

The Way Ahead

By Chris Hudson

The Sports Council has confirmed its intention to offer a Grant towards the cost of implementing the CA's Forward Plan for each of the years 1991 to 1994 inclusive.

The grants allocated are as follows:

1991	£23,000
1992	£23,000
1993	£28,000
1994	£28,000

The increase in grant in 1993 and 1994 reflects our acknowledged success in achieving many of our previous objectives. However, the amount of grant falls short of the total for which we applied, so unless we can increase our income in other ways, our Forward Plan will have to be modified to bring the level of our activities into line with the money available.

Our two major objectives will, however, remain the same:

- To increase membership of the Croquet Association to at least 6000.
- To establish and develop more Regional Competition Venues (RCVs).

Increasing membership

Now that members of registered clubs automatically become Affiliate members of the CA, any recruiting

done at club level will be reflected in our national figures.

The Croquet Association is taking steps during the coming winter to help all registered clubs or groups to increase their membership and hence their viability next season. By next spring, we shall be able to supply clubs with free leaflets explaining Association Croquet, Short Croquet, and Golf Croquet to help with their recruiting drives, and to provide blank posters that can be used to publicise beginners courses. An example of a recruitment leaflet that can be modified to suit any club will also be available.

In the next two issues of this magazine, we shall be publishing articles describing successful recruitment methods used by clubs



Leicester's winning Longman Cup team (L to R): Richard Whiting, Richard White, David White, and Gary Yates.

in the past. We hope these will be helpful. Enquiries received at HQ from people wanting to take up the game will be directed to clubs already registered.

Those clubs and groups not already registered will be strongly advised to do so, and thus benefit from the help we can all offer them. For example, specimen club constitutions can be provided for groups in the process of forming a club, and enquiries can be directed to them to increase their membership. Registration gives them access to qualified coaches, and the opportunity to take advantage of all the facilities provided by both the CA and the local Federation for competitive play, discounted equipment, and so on.

Coaching

A subsidiary objective in our Forward Plan, but one that I consider to be very important, is to increase coaching effectiveness. This can be done by increased coach training and, perhaps, by the provision of a professional coaching service.

Publicity

In general terms, the CA is investigating ways in which we might increase media coverage of croquet in the regions, by using central facilities to circulate details of national events to regional press and other media forms. Clubs can help themselves in this way, by making sure their local papers have details of outstanding performances by their members, league match successes,

recruiting drives, and so on. If the CA, Federations and Clubs can get their act together, increased regional coverage could bring many more people into the clubs. Again, the CA can help with advice in this area.

To increase public participation next year, we shall again promote the Croquet Classic, hopefully with the support of a sponsor. This time it will have a different format to give every competitor at least three games, win or lose. As before, clubs are urged to take advantage of this opportunity to provide their new members and beginners with a most enjoyable introduction to competitive play.

An additional national competition, this time for Golf Croquet, will be organised by the (200+) Croquet Demonstrators we

Over-50s

For the 'Over-50s', 1991 will see the first Seniors Championship sponsored by Gieves and Hawkes. Detailed plans will be announced in the Fixture Book, but it is expected to be held as two weekend competitions, one in the North and one in the South, with a one-day Final to be held in London.

Developing RCVs

Over the next four years our objective is to develop a number of new RCVs. Already several sites have been recommended but their future development will depend on the availability of the necessary finance and the enthusiasm of local members. The CA will do all it can to assist in these developments, and the earlier we can become involved, the better.

The next four years are full of promise. We look poised to increase our membership considerably (and numbers are important in protecting the future of the game). Basically croquet is in competition with every other sport for a finite amount of national resource, be it lawns to play on or money to finance our activities. The more people we have pushing forward together, the more successful all of us will be.

1990/91 Meetings of CA Council & Committees (at Hurlingham) (Chairman in brackets)

6 Oct	Publicity (Charles Townsend)
13 Oct	Tournament (Nigel Aspinall)
27 Oct	Council (Stephen Mulliner)
10 Nov	Finance & GP (Colin Irwin)
17 Nov	Development (Syd Jones)
8 Dec	Council (Stephen Mulliner)
15 Dec	Coaching (Bill Lamb)
2 Feb	Council (Stephen Mulliner)
9 Feb	Publicity (Charles Townsend)
23 Feb	Development (Syd Jones)
2 Mar	Finance & GP (Colin Irwin)
9 Mar	Tournament (Nigel Aspinall)
24 Mar	Council (Stephen Mulliner)
20 Apr	AGM/Council

Council Members

Nigel Aspinall	(Roehampton)
Keith Aiton	(Nottingham)
Judy Anderson	(Colworth)
Derek Caporn	(Woking)
Thomas Coles	(Hurlingham)
Smokey Eades	(Phyllis Court)
Martin French	(Ipswich)
Don Gaunt	(Cheltenham)
Bill Gillott	(Cassibury)
Tim Haste	(Southwick)
Andrew Hope	(Cheltenham)
Colin Irwin	(Bowdon)
Syd Jones	(Tyneside)
Barry Keen	(Bowdon)
Bill Lamb	(East Riding)
Stephen Mulliner	(Surbiton)
Martin Murray	(Cheltenham)
Bernard Neal	(Cheltenham)
Alan Oldham	(High Wycombe)
Charles Townsend	(Colchester)
John Walters	(Ipswich)
plus 3 vacancies....	

Universities

Following Oxford University's success in reviving the Student Championships this year, we hope the event can be repeated next season with an increased field.

CROQUET

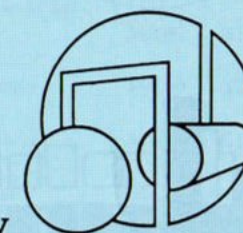


Inside:

News & Views
1990 World Championship
Croquet Classic Results
Tournament Round-Up
Your Letters

...and lots more

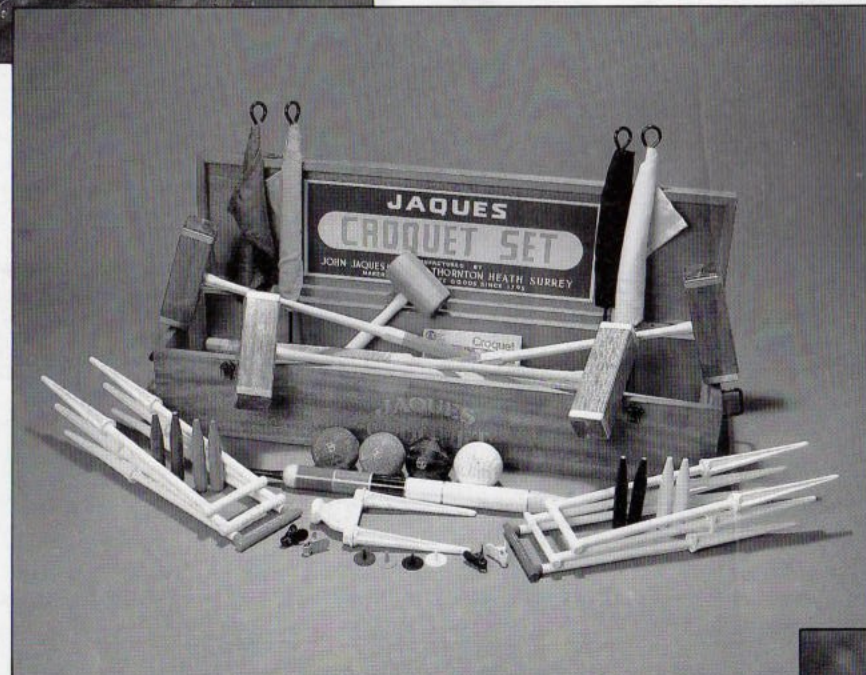
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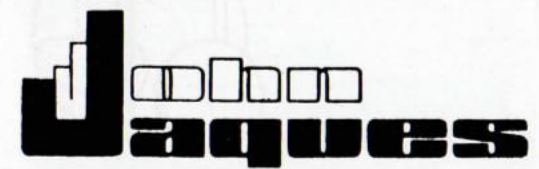
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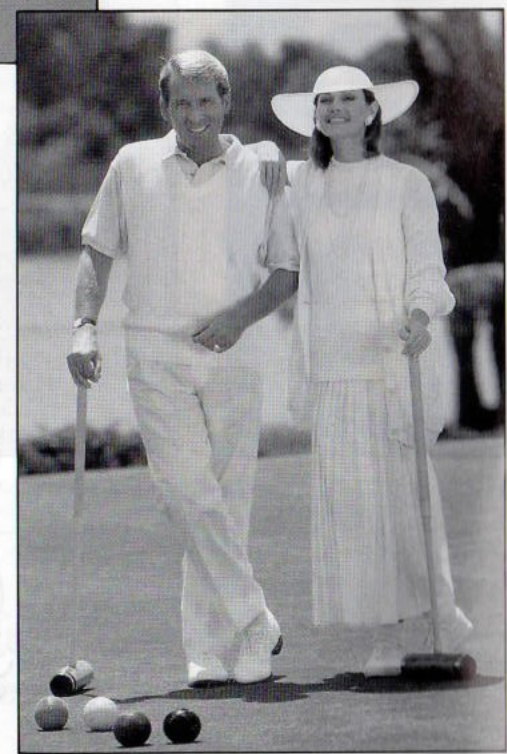
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**CROQUET
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Tournament results and reports to be sent direct, within 7 days of completion of the tournament, to the Secretary of the CA.

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

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Cover Photo: (by Ray Hall): Mark Saurin congratulates Robert Fulford at the end of their World Championship Final.

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Editorial

COMMENTS PLEASE

In a letter published in our last issue, Ian Plummer commented on the content of the magazine, and put forward some suggestions for articles that he would like to see in future.

Some recent feedback from Tony Antenen's visits to clubs suggests that some members, hopefully a small minority, feel the Association now caters only for 'A' class players. This feeling may reflect the fact that the magazine carries reports of many more international, national, and regional events than used to be the case, simply because nowadays there are many more of them.

if it is the first time the club has held such an event. Space may not allow publication of full results, but it is often a rather arbitrary decision as to who is the actual winner these days, with so many Swiss and Egyptian events.

During the past few seasons, I have tried to include reports of major events as soon as possible after they have occurred. This has meant that some of our reporters have been under considerable pressure to produce a report in the timescale available. The end of another season provides an appropriate moment to express my gratitude to



Syd Jones preparing a cannon shot to start Croquet North's 1990 development drive. More next issue!

Our membership can be divided into several categories, the 'A' class player at one end, and raw beginners at the other. Articles that suit some may well not suit others, but I hope that we are managing to provide a mix of material for everyone within the confines of the space available.

However, I would value more feedback on what people would like to see, and what they think of the present mix. At present we provide little news of Federation activities, club developments, and local leagues, partly because very few reports are received. Perhaps clubs and federations don't like to blow their own trumpets! CA national competitions, such as the All-England Handicap and the Longman Cup, are also inadequately covered in my view, again partly because very few reports of individual matches are received.

In an attempt to resolve this, I am reserving space for reports from Federations in our next issue, due out in January, and for reports from Clubs in the issue after that, due in March. I hope Federations and Clubs will take advantage of this to advertise what they have achieved during the year and their hopes for the future. Photographs of local events would be particularly welcome. Those managing or taking part in CA national events next year might like to write a report on how things went.

Reports of club tournaments, including weekend tournaments, are always welcome, particularly so

everyone who has contributed articles, reports, or photographs for the magazine during the past year.

Without their input, the quality of the magazine would be very much diminished, and I am sure that readers generally would like to join me in thanking our contributors for providing us with so much enjoyment.

On another topic, 'Croquet News' is now published as a separate newsheet, and a complimentary copy is being sent to all Affiliate members as they register. It may be that Associate members would be interested in subscribing to 'Croquet News' as well as 'Croquet', and if so, enquiries should be directed to the CA Office.

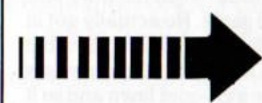
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Tournament Weekends

Roehampton: 14-15 July More Busy Bees at Roehampton

Report by Tim Russell

There could not have been a finer or hotter weekend for the 16 players who assembled at Roehampton to croquet for the Philpot Cup. Bright blue skies, refreshing breeze, and, thanks to the long dry spell, remarkably fast lawns, all made for perfect playing conditions.

The lowest bisquers did not fare too well. Paul Macdonald (2) and Kevin Carter (2½) fell in the first round in two contrasting games, Mike Llewellyn-Williams beating Paul very convincingly and Mark Hutchison just getting the better of Kevin. Tim Russell (2½) did a little better, winning his first round but then succumbing to a tenacious Robert Pennant-Jones.

In the second and third rounds the increasingly impressive Llewellyn-Williams defeated David Ruscombe-King and Denis Cross with relative ease, as did the redoubtable Pennant-Jones dispose of Mark Hutchison as well as Tim Russell; Mark's opponent in the second round, Pat Macdonald, unfortunately had to retire with sunstroke when marginally in the lead - perhaps the weekend was a bit too fine and too hot after all!

The final, between Robert Pennant-Jones and Mike Llewellyn-Williams, was played as best of three. The first game was a little tentative, with neither player gaining the upper hand, but notable for Robert's constant hitting-in; indeed, it was this that gained him the game +5 after Mike had pegged out Robert's forward ball. The second game saw 9-hoop breaks from both players, Mike always just in front. This time, with Mike on Peg and Rover, Robert

unwisely pegged him out when still only for 1-back himself and of course paid the penalty, -8.

The final game saw Mike playing probably the best croquet of the tournament. His break play was particularly impressive and, in spite of typically courageous hits by Robert when under pressure, Mike came home comfortably +15. It was a thoroughly good contest and both were rewarded with handicap reductions. In the play-off for third place, which also played as best of three, Mark Hutchison beat Denis Cross +14, +13.

The rest of us, meanwhile, had been enjoying a progressive Swiss. Kevin Carter played consistently well, winning all his games, although



Mike Llewellyn-Williams, winner of the Roehampton July Weekend.

Roehampton: 11-12 August

'The unmatched form and figure of blown youth' (Hamlet)

Report by Robert Prichard

The early President's, the World qualifiers, and no Test team jostling, meant this year saw a much wider range of ability in the 'Rowlock'. Neither of 1989's finalists, Mulliner and Clarke, played and other absent regulars included French and Cordingley. Hilditch atoned for forgetting to enter last year by being the first to do so, but there was room for J. Carlisle and J. Dyer to enter after the closing date. The latter had a High Wycombe handicap of 7, which did not survive (pace the Keen edict), but was the only one to give Fulford a moment's real disquiet.

Nobody could match the form of the youngest player. Commuting from Colchester he had leave till 11 both days but had won the final well before tea. He was clearly helped by the lawns (which survived the drought far better this year) and hoops which enabled games to average almost ten (double-banked)

per court per day and over seven per person. However he and the inevitable Noble did the only TP's, a mere one each, except for Aiton who produced three TPO's. Only Coles punished the audacity (+2), so Aiton avoided last year's zero wins.

Fulford's closest game involved some audacity. On condition the runner-up got the pint tankard, leaving the winner with only the less useful Rowlock, Noble agreed to play best-of-five. Two games down, he pegged himself out on the third turn of the third game. He actually got in with a perfect 3-ball break later but crashed to lose by 5. The draw was shaped like a croquet lawn and so it was Fulford who on paper reached its 'peg' first to win the Rowlock.

Losers were transferred to a 'Swiss Lawn', with the best four eventually 'lifted' to its B-baulk for a race to its 'peg' for the second prize of a small tankard. This was won by D. Wiggins,

perhaps slightly fortunate when beating Tim Russell +2T, in that his opponent forgot he had a lift with two balls in baulk! (It was, after all, extremely hot!) Bob Stephens belied his handicap of 6 and played consistently well to finish runner-up in the Swiss.

Thanks must go the groundstaff at Roehampton for their hard work in bringing the lawns back into good condition after the ravages of last summer, and to Paul Macdonald for his accomplished organisation; it is never easy with only 3 lawns to keep everyone happy, but, as always, Paul's unflappability ensured that the weekend was a great success, enjoyed by all.

East Riding: 28-29 July A Flag of Convenience at Hull

This handicap weekend began with some confusion for the players, as they studied the tournament notice describing the change of format from American blocks to Liberian. This formula was really a flag of convenience for the Manager to act as dictator, whilst the players struggled for the freedom to play the type of game they preferred.

The format was basically that of the Egyptian but games could be played either bisque difference or full-bisque off a base of six; low bisquers could also play to advanced rules, with the restriction that a bisque could not be taken immediately after a missed lift shot. Nearly all preferred to play bisque difference (although most were familiar with the full-bisque form from last year's tournament) until the Manager imposed full-bisque to speed things along on the Sunday.

Conditions were difficult and variable from court to court. East Riding's own courts were fast after the drought with the gentle slopes causing problems around the hoops for the unwary. The occasional courts in the tennis area were parched brown and rather bumpy, whereas the over-watered bowling greens were lush and slow. Both days were very hot and several players took advantage of the 'resting' box.

Nick Cordingley from Ormesby Hall received a baptism of fire in the first game of his first tournament against Colin Irwin; on the third turn Colin took a ball to the peg; Nick responded by pegging Colin out but did not realise the advantage of pegging his own ball out as well with seven bisques standing. He was lucky to survive after Colin lost control of a winning three-ball break. However, Nick profited from his good fortune and, playing with increasing confidence, emerged as the unbeaten winner of the tournament.

Of the thirty-six players, David Appleton was the only one to register a TP; I think he was the only player to try. Apart from that, local players Ted Scott, George Chamberlin, Ross Gillespie, Keith Hutton and James Peters - the latter also playing in his first tournament - were well to the fore.

To keep the format exactly the same as last year's apparently wildly different Snakes-&-Ladders, a third prize went to Hilditch. He was the best of the rest, despite voluble claims that he cannot run wide hoops, and his shaky start with a +3 over Llewellyn-Williams. He was followed by Coles and Russell, who was inspired by a +1 win over Prichard (the second in two years) to recover from two -26's before lunch.

The tournament is no longer the all London affair it was a few years ago. The two most distant visitors had contrasting fortunes: Jenkins from Bristol won three out of his first four but Lamb from Hull took six games to reach the same score, despite being seeded.

Southport: 13-15 July Over-35s go Wild at Southport

Report by Martin Kolbuszewski

A weekend tournament for the over-35s, it said in the fixtures book. I've noticed recently that croquet players are starting to look young, which is probably a classic sign of advancing age, but this sort of thing makes you feel as if they're measuring you up for a bathchair. It needed a euphemism. Not 'Veterans', that's been done. 'Vintage' doesn't sound right, either. Eventually somebody thought of 'Vintage Character', which got metamorphosed into 'Late Bottled', 'Old Peculiar' and so on. In the meantime they'd bent the rules anyway, in order to allow Gail Curry to defend her title from last year's B-levels. Furthermore, Andrew Bennet delegated his management duties to Adrian Saurin, aged 13½, and concentrated on the really important matters like trying to find out when the real ale shop opened. Adrian carried out his duties with efficiency and panache, forming a small committee to deal with the amazingly complex task of working out round 8 of a 16-person Swiss. I'd watched Andrew trying to sort out round 7 on Saturday evening. It took two hours and at least half a bottle of very good Côte Rôtie. (I bet 'Croquet' magazine can't print circumflex accents.)

Most of us were familiar with the attractions of Southport including friendliness, hospitality, good food and drink, the seaside and so on, but they even managed to provide hot sunshine and fast lawns as well. Several of us were caught out by the red ball which expanded to the same width as the hoops in the extreme heat. I am looking forward to hearing what the Laws Committee has to say about cooling the balls in an ice bucket during a game. However, perhaps the strangest manifestation of the high temperatures was the man observed on Sunday morning with a skateboard attached to each foot, using a pair of ski poles to propel himself along the cycle track of the A565.

There were six and a half ladies among the sixteen players. Well, there was a lady who introduced herself as Alan Gordon. This turned out to be Barbara Haslam, substituting for Alan who was unable to come on the first day owing to work commitments. This was Barbara's first experience of Advanced play and she performed very creditably, beating Carol Lewis and coming within a whisker of beating Pat Hague before retiring to the excellent catering team with a substantial handicap reduction.

It soon became clear that Colin Wild was the man to beat. He started with a couple of plus one on times and then moved into overdrive, remaining unbeaten throughout the weekend with accurate and consistent strokeplay. He has improved a lot since I last saw him play several years ago, coming down by a bisque or so each season. Nobody else could keep up and we had to be content with traditional activities like changing over from the black ball to the brown during a break and helping Pat Hague to find a succession of balls lost in the bushes.

The tournament ended on a dramatic note with a heavy thunderstorm which threatened to flood the lawns and sent the contestants inside for an early tea. The idea of an over-35s tournament was generally agreed to be, in the words of one player, 'a damn good idea'. Thank you Southport CC and please could we have another one next year.

Tournament Weekends

Southport: 22-23 September The Season for Juniors Continues!

Report by Mark Saurin

From the twenty entries for this open weekend, six were juniors which meant there was a good chance of maintaining junior victories this year. It turned out that one of the six did!

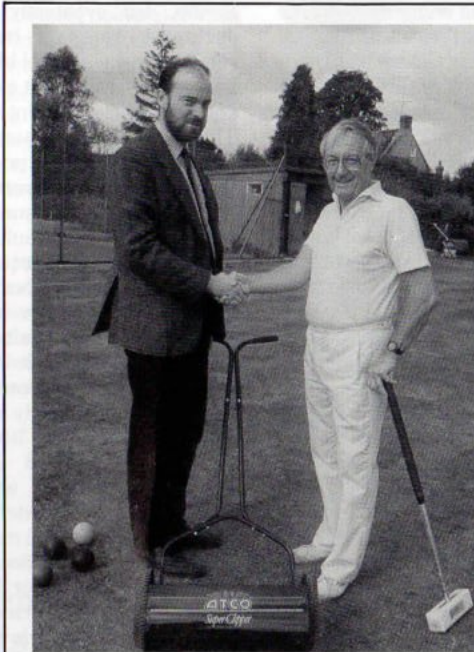
Under the management of 13 year old Adrian Saurin, the tournament, knockout with consolation Egyptian, began in traditional miserable weather on the Saturday. This didn't seem to affect Colin Irwin, going for his fifth consecutive September Open Weekend victory, as he dealt with his opponents ruthlessly, but other big names fell.

Out went David Maugham who lost to Dan McCormick, having had three shots in the knockout. Out went Chris Haslam to Colin Southern, who almost completed a triple. Thus the semi-finals looked easy matches for the two big names left, Colin and Mark Saurin, their opponents Adrian Saurin and McCormick respectively. Dan had had a close victory in the quarter-finals, beating Russell Collighan +3 after Russell had completed a TPO and pegged two out, leaving hoop one versus hoop one. The decisive shot was when both players were for 2-back, Dan ran the hoop from the peg.

The semi-finals proved to be close but with both favourites going through, Irwin finishing with another triple. So to a best-of-3 final between the two GB internationals, psychologically important before the GB under-21 versus GB confrontation. This seemed to be sufficient inspiration for Saurin, who won the first 26-0(TP) seventh turn and +25 in the second a couple of turns more; 'Hogonic peaking' by Mark.

Outside the main event, the excellent Egyptian system was being employed which Mr Maugham took as an opportunity to destroy as many opponents as possible with triples. There were some close finishes this weekend though, with four +1 results being recorded. The only one I saw was Collighan/Haslam. Collighan for peg/box, Haslam for one/one. Russell hit in when Chris was for peg/box, almost rushing opponent ball on to the peg.

Well that's it for this season, finishing with this memorable weekend. Thanks to anyone who helped someone do anything for such enjoyment. For all those with good memories, please next season ask Dan McCormick about his 'car park' and ask Chris Haslam why he had 'loose screws'. Both explanations will be entertaining.



ATCO SUPER CLIPPER PRIZE COMPETITION

In our July issue, we ran a competition for an Atco Super Clipper mower, generously donated by our sponsors. Seen here is Leslie Hull (right), from Chippenham, Wiltshire, being presented with his Atco Super Clipper by Derek Belcher, Managing Director of local Atco dealers, Handy Garden Machinery.

Leslie is a keen croquet player and Chairman of Kington Langley Croquet Club. He has been playing croquet since the club was established four years ago in the grounds of the local Cheshire Home, Great House.

The only club in North West Wiltshire, with around 30 members, Kington Langley is becoming increasingly well-known. It offers beginners coaching courses through the local Polytechnic, and is looking forward to joining the intermediate league of the South West Federation next season.

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Guildford & Godalming: 18-19 August Bigger Tent, More Chairs

Report by Nick Harris

Saturday began with players, unbelievably sheltering from the rain, actually waiting for it to stop before commencing play. Player Manager Richard 'The trophy's too big to go on my television again' Hilditch appointed me columnist and Les Chapman turned up limping (had he dropped his wallet on his toe?) with a seriously metal E flat Mallet which Mr Miller got his hands on later.

Round 1 got under way, but I had to wait until a relieved Fireman Wiggins completed his leave and arrived at the Tournament. I helped us catch up with the others by giving him a +23 win.

Towards the end of Round 2, nothing noteworthy had happened and I was advised to fabricate the entire report. However most competitors adjourned to the Cider House for lunch so were more adventurous, and some a lot noisier, in the afternoon. Mike Hopwood rigalled your correspondent, peg & 4-back v. penult & Ballbox, but gave me too many shots and lost.

Undeterred, he rigalled the Bonging E flat Miller, who had had 2 peels of a delayed Triple to make Oppo Penult & Ballbox again, whilst still for 2 with the other ball. Even leaving him in front of penult wasn't disastrous, as he picked up the third ball, in position at Rover, after running 1-back and took the break round to finish +2.

Later, whilst most prepared to repair to the local Chinese, A. Miller was bonging on Lawn 1 and generally complaining about the light. To prove his point, to cries of 'get on with it', he missed a 3 footer

after running Rover with his remaining Post Portwood? Ball. By the end of the day, newly gilded (+25 Tp against David Wiggins) soon to be wed Simon Tuke (Veronica Gadsby H 14 also of Parsons' Green) had 4 wins to lead the Swiss and the weather had warmed up enough for Les to show us his braces.

Sunday dawned extremely wet and also, unfortunately, John 'have you brought a note?' Coutts was forced to scratch due to injury. Throughout the rain, Lionel 'Margaret likes your Hat' Wharrad and Sou'westered Steve 'Wonky' Battison played quietly on as an example to us all. Richard Brand and the Manager both seemed happy to stay in the Tent whilst I had a +26 and a +24. Actually I took only 5 minutes to line up the peg out and not 10 as some would maintain! Meanwhile Simon after a Dp rigall by Tony Mrozinski took a 3 baller from 1 to peg with 20 yard roquets and 3 yard hoops for his 5th win, a sixth soon followed and then they went to the Cider House.

Considerably encouraged by his lunch Anthony Miller completed the development of his Post Portwood Non-Peeling Plan: Run Hoop 1 with both balls from the yard line, hit in, take your first break to peg and peg out, hit in again, take your second ball to peg and finish! - and won his next game. The Manager then showed he was less than impressed when these tactics were tried against him, by winning comprehensively.

Hugh Smurfitt enjoyed all his games win or lose, even when Richard Brand went to 4 back, 3rd turn, (unfortunately he couldn't get

a fifth turn finish). Enquiries concerning a misplaced? Brown Clip during our game, another win for Simon, led eventually to Roger Jackman. He said he couldn't remember anything of his previous game on that lawn, let alone which colours he played, except that he lost! The misplaced Clip turned up in Chairman Mrozinski's pocket! Nigel 'Mighty Mouse' Gale, warned earlier that if he didn't do something very interesting soon he would end up as a nondescript, had a squeak of +3 wins and Jeremy Dyer, who was anything but, had a last round opportunity to halt Simon's inexorable progress. It was a good effort too, forcing Simon to peg out his own balls separately in winning.

In accepting the Trophy from Margaret, Simon, 8 wins 1Tp, declared that as he was getting married soon he needed to get in some practice! He then made a short speech thanking Club Secretary Ron and Margaret Selmes for their (much bigger) Tent and their catering soon to rival Harrow, (surely not even a *Summer's Day* could compare to *Harrow's Plastic Knife and Teaspoon?*)

He also thanked the Manager for his expertise and Anthony for being the Page Boy. Tony Mrozinski, 6 wins 2 Tps, including a p.m. pint a peel Triple was the runner up and asked if it were true that Anthony had caught the eye of the Handicapper, with a view to an increase? I thought this unlikely as there had already been an increase in the number of chairs since last year.

Ipswich: 18-19 August A Hutful of Referees

Report by Neil Jackson

By 5.30 on the second day five straight wins allowed Bruce Raymond of Ipswich (handicap 11) to take home the handsome Suffolk Bowl for the second time, while Ian Burrige and John Walters put on a post tournament friendly and Richard and Peter, overcome by it all, vied for the most spectacular and frequent way to give up the innings in their battle for ninth place.

The six visitors and six locals nicely filled the tree-shaded lawns in beautiful Christchurch Park. Meanwhile their supporters, parked right in the centre of the town, were happily engaged in dozing during the boring bits or nipping off for a spot of unlicensed shopping.

It was a chauvinistic occasion. The Ipswich ladies, who collectively could beat the pants off the resident players, gallantly decided to keep the score, generally manage the tournament and to feed the gentle

Wrest Park: 18-19 Aug A Real Trouper

Report by John Bevington

Spare a thought for John Wheeler, who had strained a muscle earlier in the week, possibly when lugging a large drum of line marking compound from the boot of his car. This injury was no doubt aggravated on the Friday when he mowed the lawns and (with your reporter's assistance) set 36 hoops, marked 756 yards of white line and installed 84 pieces of wood of various shapes and sizes. On Saturday he could hardly move and had to scratch, but he still turned up on both days to assist Enid Bottomley with the catering and attack any crosswords that dared to show their faces. A trouper.

Jon Watson divided the 20 players into two Swiss blocks, and play began under dull skies with the lawns playing more smoothly than of late due to some recent rain. The hoops were firm and set to standard 'minus a little bit' - shall we say Minister's width? First on the lawns were Tom Anderson and Duncan Hector, who were given a start by the manager - wisely as it turned out, Duncan winning by 2 on time. Elsewhere, Howard Bottomley and Duncan Reeve got away to winning starts against Alan Sutcliffe and Brian Hallam respectively.

In the lower block, John Bevington failed the peg-out and was left wondering whether he should have at least pegged out one ball as John Ruddock completed a smooth break to win. Adrian Craxton lost his first, and as it turned out, only game to Gill Bogle. He said he was indebted to Corla v G. who after their game in the Wrest Park May tournament had lectured him on the benefits of a more attacking style.

sex instead. Only once, baffled by the cast-iron pot-bellied barbecue, they called for assistance from a player, who lit the wrong end for them before retreating back to his game.

On Sunday church bells rang, bands played; a hutful of referees spent the morning re-writing the rule-book while the players sheltered from sun and rain under their up-raised mallets. From time to time they emerged to test their abstruse theories on the fundamental illegality of all roll-strokes, to tighten the hoops until the balls stuck properly, or to angle the north lawn hoops elegantly away from the collapsible peg.

As a beginner I was very impressed by this neat little tournament, the competence of the officials and the way the handicap system gave us all a chance to win if only we could concentrate and play our best on the day.

George Collin added a new dimension to the duties of the ROT by making random appearances armed with a knife. Players anxiously wondering whether the Laws Committee had finally decided to get tough on unclean roll strokes were relieved when he bent down to slice out the offending broad-leaved weed that had caught his eye. Wrest Park's open planning led to the inevitable collisions as Jon Watson hit in on a half-pint jug, and Alan and Gill Bogle interfered with each other when Alan's east-west shot collided with Gill's rush on the adjoining lawn.

Duncan Reeve was seen to indulge in a spot of what might have been described as Irish gamesmanship when, preparing to peg out against his namesake (Hector variety), he cried out in pain and threatened to retire with an attack of cramp in the calf. The gallery rightly pooh-poohed these delaying tactics and the game was concluded.

Sunday came on wet, and white gave way to blue, green and, in Heather Pritchard's case, fluorescent orange as the waterproofs appeared. Play became aggressive and hard-hitting, and many in a position to do so went round and gave contact, since even hitting the width of the lawn could not be guaranteed. Don Gaunt was the first to try the golf swing and his example was soon copied by others. Its use in croquet strokes has obvious advantages in such conditions, but it is difficult to estimate the distance and direction of the striker's ball when playing big splits in the wet. Another topic for research? Adrian Judge and John Bevington (who had both agreed at the outset that neither wanted to stay out any longer than was necessary) were the first to finish after Adrian had pegged out an opponent ball but later missed a relatively short roquet.

After lunch the sun returned. Outer layers were shed and the lawns gathered pace. Terry Burge claimed the straight shooting award by running hoops 1 and 2 on lawn 3 in his first stroke (actually the ball was heading to the right but the much maligned Wrest Park slope pulled it back!)

Jon Watson's notes record that (a) he had one ball pegged out by Don Gaunt and (b) that he ran a 14 yard hoop to hit balls on the other side. The trouble with writing reports is such scraps taken separately may mean more or less than when taken together. Was the hoop run before or after the single ball had been pegged out? Did he hit both balls? Was the pressure on? I cannot tell, even though (or, more likely, because) I was playing on the same lawn at the time.

Alan Sutcliffe made up a lot of ground in his last game against Duncan Reeve before Duncan finally scored the last three points to remain undefeated in the top block. In a late finish Adrian Craxton, having already pegged out one ball, finally hit the peg from what in racing parlance might be described as 'a distance' to clinch his fourth win and the lower block with 45 seconds to spare.

A most enjoyable weekend - a sentiment echoed by Duncan Reeve as he thanked the organisers on the visitor's behalf. As the Dodo said after the Caucus race: 'Everybody has won, and all shall have prizes'



Nigel Aspinall watches his chances disappear as Mark Saurin powers ahead in this year's World Championship quarter-final.

Cheltenham: 25-27 August Hands Up for Cheltenham again

Report by George Winter

I have just returned from the most wonderful croquet tournament, at Cheltenham, over the August Bank Holiday weekend.

The bare statistics do not do it justice, but here they are. 56 entrants from 19 clubs played 196 games. Although this was a level play event, the handicaps ranged from -1 to 16. Indeed, a quarter of the field were 9 or above, which was most gratifying to see.

But forget the statistics. What matters is the atmosphere and the good-natured competition, the friends made and the friendships reinforced.

Cheltenham's ten courts were like an oasis of green for those of us who have struggled for most of this arid summer with parched, slippery surfaces. The sun shone and the backdrop of the Cotswolds was superb. Non-croquet diversions included a superb day two barbecue, courtesy of the untiring work of Gill and Alan Bogle, along with the Wheelers.

The Cheltenham Club seems to have developed the management of a weekend tournament to a fine art. We saw in action again the now very popular 'Hands' ladder system. You play as much or as little as you wish - several achieved ten games in three days, others were content with five or six. You always play others of a similar ability but if you win and climb the ladder you will find yourself against increasingly better opposition (and if you lose you drop down to an easier level).

The Manager, Kevin Carter, is clearly a masochist for taking on the job of keeping in place such an

unruly horde - and playing at the same time! Spare a thought, too, for those of us who played him, having to continually seek him out of the pavilion for each turn. Poor Colin Snowdon, bemused and baffled, remarked that it was like starting a new game every turn.

Seriously though, is it not the people who make a tournament successful, the characters? We had Bob and Barbara Sunwalt, over from America (to learn the proper rules), Sally Green and her 13-year-old son, Ben, up from Bristol and both playing with distinction in their first tournament (with Dad at home looking after the other kids). Charles Waterfield and Keith Hutton, from Hull and Yorkshire respectively, contrived to make their game a 'North Eastern Championship'.

Christopher Williams, a regular visitor from Dyffryn, brought a careful this time: Michael Mathews and his soon-to-be-a-mum wife, Rosemary, and Paul Pristavec, a new face and a player of great promise. We had the 'cracks' like Bernard Neal, Bryan Sykes and Francis Landor to add class and we had the 'rowdies' like the Brand twins, and Anthony Miller with his selection of loud hats.

Probably the only complaint I heard all weekend was the infuriating habit of the club to close its bar a few minutes before the thirstiest players finished their matches. It does seem rather curious that the club retains the old opening hours from pre-licensing liberalisation days.

The list of winners seems of secondary importance to the sheer

enjoyment of it all. However, we came to win and that is exactly what a 'born-again' Dennis Moorcraft achieved in the top section, ahead of Francis Landor. The second engraved pewter plate prize was won by Chris Williams, narrowly beating Gill Bogle.

John Willis was a runaway winner of his section, winning all seven of his games, ahead of Julian Sheraton-Davis, a stylish newcomer from Surbiton. The lowest section was won by Angela Hall, a local player off 13, who survived a nail-biting sudden-death play-off, on time, in the final game against Sally Green.

Cheltenham generously gives bottles of bubbly to those who achieve CA Award badges. In this event there were no fewer than five: bronze to Angela Hall, Sally Green and Michael Mathews, and silver to Paul Pristavec and (under-age) Ben Green. None of the tournament's four triple-peels was a maiden effort and, therefore, the gold awards proved elusive to those who strove for them.

A final applause to the Cheltenham Handicappers who wisely reject the CA entreaty to make handicap changes only at handicap events. The 'Hands' system employed at this tournament lends itself very well to re-handicapping people who gravitate to their true ability levels. The dozen or so bisque amendments included some increases as well as reductions.

Cheltenham weekend tournaments unsurprisingly get fully booked very early so I shall be sending in my 1991 entries very soon.



Strat Liddiard of Poole demonstrates the Solomon Grip at the Woking Triples.

Croquet Classic

THE 1990 FINALISTS

RICHARD FRANKLIN aged 24, comes from Market Drayton in Shropshire and works in Birmingham for Thomson Directories. Played garden croquet for several years before joining the Shrewsbury Croquet Club last season. He is a keen sports diver. His brother, David, reached the final last year.

NEIL GOODYEAR aged 33, is a computer systems analyst with Barclays Bank at Knutsford. First played croquet in 1976, recently took it up again and was losing finalist in last year's competition. Plays in a lunch-time croquet league at work, with 1-hour time limits. Other sporting activities include village cricket, golf, and 5-a-side football.

PETER HARDY aged 38, lives in Huntingdon and is in business manufacturing laser equipment.

Married with 4 children, he first played croquet at school, pottered around in the garden for several years, and then entered the Croquet Classic for the first time last year, losing all his games in the Regional final. He joined Cambridge Croquet Club as a founder member last season.

MIKE HAYMES aged 40, is in private practice as a Chartered Surveyor in Carlisle. He has played garden croquet for 4 years, and recently installed a half-size lawn at home. He won the Phileas Fogg qualifying tournament at the Gateshead Garden Festival this year to reach the final. He plays in the Northern Short Croquet League with his friends, but has not yet joined a local club.

NIGEL HIND aged 41, is a computer project manager with the Friends Provident in Salisbury. A garden

croquet player for most of his life, he only started the 'four-ball' game 4 years ago when he built his own three-quarter size lawn. He reached the Classic final last year and plays regularly in his garden with three other local players in the 'Whiteparish mixed croquet circuit'. A keen sportsman, he plays village cricket, hockey, and fives.

NEIL JACKSON aged 58, from Aldeburgh is a retired BOAC pilot turned operator of craft workshops. Played 'silly croquet' for 15 years before building a three-quarter size lawn where the Aldeburgh Garden Croquet Club's 3 members and occasional learners play. He lost in Round 1 in 1987, missed in 1988, and reached Round 2 in 1989. Thus encouraged, he has been practising all winter in the garden, joining the Ipswich club this spring. An ex-rock climber, his hobbies now are drinking and TV.

ROBIN MALCOLM aged 31, lives in Guildford, Surrey. He has played garden croquet for 4 or 5 years, and was a Regional finalist in 1988. He enlarged his home lawn last year and as well as croquet, plays golf and cricket. A former member of the Welsh Guards, he now works in the City as a broker.

PAUL MALE aged 25, is an



Semi-finalists Peter Hardy (left) and John Norris. Peter won 6-5 on time in a very close game.

accountant who lives in Ascot. He has played garden croquet for 15 years but this is the first time he has entered the Croquet Classic. He joined the Woking Croquet Club in August. Single, he enjoys cricket, bridge, and board games.

FREDDIE MARKHAM aged 41, is a company director whose business specialises in hot weather clothing for safaris and overseas travel. Married, with 4 children, he has played garden croquet for some 20 years in his father's annual 'Cumbrian Croquet Championship'. Four years ago, he discovered the modern rules and levelled his lawn.

NEIL MATTHEWS aged 26, from Chingford, London, is a software designer with British Telecom. He first played croquet at Oxford and

REGIONAL REPORTS



The finalist group at Gateshead (L to R): Vi Sanders, Richard Barry, Don McKinley, Richard Neville, Michael Haymes, John Norris, Colin Pickering (Australia), Margaret Garner, Syd Jones, and Tony Garner.

From Peter Walker

A National Garden Croquet Classic group competition was held at the Bowdon Croquet Club on 29th July, and attracted a record entry of 24 players. Many newcomers to croquet enjoyed the competitive spirit of the tournament and the more experienced players emerged to resolve the semi-finals.

The final resulted in a clear-cut win for Howard Taylor, who defeated Tom Leckie.

The Derwent Valley Foods competition at Gateshead National Garden Festival

From Syd Jones

We had thirty three entries, playing in eight heats, giving approximately forty hours of croquet from June to August. The standard of play has been excellent throughout and

enjoyable to both players and spectators.

Hundreds of visitors to the Festival have played Golf Croquet on The Green, and many have expressed an interest in playing croquet in the future.

The presentation of the trophies was made by an Australian Croquet Champion, Colin Pickering, a 'fine fellow from around the world' who was over in England to play in this year's World Croquet Championship.

The eight players competing on the finals day have between them travelled over 1600 miles for this championship. We have had entries from as far afield as North Yorkshire, Cumbria, and Northumberland.

Many thanks to Derwent Valley Foods for making all this possible and good luck to our Phileas Fogg representatives in the National Final at Twickenham.

since then has continued to play in his garden with friends. A keen orienteer, he plays cricket and football for his old works team.

JOHN NORRIS aged 43, comes from Richmond, North Yorkshire, where he works as an analytical chemist. He has played croquet for 18 months and, like Mike Haymes, qualified for the final by winning a Phileas Fogg tournament at Gateshead. Married with 3 daughters, he is a keen walker, and a member of the Ormesby Hall Croquet Club.

JOHN ROBERTS aged 42, is a solicitor in partnership in Bristol. Married with two children, he first played croquet at Law College. Took up the game again last year with a friend who had reached the regional finals. Interested in sport generally, particularly rugby and cricket, he is a keen cinema and theatre goer.



Chris Wood in play against Howard Taylor in the semi-final.

TIM SAGAR aged 16, is a pupil at Harrogate Grammar School. Entering the sixth form next year, he is thinking of taking maths and related subjects. He took up croquet at school, plays cricket and football, and is a member of a local tennis club. He joined Harrogate Croquet Club last year.

HOWARD TAYLOR aged 28, was a regional finalist in 1987 and a national finalist in 1988. Formerly a bookmaker with William Hill, he is now a partner with Taylor & De Witt, specialists in confidential investigations and process serving. A keen horse rider, he recently gave up cricket to concentrate on croquet.

JOAN WELCH aged 50, is only the second lady to reach the final of the Croquet Classic. She works as Secretary for a Director of a company that manufactures robots. This is her third year playing croquet, but the first time she has entered the competition. A member of the Ealing and Surbiton Croquet Clubs, she likes gardening, embroidery, and cats.

CHRIS WOOD aged 27, is an investment analyst who works in the City. He played croquet at Oxford, but has not played much since then, and after some occasional garden play, he entered the Classic

Twickenham: 15 September THE CROQUET CLASSIC Howard Taylor 1990 Champion

Report by Chris Hudson

Conditions at St Mary's College Twickenham for this year's Final of the Croquet Classic were difficult, both for the players and the manager.

For the players there was hardly a blade of grass to be seen, but the clumps of weeds that had managed to survive the dry summer always seemed to be in the line of long shots that went dead straight, hit a weed and bounced over the target ball.

For the manager, the rock hard ground meant that hoops, pegs and corner flags for nine short lawns all had to be inserted using a hammer and chisel, an effort that soaked up some 6 hours of his time on the previous day.

However, the day of the Final turned out to be bright and sunny, albeit somewhat overcast after lunch for the later stages of the competition. As usual, 16 players arrived from all over the country to take part in the final, many of whom had already reached Regional finals or in some cases the National final in previous years.

The final was played as four blocks of four, followed by a knock-out for the winners. In Block A, Chris Wood who plays with only one arm looked the most experienced player on paper, and he duly won his block quite easily. Somewhat slow and deliberate in his performance, he tucks the end of the mallet under his chin and plays with his left hand, demonstrating a useful knowledge of tactics.

In Block B, Neil Goodyear (last year's losing finalist) was keen to go one better this time. Unfortunately he was held up by traffic on the motorway and arrived late, so his first game against Richard Franklin had

to be limited to 40 minutes. Richard, who comes from a croquet playing family in Shropshire, put up some spirited resistance but eventually lost

three had reached hoop 3. Both players jockeyed for position, setting up breaks but never quite getting going, and this remained the pattern



A general view of the lawns at St Mary's College.

by 6-2 on time. However, Richard then went on to beat John Norris 12-11 on time in a close game in the second round. In the third round, John, who was one of the winners of the Derwent Valley Foods 'Phileas Fogg' qualifying competitions at Gateshead Garden Festival, beat Neil to give three players with two wins. John took the block on net points.

Block C was probably the strongest block, with two previous national finalists (Howard Taylor and Mike Haymes), Neil Matthews and Robin Malcolm. In the end, Howard had three wins, but he was fortunate to come from behind to beat Robin right at the end of the game. In his game against Howard, Neil was unfortunate to give away a lift by wiring the ball that mattered, which effectively cost him the game. All four players in this block showed considerable potential and I hope the competition will encourage them to join their local clubs.

In block D, Nigel Hind was a previous finalist and looked the likely winner on paper. He achieved two wins, but met his match in Peter Hardy who, pipe in mouth, looked one of the most relaxed players present. Tim Sagar, from Harrogate Grammar School, managed one win against Joan Welch, but should not be too discouraged. Conditions were difficult, and he showed that he knew what he was doing.

To the semi-finals! Both matches turned out to be low scoring affairs. Howard Taylor beat Chris Wood by 7-3, having the edge when it came to hoop running and making 4-yard roquets. The other semi-final was a very close-run match, with Peter Hardy beating John Norris by 6-5.

In the final, Howard ran the first hoop in the first turn of the game, but after 20 minutes play, Peter's Blue ball was still on hoop 1 and the other

for the rest of the match. Howard ran out the winner of the 1990 Croquet Classic by 11 points to 6 in a final played in a most friendly spirit.

RESULTS

Block A

3 wins: Chris Wood beat Paul Male 11-8(T), Freddie Markham 9-5(T), and Neil Jackson 12-6(T).

2 wins: Neil Jackson beat Paul Male 10-5(T), and Freddie Markham 7-4(T).

1 win: Paul Male beat Freddie Markham 11-3(T).

Block B

2 wins: John Norris (block winner) beat Neil Goodyear 7-0(T), and John Roberts 14-1. Neil Goodyear (2nd) beat Richard Franklin 6-2(T), and John Roberts 14-3. Richard Franklin (3rd) beat John Roberts 14-3, and John Norris 12-11(T).

Block C

3 wins: Howard Taylor beat Mike Haymes 10-3(T), Neil Matthews 14-7, and Robin Malcolm 13-11(T).

1 win: Mike Haymes (2nd) beat Robin Malcolm 14-4. Neil Matthews (3rd) beat Mike Haymes 8-4(T). Robin Malcolm (4th) beat Neil Matthews 8-7(T).

Block D

3 wins: Peter Hardy beat Tim Sagar 8-4(T), Joan Welch 6-4(T), and Nigel Hind 5-3(T).

2 wins: Nigel Hind beat Tim Sagar 14-4, and Joan Welch 8-3(T).

1 win: Tim Sagar beat Joan Welch 8-4(T).



Howard Taylor holds aloft the Croquet Association Rose Bowl.

last year and reached the final. This year, he has joined two clubs, High Wycombe and Harrow Oak. Plays local league football on Saturdays and Sundays. Sings in a local band, and has made some trial recordings.

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Tournament Reports

Hurlingham: 28 July - 4 August

'Drinks the green mantle of the standing' (King Lear)

Report by Robert Prichard

Entering the Hurlingham summer tournament can be like ordering drinks in a New York bar. The nine events with staggered starting dates give players a wide choice of personalised cocktails, depending on their thirst for play, taste for doubles (mixed or not) or singles, laced with bisques or neat. Pity the bar-tenders, who had to cope with the various and varying whims of 57 players.

The Chief Steward, Paul Macdonald, had the assistance of Bevis Sanford, who drew up the menu, and Jean Henderson, using Mitzi to sniff out abstainers. Their task was aggravated by the hottest week of the century, which drove players to the real bars, the swimming pool and, in one case, a hair cut. Moreover, some did not know when they had had enough: the names Wormald, Greenwood, Stephens, V. Carlisle and Russell each appeared in two finals.

Home members quickly tumbled in the Hurlingham Cup. The club champion, Dayal Gunasekera, started with a smooth triple against Tom Browne, but then fell (as did Robert Prichard) to Ian Plummer and John Greenwood. John looked like winning both halves, like Comish last year. In the Process final he beat Susan Wiggins before many other games had started. (In an earlier round she pegged out against Veronica Carlisle for the first time in their seven games, of which she has now won four). However, in the Draw he lost to Mark Wormald, who won their play-off by 3, after being on 1 & 2 versus peg and 4-back.

Locals did better in the other Classes. Paul Macdonald finished a busy week by losing the Turner Cup (B) late on Saturday to Roehampton's Tim Russell, whose second trophy of the day was delayed by anxiety to be in Oxford for dinner. Bob Stephens won neither final, starting by losing the Younger Cup (C) to Brian Thompson from Tyneside. There was a home success in the Longworth Cup (D) for Steve Allen, who had only entered as a last minute substitute.

Hurlingham dominated the big handicap, with five of the six block winners, who then competed for the Silver Jubilee Cup, and four of the runners-up, who played for the Baillieu Plate. There were two bisqueless triple peels by Matthew Coles (4) and Gerald Wombwell (7). In both cases the victim was Martin Haggerston. Another welcome surprise was the re-appearance of Chris Cousins, who had not played any croquet for eight years but has quietly remained a CA member.

The best ending was a two-baller in which Stephens (on 2-back) beat Greenwood (on peg). He relied on multiple hits-in, rather than on the one and a half bisques, which he squandered before 3-back. His

shooting almost brought him the Cup, when he hit in from 40 yards to peg Tom Browne out, but Tom hit in from just as far to win. The Plate was won over Mike Pearson, who arrived shorn of some hair, by Matthew Coles, who left shorn of some bisques, much to his disappointment.

David Peterson's arrival with four and half more bisques than last year caused some muttering. For the first time in five years he and Robert Prichard were not the backmarkers



Steve Allen, winner of the Longworth Cup.

in the Wine Coolers (but they lost as usual in the first round anyhow). That distinction went to Plummer and Wormald, who reached the final with a +1(T) win over Bevis Sanford and Dennis Shaw. The same scoreline produced both the other semifinalists, David Godfree and Bernard Neal and Simon Cawdell and Tim Russell. The latter were only there because John Greenwood missed a 4-footer with score level but they won the semi-final and final with growing aplomb.

The ladies' handicap doubles also had some close timed finishes. The final might have seen one, had not Veronica Carlisle used a bisque to set up a splendid failed STP to retain the Ladies' Field Candlesticks with Joanna Prescott against Susan Wiggins and Pat Asa-Thomas.

This year the mixed doubles were split into two. The Open attracted only four entries, as everyone feared another easy win for the Carlises. Ironically they were beaten in the first round by Robert Pennant-Jones and Mrs Bonser, who however retired on the peg (with some difficulty as their one ball was never near it) as she had planned a holiday assuming defeat. The final saw three players playing poorly and an exhausted Greenwood, playing his fourth game of a sweltering day, playing just well enough to lead Pauline Healy to victory at 8.30.

The mixed handicap doubles were won by Rupert and Liz (Taylor) Webb.

Their first victory was over David Peterson and Virginia Diaz-Gorriti from Spain, playing her first-ever game of croquet. She made several hoops and a long hit in, while her elaborate cream dress with a large bow was a reminder of how elegant croquet could be before Maoist uniformity reduced us all to white. Liz always manages to look as pretty as one of her pictures but it was her shooting which gave them a narrow win over Terry Burge and Alex

O'Connor. Towards the end, seven out of eight consecutive long shots were hit.

With no really big noises playing we had to make do with the construction of the new conservatory. As a result, some indefatigables sought the peace of the terrace lawns for an Extra, won by Denis Cross. Next year the fatigables will have a splendid new vantage point. Come and let us watch you enjoying your croquet cocktail.



Lucy and Andrew Mulliner, enthusiastic about the return of the Open Trophy.

RESULTS

Hurlingham Cup
(Draw & Process; Advanced Play. 16 entries)

Play-Off: Dr M.R. Wormald bt J.D. Greenwood +3.

Turner Cup

(Advanced Play; 2 blocks & play-off. 9 entries)

Play-Off: T.G. Russell bt I.P.M. Macdonald +11.

Younger Cup

(Level Play; 5 bisques and over. 3 blocks & play-off. 12 entries)

Play-Off: B.E. Thompson bt R.T. Stephens +5.

Longworth Cup

(Handicap Singles. 2 blocks & play-off. 8 entries.)

Play-Off: S. Allen (8) bt Mrs C. Osmond (8) +5.

The Hurlingham Doubles

(Advanced Play; Mixed Pairs. 4 pairs entered)

Final: J.D. Greenwood & Mrs P.V. Healy bt J.W.H. & Mrs Carlisle +9.

Mixed Doubles Handicap

(Knockout. 11 pairs entered)

Final: Mr & Mrs Webb bt T.R. Burge & Miss O'Connor +6.

Ladies Field Candlesticks

(Knockout. Ladies Handicap Doubles. 7 pairs entered)

Final: Mrs H.B.H. Carlisle & Mrs A.J. Prescott bt Mrs E. Asa-Thomas & Mrs S. Wiggins +10(T).

The Wine Coolers

(Knockout. Mens Handicap Doubles. 14 pairs entered)

Final: S. Cawdell & T.G. Russell bt Dr I.R. Plummer & Dr M.R. Wormald +10.

Silver Jubilee Cup

(Handicap Play. 6 blocks & play-off. 36 entries)

Block winners: G.A. Wombwell, R.T. Stephens, I.P.M. Macdonald, T. Browne, D.C. Cross, and Mrs W.R.D. Wiggins.

Final: Browne bt Stephens +5.

Baillieu Plate

Block Runners-up: Mrs I.P.M. Macdonald, M.G. Pearson, M. Coles, T.G. Russell, M.R. Wormald, and C.T.J. Lindsay.

Final: Coles bt Pearson +5.

Cheltenham: 23-28 July

52 Celebrate Cheltenham's 74th

Report by Ron Selmes

Very hot - lawns very fast - very few held a break together for long - time limit of 3½ hours eventually had to be imposed on all class games. Perhaps on reflection this should have been considered earlier, but that would have deprived the late evening raucous drinkers of the pleasure of cheering and clapping a monumental game on lawn 8 between Dab Wheeler and John Wheeler (no relation) which lasted for 6½ hours! Who did win?

Cheltenham gave its usual warm welcome to many visitors and I echo Dennis Moorcraft's comments that our joint Managers really got it right this year with a class game on Monday morning followed by handicap games, played under the Hands system which allows each player to play as many or as few games as required; the doubles either family or general each morning from Tuesday to Friday and class or handicap games thereafter. This ensured that those who only wanted two games a day could play that way and those who tried for four games a day could also do so. Play continued until after nine o'clock on several evenings and a very pleasant barbecue was held on Wednesday evening which was enjoyed by all in attendance. Thank you Alan and Gill Bogle for your efforts.

Five class events with ten players in each event were divided into two blocks of five with the winner of one block playing the runner up of the other block and vice versa. The first three blocks played advanced play, the fourth (which does not have a trophy) level, and the fifth class full bisque handicap play on a base of four to encourage break building; this sadly it did not seem to do and only



Pam Kendall, block runner-up.

gave 'Aunty' the extra chance to divide and conquer.

David Foulser, the holder of the Cheltenham Challenge Cup, only lost one game and that to Peter Dorke, but in winning two by very narrow margins against Peter Darby +1 and Dennis Moorcraft +3 failed to qualify for the play offs in a block with three players on three wins. The semi-finals were between Block A1 Winner Don Gaunt and Block A2 Runner up Peter Dorke while Block A2 Winner Alan Bogle met Block A1 Runner up Jon Wurml.

In the final between Don and Jon, Don made a very quick start and was for Peg and Rover (failed with Rover ball hard on wire) when Jon (still with both clips on one) took his lift with black to play from blue in corner one and played blue, returning them to corner one. Don was unable to capitalise on this situation and finish, but won nevertheless +15.

The Money Salver semi-finals had Les Chapman versus Gill Bogle and Kismet Whittall versus Chris Williams. The final was between Les and Chris. Les started well and seemed to have the game under control. It then became a game of long hits in and very little development, mainly owing to missed short shots and many blobbed hoops. There was ironic clapping when Les finally got Hoop 3 with his second ball after eight attempts between them. He promptly failed Hoop 4 off Chris's ball. Some time passed over much of which we draw a veil. Chris then got in and pegged out Les's forward ball, unfortunately leaving Les's backward ball in front of Penult (his hoop) which Les in his turn ran, Chris then two-balled it to Rover, forgetting the lift, blobbed the hoop, Les hit with his lift and won +3.

In the Asa Thomas Trophy Ron Selmes played Roy Weaver and Edward Dymock played Peter Leach. Both of these semi-finals were over quickly with Roy meeting Edward in the final. Roy went to Rover giving lift and contact from which Edward also went to Rover returning lift and contact. Roy made little progress from this and Edward won +12 in one hour and twenty minutes making the two semi-finals look almost pedestrian.

The 'D' Class Event for which there is no trophy (is there no one out there wanting to perpetuate his or her name?) saw Malcolm Shepherd (more of him shortly) play Val Tompkinson, and Andrew Potter play Don Cornelius. Malcolm met Andrew in the final and won +12. Malcolm's only loss in this event (and indeed in the tournament until he met Les Chapman in the very last match) was against John Exell who is now 83 years of age and was giving Malcolm more years than I care to work out.



Allan Laidlaw, winner of the Calthrop Cup.

In the Calthrop Cup, with everyone getting bisques, Derek Harrison won one block and played Pam Kendall. Allan Laidlaw won the other block and played Maureen Evans. Both the men won +10 to meet in the final and Allan emerged the winner +6.

The Handicap Event for the Daniels Cup played as a Hands had Roy Weaver winning his first four games and increasing his base score of 50 to 66 by Wednesday night, but then he had three losses and fell away to finish in the pack with 53 points. This competition allows the really keen to play a lot; in fact, 52 people played 145 games in this event and whilst one managed ten games, thirty played six or more. John Ross managed nine games besides his class event and the family doubles and ended the tournament on Saturday desperately seeking someone to play who had a score nearer to his own in order that he could get four more points to add to his total of 69. He failed and had to play his last game for only a +2 -5 split and won, giving him second place over the total of 71 points.

John's problem was that he could not win without getting four points from his last game, as Malcolm Shepherd and Les Chapman had a game to finish which had been pegged down while they each played and won their Class Finals. They had 70 and 68 points respectively before the last game, the winner of which would get four points. This game was played to a timed finish at 6 o'clock and Les won +1 on time. Malcolm was very unlucky to lose and but for an inexplicable rush of blood when after failing Rover whilst his other clip was on 4-back and Les was for Rover and 1, he shot at Les' backward ball on the boundary and missed.

Les picked up the break from that and got to Rover. Les tried a complicated promotion cannon to peel Rover and failed, giving

Tournament Reports

Malcolm one last chance. As time ran out, he got a ball to 4-back and made it, but over-ran Penult, and having left Les cross-wired at Rover, missed his last shot to give Les the Daniels Cup. Malcolm and Chris Williams finished joint third in the event.

In the doubles, always a fun event or an incitement to murder, twelve family pairs played for the Secretary's Spoon and 16 other pairs played for the Barwell Salvors.

In the Family Doubles the handicaps ranged from five (John and Chris Ross) to 21 (Dr and Mrs Turtle). The Family Ross won all four games to win with Don and Fay Gaunt ending as the runners up with three wins. Well done Fay, with the highest handicap in the tournament.

The Barwell Salvors had a handicap spread of 3 (Joe Jackson and Chris Williams) to 19 (Derek Harrison and Rene Underwood). This event also had last year's Secretary's Spoons winners Alan and Margaret Selmes met the low handicap pair on Tuesday and inflicted their only defeat on Joe and Chris. Les and Margaret went on to win all four games, with Chris Bennett & Dorothy Miller, Alan Bogle & Angela Hall, and Paul Watson & Ted Goleworthy also all recording three wins.

Handicap changes were announced at the end of the tournament with reductions for the runner-up and joint third place players in the Handicap Event. It was surprising that the winner, who had also won a class event and the handicap doubles, did not earn one.

A tournament of this size entails a lot of hard work and to keep over 50 people happy may seem a tall order but Dab and Roger Wheeler did it. Congratulations to you both.

All-England Handicap

Himley: 22-23 September

Richard Brings Second Success for White Family

Report by Terry Greenwood

The Venue

The gentle rolling slopes lead to the Great Pool shared equally by sailing boats, fishermen and Canada Geese; the wooded hillside, which blazes with colour in the spring from daffodils, azaleas and rhododendrons, now tinged with the autumn colours, provided the ideal setting for the final round of the All England Handicap Singles.

The lawns, whose reputation alone had terrified many an illustrious player, have now mellowed to an acceptable standard, give and take the odd deviation which can be your friend if you give it some thought.

Summary of the Players

N. Gale (2): When given the opportunity, showed his class.

B. Hewitt (8): Was confident with bisques, but found life difficult at times.

C. Jones (4): A confident player, patient and cunning without being negative. Showed why his handicap has nosedived this season.

A. Miller (1½): His confident strides across the lawns indicated his aggressive style of play and the reason he has a low handicap.

J. Taggart (7): Nice, quiet style of play; he was the one player who showed he could be dangerous but never really had the rub of the green.

R. White (10): A reputation of being a bandit before he arrived and his play showed why. Only once did his confidence falter.

C. Wood (10): Showed he can play but had a tendency to want to save his bisques for a rainy day. Not only did he converse with opposition; he was found talking to the balls on many an occasion.

The Format

Swiss event with a time limit of 2½ hours, to enable three games per day if required. This limit turned out to be sufficient and indicated that the standard of play was very good throughout the two days. Only two games went to time and only one failed to yield a 26-point win and that was only 2 away.

Three lawns were set out, a fourth was made available for those who had to play Mr Bye. All players were invited to take a five minute loosener on the lawns prior to the start.

The Contest

The Gale v Miller contest was probably the best of the tournament. Gale struck early and moved into a lead of some 18 points and looked comfortable. Then Miller showed his excellent eye with a longish hit and then his class as he moved easily round the hoops. His leave was respectable but Gale then showed his hitting ability. Twice Gale had to negotiate the furniture on a take-off from 4-back to No 1 corner and then attempt a rush to 4-back. The second

rush succeeded and Gale won +10 just inside 2 hours.

Hewitt took an early lead against Jones, with bisques and the usual tactic of, if in doubt, split the opposition. Jones's position looked insecure as time dragged out but his patience and sound tactics plus a quick burst round the hoops ensured a victory on time.



Richard White (Leicester), this year's All-England Handicap Champion. Brother David (left) won the title last year!

A batsman would have described this match as the 'Nervous Nineties'. The early stages showed a touch of nerves with short roquets missed and nervous hoop approach. However, both players improved and it was Wood who used that imaginary rectangle to keep his break fluent and reached the 26 points just as time was called.

Whilst Hewitt, Jones, Taggart and Wood battled out the last three quarters of an hour, White took on Gale. Here we can use endnote puns, a WHITEwash, hit by a GALE. In 45 minutes and with two bisques left, White won 26-0. White gave a near faultless display, indicating his reputation as a bandit was not to be taken lightly.

The next round saw Jones and Wood showing a glimpse of their potential. Wood went into an early lead using his imaginary rectangle, whilst Jones bided his time. As Wood tried every conceivable trick to prevent using a bisque, Jones meditated in his now familiar manner of a smile whilst he huffed and puffed huge columns of smoke from his pipe. As was to be the case in following games, Wood ended up using bisques in a defensive manner and Jones cashed in to win 26-20.

Miller took on Hewitt and it was obvious that Hewitt was playing on the wrong day against an opponent who was fired up. Hewitt built up an early lead but quickly found Miller in superb form. A long hit, followed by a scintillating break, must have shaken Hewitt and from then on, only one player was in the game.

Find the Winner

As the tournament progressed, we saw Gale return to form in his game against Hewitt. Again Hewitt

followed the rule of striking early and built up a lead. As usual, he showed how comfortable he was when armed with a few bisques but then lost his way. Gale was quite prepared to seize any opportunity to run a single hoop and tempt Hewitt to use a bisque. When the bisques finally ran out, Gale turned in an impressive performance to win the game.

Miller was allowed, and even the likes of our top players would have been faced with difficulty in attempting to hit White's leave at the end of his turn.

All that remained was for Wood to stop the rot. Both White and Wood would have four bisques and Wood's familiar theory of using bisques soon became evident. Twice he had the advantage to provide himself a match winning position and refused. This gave a confident White the opportunity to step in and show that he only needed three of his four bisques to win 26-17 in just over two hours.

The game for runner-up position between Jones and Miller started off in a brisk manner, with Jones showing he could play with the best. But as news filtered through on the White/Wood game, the game fell away leaving Jones to win and take the runner-up spot.

Epilogue

I am not following the usual format of providing all of the results. The space will be used to offer congratulations to all of the players.

One feature of the tournament was the standard of play, and whilst one can discuss some of the tactical errors, the break building of the highest handicap player was impressive. All of the contestants showed the highest quality of comradeship and there was never a hint of bad sportsmanship.

A special mention for Chris Wood who sets an example in overcoming disability. An accident left him with the problem of playing with one hand and whilst there are some shots that must be extremely difficult for him, if not impossible, he never once complained.

All of us present at the tournament can only have the greatest respect and admiration for him.

Order of Merit

Winner - R. White (4/4 wins)
Second - C. Jones
Third - C. Wood
Fourth - A. Miller
Fifth - J. Taggart
Sixth - N. Gale
Seventh - B. Hewitt

RESULTS

Round 1:
N. Gale (2) bt A. Miller (1½) +10; C. Jones (4) bt B. Hewitt (8) +11(T); C. Wood (10) bt J. Taggart (7) +10(T).

Round 2:
White bt Gale +26; Jones bt Wood +7; Miller bt Hewitt +15.

Round 3:
White bt Jones +12; Miller bt Taggart +9; Gale bt Hewitt +13.

Round 4:
White bt Wood +9; Jones bt Miller +9; Taggart bt Gale +23.

Round 5:
White bt Miller +26; Jones bt Taggart +8; Wood bt Gale +26.

However, Gale's chances of glory went into oblivion as Taggart slipped into top gear and won 26-3 and then was a victim of another whitewash, this time from Wood who at last showed that occasionally he could use bisques in an attacking manner. White met Jones, and went quickly into a lead that took him to Rover and 4-back. Though his bisques had been used up, White remained in a commanding position. Then signs of vulnerability became evident. On three successive occasions White missed remarkable easy roquets which would have given him a match winning position. Jones had to get out of a cross-wiring situation and try to join his partner ball, and the White misses gave him the chance he had been patiently waiting for.

In a flash, Jones arrived at Penult and he then experienced a situation of which we are all aware. The ball went through the hoop and rolled on and on, leaving a very difficult shot which he failed to hit. However, it still left a difficult shot for White. Taking two large drags on his cigarette and two deep breaths, he regained his composure, struck superbly, and then went on to complete another victory.

Sunday Roll Call

Miller now realised a win against White would put him in contention and no-one needed to give Miller a pep talk. 45 minutes later and with White still holding two bisques in reserve, Miller could only shake the hand of White and congratulate him on his victory. White had observed Miller in play in other games and knew that any half chance would give Miller the incentive to win. Was it three shots or four shots? Including the two starting shots that was all

Tournament Reports

Hunstanton: 26-29 August

Cat Lost Near Hunstanton in 91st Tournament

Report by Martin Kolbuszewski

I had the best possible excuse for being late, which was thick fog near Cambridge. It didn't work. The Manager asked me to write the report as a penalty for entering late and arriving late. I wasn't quite sure what other sanctions Bill Lamb had up his sleeve, so I arrived on time for the rest of the week.

It immediately became obvious that the handicap events would be won by locals Paul Day or Ian Storey (not the well-known misprint from Bowdon), with enough bisques to destroy a fair-sized rain forest. This made my job much easier, as I didn't have to keep track of the croquet. Apart from that, the main event of the first day was Alan Oldham losing his hat.

On the second day, Nick Harris went one better and lost his cat. At least, he claimed that it had escaped on to the roof, possibly taking hostages, and he had had to perform some SAS type manoeuvres to avoid the Fire Brigade's charge for retrieving it. This was a much better excuse for being late than thick fog at Cambridge and he wasn't made to write a report on anything. Bill Lamb lost his sweater but nearly did a quadruple peel in very tricky fast conditions and Pat Hague lost her whisky by roqueting it.

The new CA Secretary, Tony Antenen, visited the tournament, having just come from watching the President's Cup. I don't know what he thought of such scenes as Mick Tompkinson and Martin Kolbuszewski testing one of the standard practice questions for referees by discovering half way through their game that they should have been playing advanced rather than handicap.

By the third day, the double bankers were getting into their stride and the following conversation was typical: 'Could I move blue and black, please?'. 'Never mind blue and black, where's red and yellow?' I shall long remember Ron Gosden running a difficult hoop from a position two or three feet in mid-air which he had taken up with an athletic leap in order to avoid a fast moving ball from the double-banked game.

I should mention some illegal advice I received from the double-bankers at another tournament recently. On losing the toss, my opponent said 'I'll have the ice-cream colours', so I asked 'Do you mean vanilla and strawberry, or chocolate and ...er...'. As I hesitated, trying to think of a green ice-cream, one double banker said 'Peppermint', while the other one chimed in 'Crunchy Frog'.

It got hotter and hotter, and everybody with sufficient leisure crowded into the few square yards of shade by the side of lawns 1 and 2, asking whether this was really Hunstanton. We were sustained by a constant flow of cold drinks and the usual excellent lunches and teas, including some exotic sandwich fillings I'd never seen before, such as cheese and salmon, curried egg and mackerel (but not crunchy frog). On Wednesday morning, with the thermometer hitting new records, somebody had an inspiration and organised free ice-cream cones (vanilla flavour) for the players. Bill Lamb couldn't find anywhere to put his down and was seen stalking a shot with the cone in his mouth and ice cream all over his nose. Worrying sounds of gunfire were coming from somewhere behind lawn 1 but

fortunately they missed.

The A-class event was won by Les Chapman, resplendent in floral braces, with a hi-tech mallet which incorporated a couple of golf balls in the design and made a strange pinging noise at about E flat above middle C. Bill Lamb, needing to win his last match against Mick Tompkinson to win the event, failed to approach a hoop from about two inches away when level after time had been called.

Nick Harris, worrying about his cat and lamenting that he couldn't do anything right, still won the B block. Paul Day won the C block and Ian Storey one of the two D blocks, the second being won by Norman Birkenshaw who was later seen using the trophy to carry the baby's bottle. As predicted in the first few minutes of the tournament, the X final was played between Paul and Ian, with Paul playing a break from 2-back to win after his other ball had been pegged out. The Y was won by Claire Heritage, one of a contingent of

ladies from Ipswich who were mostly called Celia. Finally, a special award for equatorial tomato slicing was presented to Cathy Storey.

The tournament was over all too soon, and it would have been nice to have stayed for five days. The Hunstanton club's hospitality was as usual very much appreciated, and Bill Lamb performed a superhuman feat in getting the programme finished in four days. Even after the official proceedings were over, there was plenty going on and Celia Pearce was observed chasing Ron Gosden down the East boundary of lawn 1. Your reporter made an excuse and left.

On the way back, there was a spectacular thunderstorm near Cambridge. Had this sort of thing been going on all week, and is this why I haven't met any croquet players from Cambridge recently, or was it just that Hunstanton club had made special arrangements to keep the rain off for the week?



Spanish competitors Fernandes and Mercedes de Ansorena with Denis Moorcraft (Manager) at Budleigh's August tournament.

C.A. News

Another 600 affiliate members enrolled in September More clubs save on insurance through CA Master Policy

Throughout September, clubs have continued to provide lists of members to the CA so that Affiliate membership cards can be sent to all their non-Associate members. Together with the membership card, each Affiliate member receives details of the benefits of the scheme, together with a complimentary copy of 'Croquet News'.

The affiliated membership scheme costs members and clubs no extra, but provides benefits to those who are not already CA Associates. These benefits are:

On enrolment, one introductory issue of 'Croquet News'.

A discount on the annual subscription to 'Croquet News'.

Free or discounted entry to venues staging selected CA events (on

production of their membership card). Details of each event will be published in 'Croquet News'.

A reduced entry fee for the 1991 Croquet Classic.

Eligibility to compete for the Golf Croquet Cups.

In addition, Affiliate members may purchase an Affiliate's Tie or Brooch (Blue or Green, with Gold CA Logo - prices on application).

The aims of the Croquet Association are to encourage the playing of croquet at all levels.

In due course, we hope that Affiliates will become Associate members of the Association and receive all the benefits and privileges open to tournament players.

Clubs wishing to obtain the above benefits for their members should

forward their membership list (if they have not already done so) to Chris Hudson, The Oaklands, Englesea Brook, Near Crewe, Cheshire, CW2 5QW. Their members who are not at present CA Associates will then automatically become Affiliate members of the Association.

The lists of names supplied by registered clubs will not be given or divulged to any other organisation, in accordance with the undertaking given by the CA to the Data Protection Registrar.

In developing more benefits for clubs and their members, the CA will maintain preferential treatment for its Associate members.

The increase in membership resulting from the affiliate membership scheme will

considerably strengthen our position as a governing body in dealing with outside organisations.

Clubs that have already implemented the scheme can take advantage of the CA's Master Insurance Policy for Public Liability, and Employer's Liability, Insurance.

Under the CA Insurance Scheme, the savings in annual premium can be significant. If you would like further details, please contact Chris Hudson (Tel: 0270-820296).

Ex Epistulis Lucri Facere

A Short Story by Brian Bucknall

"To make a profit out of the post" is the motto of every Direct Marketeer. "What is a Direct Marketeer" you may ask and furthermore "what is the connection with croquet?"

Well, a Direct Marketeer is a practitioner in direct mail, commonly known as 'junk mail' of which, as we all know, there is an ever-increasing amount through our letter boxes these days. And the connection with croquet - well, read on.

Dickie Drayton was both a direct marketeer and a croquet player who for business reasons was obliged to live an inconvenient distance from the nearest croquet club. One Sunday afternoon, while he was taking a stroll through the local park, he happened to notice that new all-weather tennis courts were being constructed and the old grass courts were becoming abandoned. His thoughts were that the latter would make two excellent croquet lawns, so a few days later he paid a visit to the local Council.

To his pleasant surprise, the Council readily agreed to provide initial support but its continuation would be subject to Dickie being able to establish a club of at least 50 people within two years. Otherwise,

it wouldn't be fair to the ratepayers, they said.

Dickie was able to gather a nucleus of people to start the club and some advertising produced a few more, but by the beginning of the second year he was still 30 short of the target.

He therefore decided to try direct mail as a means to recruit new members. He was fortunate in being able to have the use of all the latest facilities and techniques at his place of work.

His plan was to have two open days on successive Saturdays and to invite potential members to one of these days. The visitors would be able to play some golf croquet and see a demonstration of association croquet. If they were at all interested he would sign them up as members.

He calculated that about half of those attending would join and therefore he would need 60 attendees. On the basis of a 5% response to his letter of invitation he would therefore need to send out 1200 letters. The question, then, was where to send them.

Now the reason for the growth of direct mail, apart from some encouragement by the Post Office, is quite simply the availability of computers, computer readable



'What do you mean by this?'

address lists, and laser printers.

Computers and associated lists enable potential customers to be located and categorised in terms of 'propensity to purchase'. For example, electoral rolls are now available on computer readable tape. Matching these addresses against computer readable area census statistics enables the marketeer to select postcode areas likely to give the best possible return. Dickie Drayton decided to select only the AB social class, that is the better off income group, as being the most likely to be interested in croquet. His computer was thus instructed to address letters to all residents in those postcode areas which contained a high proportion of the AB social class.

Now the combination of computers and laser printers provides another effective tool - that is the personalisation and high quality printing of the letter itself.

This technique has been shown to generate a higher response than an impersonal circular. Since the electoral roll contains the address, the surname, and the first name in that order, the computer can be programmed to construct a letter beginning with, for example, 'Mr and Mrs Edward Smith', followed by their address and the salutation 'Dear Mr and Mrs Smith'. In the case of a single gentleman, the letter would start with Edward Smith, Esq, and so on.

Dickie Drayton constructed a suitable letter of invitation but before he mailed the 1200 he carried out a small test run, to check both the effectiveness of the letter and the level of response. This produced results in line with expectations and

therefore he then went ahead with his bulk mailing and arranged for his members to be available for the open days.

On the first Saturday 30 people turned up, of whom 16 signed for membership. He needed another 14 to reach the target.

The second Saturday was less promising. By three o'clock only 10 people had arrived, of whom 6 had signed up. He was still 8 short. He began to look worried.

At half past three he was seated at a table with his head down checking the membership list when he was startled by a deep female voice saying 'Mr Drayton?' He looked up and saw a nun in a black habit towering over him.

'What do you mean by this? You should know better'. She handed him a letter. It was addressed to 'Mother Superior of the Convent of St Theresa, Esq' and continued 'Dear Mr Superior Mother'.

Dickie looked around for a quick means of escape. But in vain. The Mother Superior had surrounded him with about 10 of her nuns. 'In spite of this disgraceful letter', she continued, 'I've decided that croquet would be a suitable recreation for my sisters. We only live across the park and have a recreation period twice a week. We wish to join your club.'

Dickie breathed a sigh of relief. 'By all means', he said. 'We'll be delighted. We can even give you family membership. Sorry for the address mix-up. It's the computer, you know'.

CA Lawn Fees

Dear Sir,

May I, through the columns of our magazine, put forward an urgent plea for a much overdue review of the fees paid by the CA to clubs for lawn and ball hire for future CA events hosted by individual clubs.

The present rate of £6 per lawn and £2 per set of balls per day is woefully out of tune with reality. This means that for the three events this club hosted in 1990, viz the Qualifying round of the World Championships, the Junior Championships, and the CA versus under 18, the CA paid only an average of £2 per person for at least 7 hours croquet per day.

I don't know of any sport in the country which can be played so cheaply.

We are an upwardly mobile club with excellent facilities and are anxious to develop and likely to obtain extra lawns in the future. All of us wish to support the CA in every way and hope to provide a first class venue for future events. Nevertheless, at the end of the day we have to balance our books. Our membership is not large at the moment and the needs of our own members are paramount and our lawn space is much in demand.

We frequently invite local clubs and firms to play Golf Croquet as a 'fun evening' and charge £2 per person for 2 hours. This is our chief source of income other than catering and membership fees. It is relatively easy to mount and doesn't ever tax our members or use our lawn space at peak time of demand. Furthermore I understand a local croquet club charges £4 per day for green fees.

Apart from the interest and prestige afforded by hosting CA events, the cash refund I consider to be most inadequate.

Although I am writing as an individual CA member, all the Southport members I have discussed this with endorse my views, including the Club committee.

I remain, a devoted CA member, Alice E. Dawson, Hon. Secretary, Southport & Birkdale Club.

The Handicap System

Dear Sir,

David Prichard's book tells us that bisques have been around since 1870, and no doubt players have been arguing about them ever since. But this is one of the most important aspects of the game; bisques make it possible for croquet players of all abilities not only to play each other but to mix freely and to enter tournaments irrespective of handicap. Level croquet has its place - and there is plenty of it about these days - but the game will suffer if we do not keep the handicap system alive and well.

It has been creaking a bit recently for two reasons. It is easier to put

handicaps down than up; we get an increasing number of minus players, and the problem is solved by occasional increases of all handicaps by one or two. To avoid this unpopular remedy the Handicap Coordination Committee have in recent years tried to put the brake on handicap reductions. This has not worked and because of different interpretations of the Committee's guidelines by different handicappers there are now discrepancies between clubs and different parts of the country.



Play in progress at the Tyneside Schools Golf Croquet competition, held at the Gateshead Garden Festival.

The other cause for concern is that there are more and more small clubs without an experienced handicapper; more young players; more coaching. The rapidly improving player is not always recognised and so we seem to have an ever increasing number of bandits in tournaments.

Roger Wheeler's letter on the subject (page 12, September issue) is welcome and we hope that it will provoke a debate in your columns. In particular we are in agreement with his criticism of the Coordinating Committee's recommendation that level play should not be taken into account in assessing handicaps. Is there a single club handicapper who does not share our view? But the most important part of Roger's letter is his suggestion that players should keep a card.

The idea of a card has been discussed for years but argument about it will never be resolved until it has been tried. The detailed proposals in his letter deserve serious consideration from the Coordinating Committee and from all Club Handicappers. The idea has gained attraction in the last year or two because of the increasing use of Paul Hand's splendid new system for a flexible number of games in a tournament event. This can be used for level or handicap games, and involves a points score for each game depending on the difference in ranking or handicap of the two players. The system not only produces a winner of an event where not all competitors play the same

number of games, but it is also of great help to the handicapper. The Wheeler system would go even further - it would lead to an automatic adjustment in handicap where necessary.

Cheltenham Club intend to introduce such a system next year for their own members. I hope that other clubs will do the same. Club handicappers will still be needed to deal with exceptional cases, for example, the rapidly improving player, but the vast majority of handicap reductions and increases

guidance to the players and handicappers in determining handicap changes, and its introduction generally will be discussed at the next meeting of the HCC.

Roger also suggested a novel scheme for the regulation of handicaps. Like all good ideas, it has the benefit of simplicity, but also some drawbacks. It does, however, tackle the two major problems facing the handicap system, namely, the general downwards drift in handicaps that requires adjustment at regular intervals to everyone's annoyance and the difference in attitudes and actions of individual handicappers.

Martin French and I are reviewing the suggestion using the cards collected at Ipswich and, more generally, selected players' results from the past season, to see what the effect would have been, had the scheme been in operation from March. The results will be put before the next meeting of the HCC.

Bill Lamb, Chairman, HCC.

'Southwick' Club

Dear Sir,

I am writing to respond to remarks made about 'Southwick' as per the report of the CA Council Meeting on 21st April (September 'Croquet').

The question of selling some of our land is under consideration because of our financial crisis, but from the proceeds of any sale, 40% Capital Gains Tax becomes payable and the adjacent Tennis Club also has an interest. The plain facts are that:

- to go to Appeal to obtain Planning Consent would be very costly (up to £5000),
- land prices are too low for selling at the present time, and
- The Club has to survive meanwhile.

This is why we are absolutely determined and committed not only to survive but to expend our energies reviving the fortunes of the Club - maybe it will not be necessary to sell any land if we succeed!

The Club needs to be supported by everyone in the Croquet world - the CA's influence is considerable. To see in print that Steve Mulliner and John Solomon (members of our Club) said 'Southwick' was nearly dead was a nasty shock, because since then Steve and Mark Saurin have put on an exhibition game at our recruitment day, and John and Barbara Solomon have supported several events at the Club. As well, many members have worked extremely hard to get and keep new members, and I do believe we can turn the tide of our fortunes.

We are now very fortunate to have a professional acting as our Publicity Officer, and next season expect that 'Southwick' will really be on the map again.

Cont'd on page 27....

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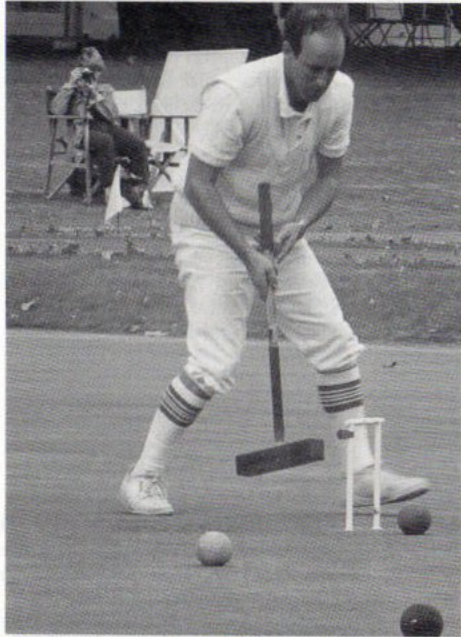
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Continental Airlines World Croquet Championship

Hurlingham: 2-9 September Hogan De-Throned by Mulliner but Title Goes To Fulford

Report by David Foulser

The format of the second World Championships, again thankfully sponsored by Continental Airlines, was different to that of 1989, in that it did not incorporate the British Open Championships. Accordingly, most places were filled by various countries' national associations selecting players but a few of the 28 slots were open to winners of



Stephen Mulliner looks as though he can't wait for the balls to stop as he beats Burridge to go through to the last four.

pre-qualifying weekend tournaments in August - two for British based players and the other for players based abroad. Thus, Jerry Guest, Phil Cordingley, Ian Burridge, Chris Clarke and Rodolphe Dourthe qualified. The latter, aged only 18, became the first Frenchman to compete in the Championships. He comes from La Rochelle and is a first year student at a horticultural College.

New Zealand's four representatives - Joe Hogan, Paul Skinley, Graham Beale and Graeme Roberts - were not their strongest quartet, as their best eight players were evenly selected for this event and the Californian Sonoma-Cutrer invitation singles where Bob Jackson, John Prince, Roger Murfitt and Steve Jones went. I believe a similar division applied to the Australians. Toru Takano again carried the Japanese flag, as did Reid Fleming for Canada, Simon Williams and Mark Saurin for Ireland, Anglo-Scots Martin Murray and Keith Aiton for Scotland as well as Jerry Stark, Teddy Prentis and Tremaine Arkley for the USA. I should particularly mention Peyton Ballenger and Carolyn Spooner who both gave good accounts of themselves and USA and Australia respectively - what a pity that more of the world's top players are not females.

The opening four days saw play divided into four blocks of seven players, with each player playing single games against the other six, and the top four players in each block proceeding through to the knock-out stage. However, although qualifying from the blocks was paramount, final position in the top 4 was also important as the winner from each block would be seeded to meet another block winner in the semi-final. Block runners-up would be seeded to meet winners of blocks other than their own at the quarter-final stage whilst third and fourth place qualifiers would remain unseeded.

This format proved very popular, as it ensured

that players who had travelled from far distant lands had time to get acclimatised to the conditions, playing out of season in some cases, overcome jetlag etc, and still have enough games to play to qualify even if they felt not at their best early-on.

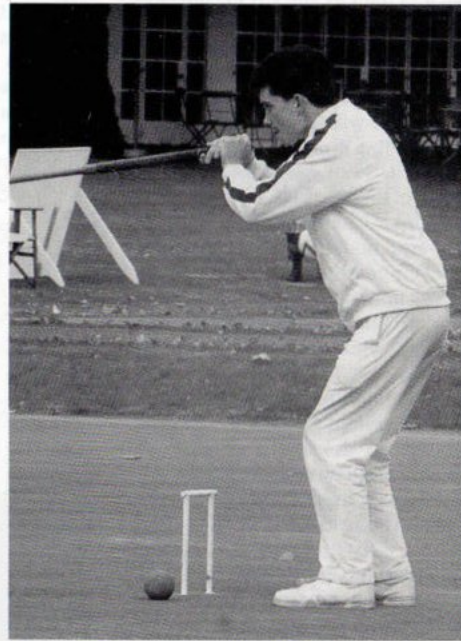
Dealing with the blocks individually, Block A saw Keith Aiton often laying up for sextuples but failing to complete any and so again failing to grace the world stage with his great talent. The Australians were determined to perform better than they had the year before, and certainly this was epitomised by George Latham who won all 6 games to become the only unbeaten player when the block stage ended. Nigel Aspinall showed glimpses of his invincible form of a decade ago, against Aiton & Prentis, whilst Guest did well to qualify, also winning 4 games along with Aspinall. Aiton & Roberts with three a piece had to play off for 4th place. Sadly Dourthe was beaten comfortably in all his games but against Aiton he managed 20 points.

Block B was not so straight forward with David Openshaw and Beale each dropping only one game, Beale being the victor in their game, but Beale surprisingly lost to the 1989 Australian Men's Singles Champion, Kenn Boal from Victoria. Kenn's results were odd in that he defeated Beale, Fleming and Murray but lost to the weaker Arkley. Murray suffered, as he often does, from early loss of confidence, causing him to miss short roquets and not too difficult hoops but he did complete a fine straight triple against Fleming.

Chris Clarke's return to form continued, losing only to Openshaw & Beale. Colin Pickering was another Australian to spoil the bookie's odds, as he played with great confidence and serenity to finish joint top of the Block C with Steve Mulliner, whom he beat +3TP in addition to other triples against Carolyn Spooner and Stark. In the process Hogan was knocked into third place with only 4 wins to become the most dangerous unseeded player in the knockout competition to follow. Hogan's game against Mulliner was critical and was started late Tuesday afternoon. Hogan's tactic was to upset Mulliner's flow by laying up for the sextuple in the third corner with opposition balls cross-wired at first hoop. It was at this point that the game was



David Openshaw fought a rear-guard action against Robert Fulford in the quarter-finals, but to no avail.



Ian Burridge, the only Welsh representative, who played above expectations to reach the last eight.

pegged down for the evening. Much to Hogan's consternation, Mulliner hit the 35 yard shot immediately on the resumption next morning and won without the Kiwi taking control again. Joe's other defeat was a marvellous +3 triumph by Carolyn Spooner who then narrowly failed to claim the scalp of Mulliner to secure a play-off for fourth place against Stark who had scored a good win over Williams. Once Mulliner missed a peg-out with his forward ball and then pegged out his partner, Carolyn showed inspired form to get a three ball break together to get round to the peg. Steve had little opportunity to shoot, as Carolyn pulled off more fine split shots and rolls to pick up another three ball break but unfortunately, miss-approached 4 back, after which Steve hit & finished.

Australia's Bruce Ford made the headlines in Block D, for having lost all his games beforehand, this Brisbane civil engineer suddenly produced a faultless performance to demolish Fulford +26TP followed by a +19 against Ian Burridge, in his last 2 games. However, those 2 achievements were insufficient to progress any further in the tournament. Saurin won the block comfortably, losing only to Burridge. The latter, who also qualified for his Hurlingham appearance by doing well at the pre-qualifying weekends, is another of the youngsters who have burst onto the international scene so quickly that many have not yet seen him. This was epitomised on the first morning when manager, Eric Solomon, asked him which country he came from, assuming him to be an overseas visitor. As the membership on the Welsh Croquet Association is small they decided against joining the World Croquet Federation on the basis that they cannot afford the membership fee, given it may only benefit one Welsh person invited to play in these Championships. However, as the lone Welshman to qualify the hard way, Burridge's play was outstanding, scoring notable wins over Skinley, Saurin and Cordingley.

On Wednesday morning the play-offs commenced and saw Fulford secure Block D's runner-up spot with a faultless TPO against Burridge. He left own balls in 2nd and 3rd corners

Continental Airlines World Croquet Championship



Jerry Stark, the first US player ever to reach the semi-finals.

and black south of the peg needing hoop 4. After failing the roll up to 4 from the contact, Burridge shot at the opposition balls in second corner giving Fulford the all round 3 ball break played comfortably on an easy paced lawn. In the only play-off to decide whether one player or the other qualified, Aiton (again - when will he learn?) lined up for the sextuple but broke down at fourth having done one peel, against Roberts. Despite being somewhat nervous Graeme won without Aiton taking croquet again. As Graeme had also beaten Aspinall 26TP in the block his final place was deserved.

The Block B play-off for top place was notable - in fact distinctly unique, as Openshaw completed a TPO on Beale - the first David had ever done in competitive top flight singles. The feat was observed with much discussion and humour by the crowd who felt neither player wanted to win, because of the technicalities of the draw to follow.

The drawback of having reserved this day for play-offs was that there were few of them so the crowd had little to watch, and play finished mid-afternoon. The Hurlingham Club had kindly offered an evening barbecue for players, officials and others but cool weather preceded by light rain forced the entertainment indoors. Nevertheless a splendid time was had by all, aided by the players having spread themselves very evenly around the tables. After the lovely food had been consumed, the Chairman of the C.A. (Steven Mulliner) gave an eloquent but short speech ending with an invitation to players or officials from each country present to speak. This lovely touch made the occasion one of a genuine feeling of being part of an international gathering. Interesting and often amusing speeches were given in turn by David Openshaw, George Latham, Graeme Roberts, Martin Murray, Simon Williams, Toru Takano, Tremaine Arkley and the President of the French C.A. Antoine Revez. The latter was in French which was enjoyed by the listeners, most of whom understood the gist of what was said, whilst Toru's speech in Japanese was probably understood by no-one, but immensely enjoyed. Tremaine's talk ended with a croquet joke

(too long to repeat here) which had everyone in great spirits. Naturally, the main and recurring theme of what was said was thanks to the Hurlingham Club for the evening, free use of the lawns for the championships, and their help in countless other ways, to Continental Airlines for their sponsorship, to the World Croquet Federation for staging it, to the English Croquet Association for their practical aid in running it, to the Manager, Eric Solomon, to the Tournament Referee Bernard Neal - who had also been the main administrator in the organising of the event - the Hurlingham groundsman for their work on the lawns, Brian Macmillan for all his background work along with his office staff and various others who helped in some way. However, the fitting climax to all this was a total tongue-in-cheek speech by William Prichard, which had everyone in fits of hysterical laughter because he gave a perfectly true and logical reason why he had no reason to thank anyone for anything. He was not playing in the championships, had paid his own ticket for the evening meal, was a Hurlingham member and so entitled as a right to use its facilities, was a Welsh player so thus not



Mark Saurin, losing finalist but a glorious display of croquet.

affiliated to the World Croquet Federation and so on, in addition to which he was pleased to see the Welsh No 5 (Burridge) through to the competition's final stages anyway - just think what the other four could have done!

Thursday morning saw the exit of the defending World Champion, beaten in straight games by Mulliner in what disappointingly was not a clash of the titans. Joe Hogan's shooting was off form so the innings changed hands barely at all. Prior to this, there had been three great gatherings of the world's best players in recent years:- 1986 British Opens, 1989 World Championships and the 1990 New Zealand Championships. As Joe had won them all there was no doubting his world number one ranking so it was a pity he wasn't at his best.

The unbeaten Latham started in the same relentless manner against Skinley, but made an unforced error near the end of the first game, allowing Paul to get into the match which he won in two straight games. Fulford despatched Guest with two effortless triples whilst Openshaw overcame Clarke with little resistance, due to his opponent seeming to have been in beaten frame of mind before their encounter had begun. Burridge recorded his best victory to date, beating Beale out on Lawn 6 away from the crowd. If he continues in this impressive fashion he may be a prime contender for a Test place in 1993.

Roberts again beat Aspinall in a single game but

being a best of three Nigel then reeled off successive triples to remind us once more that he is not yet a spent force. Although the scores were only +11 +5TP Saurin never really looked in difficulty against Boal. The best match of the last 16 round was undoubtedly that between Pickering and Stark. After total control by the Australian in the first game, the genial American giant with resplendent coloured braces shot magnificently with solid break play to steal the second game and dominate the third.

Stark was nothing short of sensational in his quarter-final against Skinley on lawn 1. After failing to approach hoop 3 in the first game, Skinley finished peg and rover, having not finished a delayed triple. He left Stark's balls in jaws of rover and 6 inches north of the peg. Stark hit the lift and took position at 3 but after Skinley missed a shot from hoop 4, Stark stuck in third. Skinley hit and laid up with the peg ball. Stark hit again but stuck in first hoop on an oppo ball. Stark again hit the long shot and went to 4-back. After the lift was missed, he went to peg with the other ball and pegged out Skinley's peg ball. Skinley missed the short lift from which Stark finished but not until he had pegged out one ball with a roll and left himself a 6 yard peg out with the other. He shot hard, even though a miss would have sent his ball to the corner where Skinley's ball lay. First game to the Californian 2 hours after Skinley had been peg and rover.

The second game was a role reversal, in which Skinley pegged out Stark whose other ball was for 4-back when he was for hoop 3. Stark got position from the lift and ran 4-back after Skinley joined up in the fourth corner. Skinley made progress with his backward ball until he failed to wire at hoop 6 from Stark's 2nd corner ball. Skinley retreated to 4th corner but Stark hit and finished on a difficult 2 ball break. A magnificent achievement both for himself and American croquet in reaching the semi-finals.

Fulford was now in top gear and thrashed Openshaw with two triples. The British captain's only opportunity over two games was early in the first when he ran the 3rd hoop too well and then missed the return roquet on a ball jammed against the 4-back wire; he was busy thinking about the choice of the next shot which was to be a difficult one.



1990 World Champion, Robert Fulford.

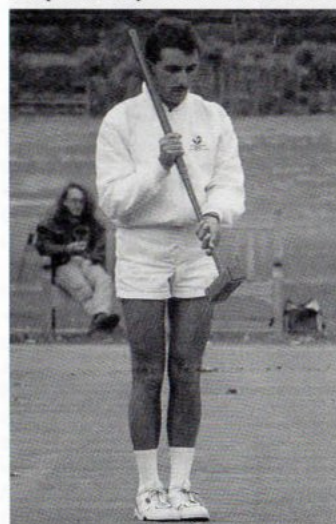
Continental Airlines World Croquet Championship

Saurin was a comfortable winner over Aspinall who made some serious errors. Burrige had good chances against Mulliner but missed a short roquet in each game towards the end of what should have been decisive breaks.

The four semi-finalists lined up on Saturday with most onlookers fancying and predicting a Mulliner against Fulford final. The script was followed early on, with Mulliner quickly round to 4-back but Saurin hit the lift but underhit a backward take off to hoop 3. As his partner ball was east of 4 it was surprising he did not scatter oppo ball towards 1 as his would have gone near partner, and Mulliner's other ball was just south of hoop 6. Instead Saurin went to middle of east boundary but Mulliner hit the 10 yarder and finished with an immaculate triple.

The second game saw some curiosities from Mulliner. Firstly, he hit the first hoop, shooting at a short double by first hoop after Saurin had failed it on the third turn. Later, he was doing a split to hoops 2 and 3 from near first corner but missed it so badly that his balls only reached peg and half way to the ball at 2, with the subsequent roquet missed. These antics saw Saurin snatch the game after hitting from 3rd to 4th corner to make a single peel break from hoop 3. The final game saw every shot hit by the Irish lad who finished with a lovely triple to knock out the favourite.

Meanwhile Fulford had taken the opening game of the other semi-final with a brilliant triple after Stark had missed a five yard roquet en route to making third hoop. Fulford gave the American a couple of chances in the next game which were well taken, especially the last break when he rolled up to 4-back from 8 yards and then from 5 yards cut a ball to penult. Despite a couple of mistakes which



Paul Skinley (New Zealand), who fell to Jerry Stark in the quarter-finals.

were unpunished, Fulford unleashed yet another triple to reach the final.

As with any management decision, there is nearly always a faction with opposing views and this was borne out in the second Continental Airlines World Championships. Players of the calibre of Robert



Fulford receives the Wimbledon Cup from Peter Yarranton, Chairman of the Sports Council.

Fulford and Mark Saurin are rarely slow, so I think a best of 5 games final should have been played. However, the Manager opted for only best of 3 games and a 10.30am start. Beautiful sunny weather saw Saurin put black to middle of east boundary followed by red being laid as a 'duffers tice' by hoop 6. Blue narrowly missed partner from B baulk into the 4th corner. The unthinkable then occurred, when Fulford not only missed his duffers tice but his yellow bounced off hoop 5 and landed near the fourth corner giving Saurin a rush to first hoop. Gratefully, Saurin made the hoop, rushed the ball to middle of east boundary, rolled them to third hoop, but did not get good rush to 2. Rushed it to boundary north of 6, took off well to second hoop, ran it about 3 yards but then had a very sweaty 6 yarder at opponent ball which was hit dead centre. Having split balls to 3 and 4, he lost concentration and missed the roquet at hoop 3. Although Fulford did not get going immediately, he soon had a ball round, followed by the inevitable triple soon after the lift was missed.

The second game started with Fulford to middle east boundary, Saurin to just outside second corner which Fulford shot at and missed. Saurin missed these balls in second corner area which Fulford then took to 4-back doing the new standard leave. Saurin's shooting was not remotely comparable with his form the previous day, so after the long lift shot from 'B' baulk was missed Fulford picked up a difficult break as the ball at peg was not easily rushable to the first hoop. He only accomplished one peel but Saurin again missed the long lift after which Fulford made the last two hoops to

give England its first World Croquet Champion.

Although there had been a lunch break between the games, the final was over by 2.15 and yet prize giving was scheduled for 4.30 so a hasty exhibition game between Joe Hogan and Jerry Stark was organised, to

keep the crowd of about 250 happy. The representatives from the Italian Croquet Association turned up for the World Croquet Federation meeting and kindly donated another 'Fun Cup' which was awarded to an astonished Toru Takano. Jerry Stark had brought back the one awarded to him last year thinking it was a perpetual trophy and realised he could now take it all the way back to the USA again.

The curtains thus drew on another highly successful world championships with Colchester's 20 year old Robert Fulford a very fine champion. He never looked in any danger of being beaten and firmly established both his British number one ranking and his standing as probably the toughest opponent one could have in world croquet terms.

I speak on behalf of all the players, officials and spectators in thanking everyone involved and to express the hope that Continental Airlines will continue their sponsorship in order that the championships can be held again next year.

RESULTS
CONTINENTAL AIRLINES 1990 WORLD CROQUET CHAMPIONSHIP (Licensed as a World Championship by the World Croquet Federation)

Block A
6 wins: G. Latham (Australia) bt K.M.H. Aiton (Scotland) +10, G.N. Aspinall (England) +10, R. Dourthe (France) +20, J.E. Guest (England) +26, E. Prentis (USA) +24, and G. Roberts (New Zealand) +17.
4 wins: G.N. Aspinall bt K.M.H. Aiton +26, R. Dourthe +22, J.E. Guest +13, E. Prentis +26TP; J.E. Guest bt K.M.H. Aiton +3, R. Dourthe +20, E. Prentis +3, and G. Roberts +9.
3 wins: G. Roberts bt G.N. Aspinall +26TP, R. Dourthe +20, and E. Prentis +24; K.M.H. Aiton bt R. Dourthe +6, E. Prentis +11, and G. Roberts +20.

Play-Off for 4th place
Roberts bt Aiton +16.

Block B
5 wins: G. Beale (New Zealand) bt T. Arkley (USA) +4, C.D. Clarke (England) +9, R. Fleming (Canada) +7, M. Murray (Scotland) +26, and D.K. Openshaw (England) +14; D.K. Openshaw bt T. Arkley +21, K. Boal (Australia) +10, C.D. Clarke +12, R. Fleming +17, and M. Murray +26.

4 wins: C.D. Clarke bt T. Arkley +17TP, K. Boal +17, R. Fleming +25TP, and M. Murray +15.

3 wins: K. Boal bt G. Beale +15, R. Fleming +3, and M. Murray +25.

2 wins: M. Murray bt T. Arkley +15, and R. Fleming +17STP.

1 win: T. Arkley bt K. Boal +13; R. Fleming bt T. Arkley +16.

Play-Off for 1st place
Openshaw bt Beale.

Block C
5 wins: S.N. Mulliner (England) bt J. Hogan (New Zealand) +20, Ms C. Spooner (Australia) +5, J. Stark (USA) +24TP, T. Takano (Japan) +26TP, and S. Williams (Ireland) +9; C. Pickering bt S.N. Mulliner +3TP, Ms C. Spooner +23TP, J. Stark +17TP, T. Takano +24, and S. Williams +12.

4 wins: J. Hogan bt C. Pickering +14TP, J. Stark +11TP, T. Takano +19, and S. Williams +26TP.

3 wins: J. Stark bt Ms C. Spooner +26, T. Takano +14, and S. Williams +10.

2 wins: Ms C. Spooner bt J. Hogan +3, and T. Takano +11; S. Williams bt Ms C. Spooner +18, and T. Takano +17STP.

Block D
5 wins: M.A. Saurin (Ireland) bt Miss P. Ballenger (USA) +17, P. Cordingley (England) +25, B. Ford (Australia) +25, R. Fulford (England) +14, and P. Skinley (New Zealand) +13TPO.

4 wins: I. Burrige (Wales) bt Miss P. Ballenger +14, P. Cordingley +23, M.A. Saurin +16, and P. Skinley +26; R. Fulford bt Miss P. Ballenger +17, I. Burrige +9, P. Cordingley +24TP, and P. Skinley +14.

3 wins: P. Skinley bt Miss P. Ballenger +26TP, P. Cordingley +12, and B. Ford +26TP.

2 wins: P. Cordingley bt Miss P. Ballenger +23, and B. Ford +18; B. Ford bt I. Burrige +19TP, and R. Fulford +26TP.

1 win: Miss P. Ballenger bt B. Ford +18.

Play-Off for 2nd place
Fulford bt Burrige.

FINAL KNOCKOUT
Round 1
P. Skinley (New Zealand) bt G. Latham (Australia) +6, +23; J. Stark (USA) bt C. Pickering (Australia) -7, +8, +17; R. Fulford (England) bt J.E. Guest (England) +14TP, +26TP; D.K. Openshaw (England) bt C.D. Clarke (England) +17, +15TP; S.N. Mulliner (England) bt J. Hogan (New Zealand) +13, +26TP; I. Burrige (Wales) bt G. Beale (New Zealand) +4, +26; G.N. Aspinall (England) bt G. Roberts (New Zealand) -7, +26TP, +17TP; M.A. Saurin (Ireland) bt K. Boal (Australia) +11, +5TP.

Round 2
Stark bt Skinley +2, +8; Fulford bt Openshaw +23TP, +26TP; Mulliner bt Burrige +8TP, +3; Saurin bt Aspinall +17, +5.

Semi-Finals
Fulford bt Stark +24TP, -16, +26TP; Saurin bt Mulliner -24TP, +16, +17TP.

Final
Fulford bt Saurin +26, +24TP.

Hunstanton: 3-7 September THE SPENCER-ELL TROPHY Bond keeps cool and takes the Ell

Report by Lewis Palmer

The eventual line-up for this year's third invitation eight contained only four of the initial players chosen by the selection committee. Of these, a couple should have been promoted to the Chairman's Salver at Nottingham but elected instead to make themselves unavailable in favour of the local taverns!

The remaining four places were taken from the reserve list and from the obscurity of the Selectors Weekend. The last player to be called up, Alan Sutcliffe, had only been asked at lunchtime on the previous day to replace Dan McCormick who had in turn replaced Chris Haslam in the Salver.

With the disappearance of Dan, the average age of the players exceeded 40; quite an astounding feat for an eight these days.

On the first morning of the tournament, Brian Sykes turned up with a set of weighing scales and Ian Bond staggered in with a barrel of local bitter. Brian informed all the players that in the interest of metabolic studies, they all had to weigh themselves at the beginning of the event and again at the end to see if any correlation existed between weight change, performance, amount of alcohol consumed, handicap or any other factor he could think up during the week.

The players were all given credit cards to record their weight and to keep a record of pints bought and drunk.

Now to the croquet! A quick look at the results will show that Ian Bond won the event by one game. Although this suggests a close tournament, his accurate shooting and whirlwind breaks kept him just out of reach throughout the whole week.

Using a borrowed mallet, kindly lent by Cathy French, Lewis Palmer eventually showed some consistent

form to take second place, just ahead of George Noble who, as expected, won the peeling prize with three triples.



Ian Bond (right), winner of this year's Spencer-Ell, with Richard Hilditch who finished 6th.

There now follows a day by day account of some of the more interesting games and entertaining moments during the week:

DAY 1

The only event worth reporting, apart from the glorious weather, was a triple by George against Ian Vincent in the first round. Four players finished the day on 2 wins but Ian Bond had shown how he meant to go on by remaining undefeated.

DAY 2

One of the more exciting games of the week took place in round 4 between Lewis and Bill Lamb. With Lewis languishing on 2-back and 4-back, Bill had a 2 foot rush to the peg. He played the shot gently and to the side of the peg, but a particularly vicious slope caused the ball to hit it, allowing Lewis to gain the innings. With the help of Bill's shooting deserting him for once, Lewis managed to catch up, leaving himself with a six yard peg out. He

decided to hit the shot hard but missed, sending the forward ball into hoop 3 and coming to rest about 7 yards from Bill's ball. Lewis was so

dismayed that he forgot to take his last shot and Bill hit and finished.

Ian Bond had another perfect day, ending with a victory over George, his closest rival, to lead by 2 clear games.

DAY 3

By Wednesday lunchtime, Ian Bond had completed a clean sweep in the first series with a win over Richard Hilditch. By tea he had recorded his first defeat, courtesy of Bill. However, any signs of a Bond collapse were soon quashed in round 9 with an easy win over Lewis, who at the time was in second place.

The most amusing incident of the week occurred in the last game of the day between Ian Vincent and Alan. The game was being played on lawn 3 next to the playing field and as Alan was replacing a ball on the yard-line next to the fence, a loud cry of 'NO' was heard followed by a boot projected over the fence and onto the lawn. Alan despatched the boot from whence it came with a lot more vigour than it had arrived. Unfortunately for Alan, he was dispatched by Ian shortly afterwards to put them both on 3 wins.

DAY 4

On Thursday, the weather broke sending all but the hardiest players delving into their bags for long trousers and sweaters. The only player to emerge unbeaten on the day was Alan, who beat the two second place players, Lewis and George, as well as Brian. In fact he looked quite at home in the wind and rain!

In the afternoon, the sun came out but the wind blew even harder making conditions very tricky on the patchy lawn. Ian Bond managed only 1 win during the day, including a defeat by George to keep himself and

Invitation Events

Lewis in the hunt.
Day 4 saw the only pegged down game of the week. This occurred in the afternoon match between Ian Vincent and Bill. As they both managed to lose their evening matches fairly quickly Richard, who was acting as deputy manager under Sarah Hampson insisted they finish it in the ever increasing gloom. Ian spent over 5 minutes contemplating his position and eventually shot at Bill's balls at hoop 2. Unfortunately he hit the hoop, and with Bill for 1-back and peg, he took no further part in the game.

DAY 5

The situation by the last day was clear. Lewis and George had to rely on either Alan or Richard beating Ian Bond to give them a chance of catching up. Unfortunately, Ian had other ideas and after a close victory in the morning and an easy one after lunch he had taken the trophy.

This left Lewis and George to play each other in the afternoon for second place. Ian had already beaten Richard by the time George had completed a TPO after some rather scrappy play by both players. He pegged out both balls leaving himself for 2-back and Lewis for hoop 3. With the help of a couple of 2-ball breaks and a few angled hoops, Lewis found himself for penult with a lift and George in perfect position for the same hoop. Lewis made a double of the hoop and ball, ran the hoop and took the game by 1 a few turns later.

The last round of the tournament also saw a straight triple peel by Ian Vincent against Brian to give Ian second place in the peeling competition.

The final weigh-in showed that there was no correlation between anything except that most people gained weight, probably due to the excess drinking, eating, and the lack of exercise. The only player to lose weight was Ian Bond who claimed that his normal week consisted of even less exercise!

All that remains to be said is a big thank-you to Sarah Hampson and her helpers for looking after us so well and for providing such excellent lunches, mainly with the produce from Sarah's garden.

Spencer Ell Cup: 1990	IDB	LJP	GWN	WEL	AFS	JRH	IGV	BCS	Games Won			Order
									1st	2nd	Final	
I.D. Bond		+12 +25	+8 -16	+9 -18	+12 +6	+11 +26	+3 +5	+16 -14	7	4	11	1
L.J. Palmer	-12 -25		+3 +10TP	-2 +10	+15 -12	+14 +10	+17 +15	+17 +6	5	5	10	2
G.W. Noble	-8 +16	-3 -10TP		+22TP +21	+20 -11	-16 +19	+23TP +13	+9 +25	4	5	9	3
W.E. Lamb	-9 +18	+2 -10	-22 -21		+7 +14	-5 +25	+18 +15	+6 -8	4	4	8	4
A.F. Sutcliffe	-12 -6	-15 +12	-20 +11	-7 -4		+18 -26	+10 +11	+5 +11	3	3	6	5
J.R. Hilditch	-11 -26	-14 -10	+16 -19	+5 -25	-18 +26		-12 +15	-4 +26	2	3	5	6
I.G. Vincent	-3 -5	-17 -15	-23 -13	-18 -15	-10 +4	+12 -15		+12 +10STP	2	2	4	7
B.C. Sykes	-16 +14	-17 -6	-9 -25	-6 +8	-5 -11	+4 -26	-12 -10		1	2	3	8

Bowdon: 16-19 August

THE 1990 PRESIDENT'S CUP

David Maugham a Worthy Winner

Report by Martin Murray

The influence of two other major events, the World Championship and the MacRobertson Shield, had several effects on this year's President's Cup. The World Championship was timetabled for the President's traditional time and venue at Hurlingham, so the event was staged for the first time at Bowdon, as a four-day event, Thursday to Sunday, and the MacRobertson Shield had already taken a heavy toll of the top player's available free time, so that Colin Irwin and David Openshaw were unavailable.

With Mark Avery away in America, and Nigel Aspinall, always a reluctant traveller, also unavailable, two promotions from last year's Chairman's Salver were made, David Maugham and Martin French, and two old stagers, Michael Heap and Martin Murray, made their first appearances in the event for six and five years respectively. They joined three test team players, Steve Mulliner, Mark Saurin, and the holder Robert Fulford, and the 1988 winner, Chris Clarke. Of these four, Saurin, after a disastrous Opens, had most to prove.

Before the event started, most onlookers were prepared to divide the eight into two fours, a top four consisting of Mulliner, Fulford, Maugham, and Clarke looking like providing the winner, and the remaining four being lucky to get many games off the top four. This division was emphasised by the draw, rounds, 1,2,7,8,13, and 14 containing only 'top v top' and 'bottom v. bottom' games, the other eight rounds consisting entirely of 'top v. bottom' games.

An alternative division of the players into two fours based on age was also popular, the remarkable fact being that there is an age difference of 15 years between the fourth oldest, Mulliner and the fifth oldest, Maugham. Since all but one of the 'top four' also belonged to the 'young four', the 'match' between the old and the young was expected to be rather one-sided.

Bowdon has long had a reputation for fearsomely tight hoops, and the hot weather this season led many to wonder whether the target of fourteen rounds in four days might not cause Bill Lamb, the manager, a few headaches. In the event a hefty dose of Mancunian rain made the lawns relatively easy, but the hoops remained firmly anchored in solid ground to provide a better test than is often the case at Hurlingham.

Round 1. The 'top and bottom' fours were segregated for the first two rounds, so there was immediate interest in the top two games. Fulford's win over Clarke was easy

after one Clarke mistake, but the Mulliner/Maugham contest was closer, one mistake each leaving the issue to be decided by Maugham hitting the final decisive shot. Murray beat Saurin after the latter stuck in penultimate when looking like winning, and the French/Heap contest was still unfinished when pegged down by the manager at 1.15.



The President's Cup players (L to R): Back row: Chris Clarke, Martin Murray, Mark Saurin, and Michael Heap. Front: Robert Fulford, David Maugham, Stephen Mulliner, and Martin French.

Round 2. Fulford/Maugham was the top match here, and again a single mistake by Fulford, sending a 25 yard roll to fourth off the lawn (on a waterlogged court!) was recovered by his hitting the long lift shot after Maugham had gone to 4-back. Clarke beat Mulliner and Saurin beat French, but the Heap/Murray game was pegged down at 4.15 after Murray had pegged out two balls to leave penult versus first.

Round 3. With the 'top' four now playing the 'bottom' four, play speeded up somewhat, with wins for all the 'top' four, including

particularly good triples from Fulford and Maugham.

Round 4. Fulford, Clarke, and Maugham carried on their winning ways, but Mulliner got bogged down in a slow game with French which was pegged down as the light faded. Fortunately time was available for Murray to win his pegged-down game with Heap, where Heap had an

excellent chance with a two-ball break but failed at five. So the first day ended with Fulford unbeaten, Maugham and Clarke only one win behind, and French, with two pegged-down games, the only player without a win.

Round 5. A major upset here in French's win over Fulford, coming from two missed 8-yarders by Fulford, excellent shooting by French, and a careful triple to complete the victory. Maugham, Mulliner and Clarke caught up with wins over the rest of the 'bottom' four.

Round 6. French's win obviously

gave him confidence, as he followed with a second triple, against Clarke. Triples also for Maugham and Fulford, Mulliner only managing a +26 against Saurin.

Round 7. The important game here was between Fulford and Mulliner, a mistake by Mulliner on the fourth turn giving Fulford the opportunity to win with a seventh turn triple. Maugham kept level by beating Clarke.

Round 8. The repeats of the first round again saw wins for Fulford and Maugham, Fulford's being another easy +26TP. Maugham's following a failed TPO from Mulliner. The second day had seen much quicker play, and French's two pegged down games were also completed bringing him up to 3rd equal with Clarke behind Maugham and Fulford, both with seven out of eight.

Round 9. Saturday dawned to beautiful bright sunshine, but the soaking the lawns had had in the previous two days meant that they stayed slow and easy. The first surprise was French's second win over Fulford, one mistake from Fulford after hitting the 7th turn lift shot (a big split-shot went off) allowing French to complete an 8th turn triple. Maugham took the lead by beating Saurin, and Murray won an awful pegged-out game against a very unhappy Clarke.

Round 10. Fulford kept up the pressure by an easy +26TP against Saurin, and Maugham also completed a triple after French, distracted by another game, forgot to run 1-back! He constructed an apparently adequate leave, but Maugham hit the 20-yarder. Murray and Mulliner had a very entertaining game, Murray making an excellent attempt at a straight triple using the now rarely seen cannon of the peelee from 4-back to penultimate. This almost landed in the jaws! but the subsequent Irish peel was too firm, and he laid up for rover and peg. Mulliner hit the short lift, went to

4-back, but left an 8-yard lift shot. Murray hit with the peg ball and laid up, whereupon Mulliner announced he would hit yellow and finish in 20 minutes. In fact he hit red (which was wired!) and took 23 minutes to finish his triple.

Round 11. Maugham did another triple to beat Murray who could not profit from some good shooting, and Fulford failed his triple by rushing into the back of rover instead of to the peg. Heap got one ball to the peg before Fulford hit. Wins for Mulliner and Clarke completed a good round for the 'top' four, who now, for the first time, held the top four positions.

Round 12. Maugham and Fulford had easy wins with triples, and French moved up to third equal as Mulliner lost to a triple from an apparently revived Saurin, who recovered some of his lost shooting ability. Again the day had seen four rounds completed without difficulty.

Round 13. The highlight here of course was the Fulford/Maugham game, which Fulford had to win to prevent a Maugham victory. Fulford laid an 11-yard duffer tice, which Maugham missed, but he hit the peg. Fulford hit but failed to get going, luckily cross-wired Maugham balls, and laid up about 9 yards apart. After Maugham's wide join Fulford rushed his ball near enough to 1st hoop to make it and then get to 4-back. Maugham missed the lift quite badly (about 6 inches).

Fulford's delayed triple ran into trouble after 6, as he failed a rush peel at 4-back and so had no pioneer at 2-back, where he then broke down. Maugham went to 4-back, Fulford missed the long lift by a whisker, but Maugham's triple also got into trouble, when an attempted Irish peel at penultimate left him unable to hit anything. This left Fulford for 2-back and penultimate, and he finished in that turn with a good half-jump at rover with no getaway ball. This left Maugham and Fulford each with 10/12, and everything depending on the last round.

Round 14. The two deciding games were on adjacent lawns, and Mulliner very quickly disposed of Fulford, who never took croquet as Mulliner finished with a typically confident triple. The Maugham/Clarke game had started later, and Maugham was playing much more slowly and nervously than previously, but he managed to keep sufficient control to complete his triple and join the select few who have won the event on their first appearance.

There is no doubt that Maugham was a very worthy winner of the event, and he and Fulford both played an extremely high standard of croquet throughout. Maybe Fulford could claim to have been slightly unlucky to find French in such good

form in both the games they played, and certainly Maugham can be grateful to both French and Mulliner for their contributions to Fulford's downfall. Without any statistics to back me up, I had the impression that Maugham's shooting was slightly better than Fulford's over the 14 games, and certainly Maugham's ability to rush balls at 5-6 yards, and run hoops (which were very tight) form 1-2 yards made his overall game very strong indeed.

The other notable performance was that of French, who surprised many by coming equal third, with Mulliner, on his first appearance. His two triples against Fulford displayed very steady nerves, and with two more triples he showed that he really belongs in the event. He has the essential quality for invitation events of persistence, which enables him to keep going, and winning, when others get disheartened by defeats or poor performances. The obvious contrast is with Clarke, whose place he effectively 'stole', who has far more natural ability, but who so often fails to do himself justice. Heap shares French's ability to keep going

when there is no obvious reason to, but both Saurin and Murray had periods when they believed defeat to be more likely than victory. There is no surer way to lose!

Of the predictions of the 'top' and 'bottom' fours, French's performance obviously upset those, but the 'top' still beat the 'bottom' by 25 to 7, French supplying 5 of those. The youngsters were about as successful as expected, winning 20 to 12, so with Maugham and Fulford leaving the junior squad after this year, this should be the best chance for the annual match for several years.

The risk taken in planning the event over four days turned out to be no risk at all, though things might have been different if the rain had held off. In the end the last game finished about 1pm on Sunday, which would have left plenty of time for a play-off, but was slightly embarrassing when the representatives of the sponsors, Pilkington Glass, turned up about 3pm for the prize-giving!

Three pegged-down games on the first day might seem excessive, but

two of these had only had about 2 hours play, and these two could have been avoided if the first slow game had been pegged down earlier. Alternatively, a better strategy might have been to plan for a 3,4,4,3 split of the 14 games over the four days, instead of the 4,4,4,2 which was (nearly) achieved. Certainly the four day plan requires a manager to run it; Bill Lamb did an excellent job.

Bowdon proved a perfect choice for the venue, and the enthusiasm and interest of the club members added to the event. After such a warm summer the lawns were in superb shape, it was just a pity that the rain made them a little too slow to be a real test, despite the hoops having been very well set by Colin Irwin. With the World Championship likely to be held at Hurlingham again in 1991, it looks likely that the President's Cup will again be a four-day weekend, and with the increasing demands on players' free time from international events, that is probably the only way of ensuring a continued high standard of participation in it.

Reflections

Reflections on Croquet in England

Reflections on Croquet in England

From Michael Hornby

Margaret and I found ourselves unexpectedly in England at the end of July with three months and nothing to do. So in true Australian tradition we bought a Camper-Van (for resale later) and set off on the croquet trail.

We had no idea how to enter competition but with the help of Brian Macmillan, the CA Secretary, we began rolling.

Our first tournament was the Cheltenham five day in September in which, with the fortunate help of Dab Wheeler, we secured an entry.

Next we went to the 'South of England' at Eastbourne which we managed to scrape into at the last moment. Here, by chance, we met Kit and Gwen Miles (Kit being President of the Australian CA).

Whilst at Eastbourne, we were lucky enough to befriend Brian and Jill MacDiarmid and Derek Caporn. Ian explained about short croquet and the Woking short croquet weekend. I became extremely interested because of the lack of space in our Perth Club.

At Woking I learnt that short croquet was certainly a good option for a Club with little space and too many members. Doubles being as enjoyable as singles.

The only criticism I have is with the handicap system. If a high bisquer plays a middle range player the higher is given five bisques and the lower two bisques - I felt, and so did

many others, that the hoops were loaded in favour of the better player with two bisques. But this is a small point in an enjoyable game.

My impression throughout the tournament was that England is way ahead in many aspects of the game.

The first and most important is the number of games played at a tournament. You always had at least three games a day, win or lose, over the whole period of the event. This was tremendous, and made going to tournaments worth the effort, however difficult it was.

The next great advantage is that you are able in tournaments to play against much lower bisquers than yourself, and you are not limited to playing people about your own grade.

The Woking greens I found fast. Some members thought them slow. The grass is cut much shorter than with us. The hoops are much firmer, as I learnt to my cost.

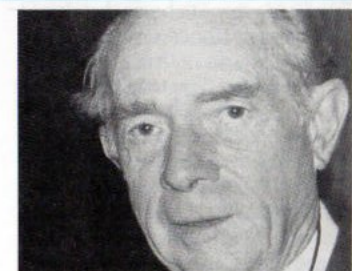
The standard of play was much higher. Kit Miles my fellow Australian, whom I mentioned earlier, thought that the average difference was about 4 (i.e. a -1 Oz player would be about +3 in England). I understand that New Zealand has come to agreement with G.B. that two bisques should be added to the N.Z. player's handicap!

Another impression was that the average age of the English player is much lower than the Australian player. At Woking the over 60's were

Reflections

Reflections on Croquet in England

Reflections



Kit Miles, President of the Australian Croquet Association.

In a small minority! In W. Australia the under 50's would be so. At the Southern England Championship competitors were nearly all under 30. Talking to these young players who were the best in England, they said they now fear they are going to be beaten by the 16 year old schoolboys!

I was amazed the number of players who either have been to Australia, were going there, or had relatives there. I never realized how close the Australian connection was or how much the English regarded Australia with affection.

As Margaret and I are about to go home we will remember with pleasure all the kindness we received from people of Budleigh, Cheltenham, Eastbourne and Woking. We don't know how to express our thanks.

May I also give thanks to that doyen of English Croquet Derek Caporn.

As for the Woking Ladies, who provide a three course dinner at the club for their CA events, my admiration goes beyond the threshold of human expression.

Tournament Reports

Edinburgh: 13-18 August Don't all rush at once!

Report by Terry Greenwood

Introduction to Edingburgh

What a delightful way to spend a week. Playing croquet in one of the most beautiful cities in Europe, where high quality food is available at prices within the reach of all tournament players. It is a toss up which city, Glasgow or Edinburgh, serves the best fish and chips in the UK but if your taste is for an exotic eastern flavour, then look no farther than the Tandoori near Broughton Street close to the Castle. If you like the traditional carved meats, including venison, then try the Lauriston Farm Restaurant which has class and style. If you favour the pub atmosphere, then the Peacock at Newhaven has a lot to offer and, for those with a fishy taste, The Ship Inn by Lieth docks will suit your requirements.

For many, an evening is not complete without a drink of beer or a short, and these can be found in one of the many traditional pubs that once dominated the local English community but have sadly been replaced by modern-style rooms where the brewers insist that every one likes juke boxes, fruit machines and aerated liquids. One such traditional-type pub is Smithies, where Calodonian 80 and Thrixton 70 provide smooth beers that do not give you heartburn or that bloated feeling, and this can be supplemented by a true single malt with a gentle splash of vodka.

Where does the croquet fit in? It so happens that in between the Edinburgh nights are long stretches of daylight which can be made more pleasurable by playing croquet. These hours are made even more enjoyable by the Scottish hospitality and humour which eliminates that intensity that shows through at many of the English tournaments but still allows the competitive element to remain.

Setting the Scene

Any tournament in Scotland would not be complete without the likes of Rod Williams, a Welshman by voice, upbringing, and education but a born Scot noted by the all familiar tartan cap which must represent some obscure Welsh clan. Then there is Corla van what's her name, reckoned to be the best Dutch croquet player ever produced. The man whose face is full of Scottish character, Allan Ramsey, or those veteran ladies who remain young at heart, Mona Wright and Grace Clark.

The international flavour of the festival was also evident with Anglo Kiwis in the form of the quiet Bob Fewtrell and his bubbling wife Faith, Anita Quin an exile in Geneva with Colin Dinwoodie whose croquet career has been interrupted by an enforced stay in Paris. Also, a big welcome back to the player who took the four ball break to Scotland and

one of the yesteryears stars, Roger Kemp, who tends to enjoy running up down the mountains of Scotland as a pastime these days.

The weather on the Monday was bright and sunny but thankfully not the scorching temperatures of England. However, due to some early successes by the English, the committee completed an ancient reel that is practised in times of drought in an effort to wash the English off the lawns on Wednesday and Thursday. It did not work. We



Bob and Faith Fewtrell.

English are not soft, we had secretly frown up the rubber brooms from Southport. Another reel was danced, this time an ancient Pict God was summoned to send forth high winds on the Friday. Whilst it moved stationary balls and twisted swinging mallets, we English battled on. Thoroughly defeated and to save their face, the committee called up a glorious day for the Saturday finals.

The Edinburgh Cup

The unrestricted handicap event with its X event in knock-out form was started on time. Whilst many of us, 'stood and stared, building castles in the air' Corla van Griethuyson and Rod Williams kept their feet firmly on both the dry and the water-logged lawns. Corla van G demonstrated some fine technique in parts and allied with fierce determination (you could tell by the look on her face) and R. Williams, who produced Aiton like precision croquet, made the finals. This final was full of expectancy, with the Glasgow pair in a master and pupil situation. Perhaps, in athletic terms, Williams had peaked too soon but whatever the reason, C van Gran out an easy winner.

One upset worth noting was the win of +2 by Faith Fewtrell over Scottish sage, Ian Wright. Most popular reasons banded about for this included the distraction of a material in Faith's skirt that turned transparent in bright light, her Mulliner-like approach to the game, or the Australian-like voice that made Ian think of missing Neighbours.

Milner Trophy

This is for those who were unsuccessful in the X event of the unrestricted handicap event and a Swiss event was used which provided hope for those inconsistent competitors with handicaps of 2 and 3. Whilst they started well enough, it soon became evident that the gentle and not so gentle sloping lawns which became rather wet were ideal for the higher bisquer with his armament of bisques and uncomplicated version of the game.

of 2 points.

The drying wind and worm casts had made reading the pace of the lawn difficult. Both finalists showed some uncertainty on rushes and hoop approaches, but as O'Connell's confidence grew, so did his lead. Thompson remained cool, never losing his style, and eventually his hitting in and smooth silky play gave a close victory.

I.H. Wright Trophy

One block for 4+ handicaps in Advanced play drew an all Scotland flavour and it was apparent that more practice in this form of play was required. Here we have a good case for L. Wharrad's pursuance of Advanced Bisque games. My money would have favoured Manager M. Smith but his hot and cold form gave way to the more consistent form of F. Mann.

Silver Jubilee Salver

Whilst several of this group (handicaps of 8 or over) had made good progress against their peers on the wet lawns, the latter stages of this competition gave them a reminder that with fewer bisques, they would be subjected to the problems of their peers. Several matches ran to time with less than the normal 26 points in a game.

B. Townsend and B. Fewtrell won Block A, and their opponents from Block B were R. Owen and R. Forth. Townsend, who had been giving a good account of himself all week, won through to meet B. Fewtrell in the final. Townsend had won +12 in the Block encounter but a more determined Fewtrell was evident in the final. However, he appeared to be more determined to clang hoops rather than run them and never took the advantage of a less than sure opponent to lose +1 on time.

Walter B. Laing Cup

This event, for those with a handicap of 11 or over, always contains the new hopefuls and those established players who play for the fun of it; here we can reflect on the mistakes we made, such as joining up in the middle. Faith Fewtrell, who had turned over some lower handicap players, ('didn't she beat Ian and Roy') was an early victim and in an event of 66% ladies, it was left to N. Gardner and T. Mann to save the faces of the men. At the start, long hit-ins followed by those simple misses of a short distance were a feature.

However, once Gardner had lit his pipe filled with his Balkan mixture, he settled down to an easy win. The Y section of this event saw F. Fewtrell determined to make amends and an equally resolute Anita Quin. From my distant stance (and who could blame me), a long and drawn out battle was observed. Thankfully, hands were shaken at the end, as Fewtrell took the match +5

on time. When both players looked set for a run, a simple mistake or a good hit-in put the move back to square 1.

Norton/Wright Trophy

The handicap doubles event always creates interest on finals day and this was no exception. The Williams/Murdoch pairing looked strong and the only duo to give them opposition was C. van G and Townsend. A close +5 result for Williams/Murdoch could have gone the other way but perhaps the difficulty of Hoop 4 for Townsend may have been the deciding factor.

The Greenwood/Weaver pairing found their passage to the final more difficult. Against the very competent duo of Mann and Gardner, who were aided and abetted by bisques, the end game was reminiscent of the Gunfight at the O.K. Coral. When Weaver was left to shoot from the boundary at either the Gardner ball on and near the peg awaiting that gentle tap, or the peg. He will not tell me if he aimed at the middle space but a +1 victory went in favour of Greenwood/Weaver.

For technical merit, the final got 10/10; for excitement it fell lower down the table, as Greenwood/Weaver clamped on any danger. A typical Williams run raised hopes but Murdoch's failure to utilise the bisques allowed the opponents a much easier win than expected.

Quotes of the Week

F. Mann in doubles against Greenwood and Weaver. (Greenwood, Mann and Weaver are on the peg. N. Gardner is on rover.)

'The Match would be more interesting if you let my partner get on the peg.'

Faith Fewtrell to Manager M. Smith. (Fewtrell is playing and Smith is about to start and double bank the lawn.)

'Malcolm, this is a very important match and as yours is not so important, would you please play on another lawn.'

Shot of the Week

M. O'Connell.

Runs 3 back from three to four yards and goes to boundary. Turns round and then shoots 35 yards up the lawn to corner 2 and scores hit on his opponent and promotes a match winning position.

Epilogue

A scoop by Ian Wright, who persuaded the Chairman of the Edinburgh Council's Leisure Service Committee to visit the tournament and present the prizes. The Chairman promised to pursue with vigour the improvements and expansion of the Edinburgh lawns at Lauriston Castle. If this becomes a reality, then Edinburgh would have one of the most attractive venues in the UK: five lawns, with a

Tournament Reports

Southwick: 13-18 August If your name's Michael, you're a bandit!

Report by Hamish Hall

Although not an old hand on the croquet circuit, I have a certain anticipated pleasure in knowing that tournaments will provide another chance to meet again some friends in a challenge of skills. But one of the characters whom I sadly missed at Southwick was George Pearse, the one-armed pool champion of ... I believe it was Chicago... and who died last winter. He played no mean game off a handicap just into double figures. Each time we met we discussed staging a three armed/legged doubles challenge. Perhaps anyone eligible for such an event might like to write to me.

But as old friends depart, so new ones arrive on the scene - and I refer to two unmitigated bandits, both of whom provided collaborative evidence that croquet is fun - providing you didn't have the misfortune to play either! Cliff Jones, who has only been playing for just a year and has come down from 18 to 8 during this time, caught two handicappers' eyes on Day 1 and had to play off 7 all week. A natty dresser sporting plus fours on the cooler days and wielding with devastating accuracy his home made mallet, I found it difficult to understand how he managed to depart without further reduction.

Mentioning dress, I observed another male displaying a new fashion in what appeared to be a ladies tennis dress, causing so I am told, a frisson (that's Peter Dorke's word to describe the sensation) amongst the ladies. The upholders of proprietary dress believe that the gent should take on board

magnificent view over the Firth of Forth.

The last prize to be presented is rather unique. It is a wooden bowl and the significant date for the holder is represented by the 20p coin. It is given to the person who usually progresses the farthest in all competitions but never wins any thing. Rather like the tradition of the bride throwing the bouquet to the bridesmaid.

It became apparent why Rod Williams had tried so hard not to win other events and successfully defend this highly prized trophy when he was summoned for the second successive year to receive it.

Whilst the tournament Committee should be thanked, especially B. Townsend for his wide array of drink and his wonderful idea of the bar bill at the end of the week, a word of praise for Malcolm Smith and his managerial skills. No irate gestures, and always a sense of humour; problems of matches going to time and rain soaked lawns were non-existent for him. Best described as a mixture of Peter Dorke humour and Edgar Jackson efficiency.

Southwick's rule on circumspect dress!

Whilst in the critical mode, a word on Martin Haggerston, a young man of considerable ability playing in 'A' block where he had three wins and who met Peter Howell in the final for the Abbey Cup. But why, Martin, is it necessary for you to throw away your mallet when you miss a hit in? If you can hit every ball you go for it is not much fun for your opponent! Peter took the prize money.

Enough of this grumbling. There was an exciting finish in the final between Len Nash and John Corrie. With all four clips on the peg, John pegged one of Len's balls out, put the other in corner two and attempted to lay up with a rush from corner four. Len crept up to the peg. John's rush was ineffective and he chose to roll up to the peg, only to find that he had wired himself from Len's ball. Too bad. Len took the cup +2.

But the most entertaining game of the week was the final of the Mixed Handicap Doubles between Michael Ruggins and Beryl Irwin v Betty Weitz and Mike Llewellyn-Williams. Michael was the second bandit of the Tournament. On Day 1 he was reduced from 14 to 12. By Wednesday he was down to 10 and he left on 8. Although using his bisques very badly in the morning against Paul MacDonald in the Mens Handicap Singles final, he had too many for Paul.

Mike had an equally easy game against myself for the Scott Cup. Mike was in devastating form, being rewarded with a cut from 5 to 3½. So we had the prospect of two Goliaths both with their tails up and being partnered by two very able ladies.

I won't give you a blow by blow account. Sufficient to say that Mike had pegged out Betty but missed the peg himself! The bandit was on 5 and



Dorothy Miller, winner of the Ladies event.

Beryl's clip was on 4-back. One bisque was standing. After some breathtaking hitting in, peeling Beryl, running very good hoops, and missing short roquets all three clips were eventually on the peg. Then inexperience played its hand. Michael laid up unnecessarily near to Mike's ball. Mike's final 15 yard attempt to hit in was successful. Betty breathed a sigh of relief, as did her twin sister Pat Shine who had yet again managed so successfully her 10th Autumn Tournament. Any budding manager could serve a useful apprenticeship under Pat's tutorage. Different coloured pens readily pinpoint the results and order of play for the various events. I don't know if Pat has a patent over her methods, but others could usefully take note!



Beryl Irwin and Michael Ruggins, losing finalists in the Doubles.

Tournament Reports

Parkstone: 27 Aug-1 Sept A Green and Pleasant Land

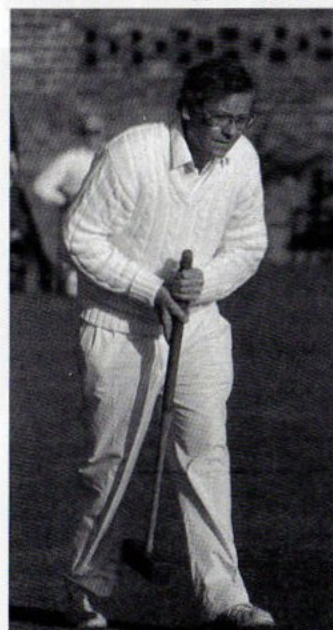
Report by Margaret Green

Having had a successful and enjoyable tournament last year we decided to return again to Parkstone's 'green and pleasant land'. The five lawns had been watered each night by the efficient sprinkler, which takes the water from an underground spring. The notorious 'cage', number six lawn, which is also used for tennis, had however suffered from the drought, and its surface had endured the ravages of the tennis players. Although the lawn in the 'cage' was better than last year, there is still work to be done to bring it up to standard. A groan emitted each time someone was allotted the dreaded 'cage'.

There is always a very warm welcome for visitors to Parkstone, and this is borne out by the number of players that return each year. But what happened to Terry Wood who won the huge Bournemouth Bowl year after year? The tournament started on Bank Holiday Monday, but the crowds seemed to prefer the panoramic Poole Bar, either swimming, surfing or boating, leaving us in the quiet oasis of the croquet club.

In the pleasant comfortable pavilion we had appetising lunches and teas. The mouth watering deserts were made by the lady club members. They would put a good restaurant sweet trolley to shame. Even one of their milkmen came up trumps and added to the wonderful variety.

The tournament was successfully managed by Les Butler in his amiable way, backed up by Margaret McMordie, Secretary, and Allen Parker, Tournament Referee. There were eight referees, so no time was wasted or energy expended



Duncan Hector playing for Letchworth in the final of last year's Longman Cup.

searching for someone to testify the validity of a stroke, and for minor problems there were three umpires. Added to this competent group, two further CA members qualified for their referee badges during the tournament week. They were Dr Strat Liddiard and Mr John Haslam.

In the X Doubles quarter finals, John Packer, partnered by Dulcie Birrell, pegged out his opponent and accidentally pegged himself out too! Black was still to make 1-back. Yellow to make Rover. Yellow after making rover had four tries at pegging out, but Dulcie had some consolation for their defeat in gaining her bronze medal during the tournament.

Their opponents Frank Shergold and Beryl Saunders went on to play and win the X Doubles. Both are Parkstone members. In the final they played Dennis and Eileen Shaw, who had had a narrow win against Peter Trimmer and Les Butler in their semi-final. Dennis wired one of his opponent's balls in a hoop when time was called and Dennis and Eileen went on to finish the game plus one on time.

It is always a game worth watching when Dennis & Eileen team up together. Eileen, a seventeen handicapper who seldom plays, can be guaranteed to do a spectacular roquet, especially when told to hit the ball thirty yards off the court. In the final, Dennis put up an excellent exhibition of his skills. He successfully cannoned a partner peel while taking off to the opponents' balls, although the second time he tried this difficult manoeuvre it was a disaster.

Perhaps the greatest catalogue of errors was made by Brian Lewis from Southport in the Y Doubles. After running hoop 6, Brian missed a short roquet. He then took a bisque and rushed the roqueted ball to the boundary. As he positioned for 1-back, his partner intervened and told him that he hadn't yet made hoop six! He accepted this guidance and approached hoop 6 again, but lost position in the approach stroke. He placed his clip on number six hoop and then the opponent told him that his clip was on the wrong hoop as it should have been on 1-back. He ended the sequence with a rather forceful scatter shot!

RESULTS

Bournemouth Bowl
(Advanced Play, 2 blocks. 11 entries)

Play-Off
D.W. Shaw bt D. Charsley-Thomas +4(T).

Deshon Cup
(Level Play, 2 blocks. 4-8 bisques. 12 entries)

Play-Off
P. Trimmer bt J.A. Packer +24.

Hasle Salver
(Handicap Play, 2 blocks. 9 or more bisques. 10 entries)

Play-Off
Mrs F.A. Fewtrell bt Mrs M.E. Rumsey +3(T).

Halse Cup
(Handicap Singles. Knock-out. 31 entries)

Semi-Finals
Mrs B.R. Saunders (5½) bt B.L. Lewis (12) +5(T); Dr D. Guban (4½) bt R.S. Eades (2) +5.

Final
Mrs Saunders bt Dr Guban +19.

Bishop Cup
(Handicap Play. Swiss)

Winner:
P. Trimmer (4 wins).

Autumn Doubles Cups
(Handicap Doubles. 16 pairs entered)

Semi-Finals
D.W. & Mrs Shaw bt L.S. Butler & P. Trimmer +1(T); F.L. Shergold & Mrs B.R. Saunders bt J.A. Packer & Mrs D. Birrell +6.

Final
Shergold & Mrs Saunders bt Mr & Mrs Shaw +10.

Nottingham: 6-11 Aug Brian Hallam Wins Gold Cup

Report by the Haslam Family

If you take testing lawns, excellent company, good food and drink, a well managed event and mix with hot, sunny days then you have the Nottingham August week. Under such favourable conditions the standard of croquet had to be good - and it was. Six events for 42 players kept virtually everybody busy all week. It was heartening to have overseas players entering - Sonya Stevens from New Zealand and Richard Meacock from Australia - and encouraging to see so many young ladies playing.

Event 1 was the Robin Hood Gold Cup which was run as a Swiss for the first 6 rounds and then for the undefeated - as a knock-out. The final was a cliff-hanger between Brian Hallam and Sonya Stevens who tried to gain maximum points as time was called by pegging her own ball out - and removing it from the lawn - forgetting the difference in the peg out law between handicap and Advanced play. Brian didn't and so won +1 on time - it was that close.

In the early rounds of the 'A' Class process there were good wins for Steve Comish, Dan McCormick and Chris Haslam, all beating Mike

Stephens, Paul Smith and John Portwood respectively by +26 - Haslam with a triple as an answer to Portwood's theory!

In the draw, Mike Stevens beat Dan McCormick +7 with an excellent TPO; Dan shouldn't clang Hoop 5 from 18 inches straight in front with a break laid out! Also in the draw, Steve Comish and Chris Haslam had a sweaty 3 ball ending after Chris had pegged out one of Steve's balls. Chris was on 4-back and peg, Steve on 2-back alone. After a long period of very close misses, Steve hit his last shot when Chris was laid up with a rush to the peg to finish! Steve played



Anthony Miller partnered Barbara Haslam to win the Doubles at Nottingham.

a well controlled break under pressure to finish +2. In the final of the draw, Steve beat Mike Stevens, and Chris Haslam beat Andrew Saurin in the process. Andrew played some very good croquet but unfortunately had to leave on the Friday, relinquishing a leading place in the main event.

The 'A' Class final was best of three - and very close-run. Steve Comish had reached penultimate and peg - Chris Haslam hit his last shot whilst on 1 and 4-back. He did 3 peels of a triple but clanged in rover. Steve hit but clanged penultimate. Chris made rover and laid up with a rush to peg. Steve hit his last shot and went to peg but couldn't make the peg out and he laid a rush. Chris hit his last shot and pegged out one ball, leaving his other ball by the peg. Unfortunately Steve missed and Chris won +2. In the second game, Chris took control and won +14 after good breaks by both players but Steve's knack of hitting his lifts deserted him at the wrong moment.

The 'B' Level Singles produced some determined play by all the entrants and the draw and process produced a final between Lawrence Whittaker and Adrian Judge - who concentrated very hard and gave no chances to Lawrence, to win by +16.

In the 'C' Class final it was ladies day as Jill Walters and Heather Pritchard won through the draw and

Cheltenham: 5-9 September Wheeler Doubles at Cheltenham

Report by Peter Darby

The Cheltenham Five Day Tournament from the 5th - 9th September had 39 entries. The format was the now traditional one of Wheeler Doubles in the morning and Level Singles Play in the afternoon, divided into four groups by handicap. An enjoyable feature of the Wheeler Doubles is that each day a player has a different partner. Partnerships are formed on Swiss principles, so that on the fifth morning the low bisquer who has had four wins is partnered by the high bisquer who had no wins, and vice versa. It thus makes it harder for a successful player to keep winning and this was borne out in practice as many games had very tight finishes. The result was that no player at all had five wins and after five rounds the four winners among the low bisquers were Bill Madams, Derek Trotman, Kismet Whittall and Norman Gooch and amongst the high bisquers the winners also with four wins were Betty Weitz, Kathy Turtle, Alex O'Connor and Barbara Sumwalt. It seemed strange for Betty and Alex to be in the high bisquers but they were both just over half way down the list of entrants in handicap order.

The Hands singles was a great success because, although divided into 4 groups initially, the successful players found themselves accruing sufficient points to enter higher groups and thereby qualifying to play on equal terms players of a lower handicap. Thus, Alex O'Connor with a handicap of 7 won her first six games and only lost to Kismet Whittall and Peter Darby. She probably would have beaten Peter if she had noticed that he had jammed her ball in the jaws of 3-back from the non-playing side. Instead she called a referee to watch the hampered hoop run and was surprised to see Peter running onto the court waving

process to meet in a tightly fought match. Heather won +5 on time.

The 'D' Class was dominated by Kevin Wells and Graham Fowler - meeting in the final of the process as well as the event final! Graham Fowler won the process by +11 and the one that really mattered +18.

As in any other doubles tournament most games were played continuously and went to time. There were some very 'interesting' partnerships and a good time was had by all - the best of all by the winners, Barbara Haslam and Anthony Miller, who were too strong a combination for Dan McCormick and Gordon Boyce, winning +19.

his arms and saying 'Good shot, but your turn ends there'. Alex duly won her section and was reduced from 7 to 5½ and, just a few days later, she was reduced to 4 having won the tournament immediately following this one. Richly deserved.

Another player to do well was Des Willetts who, although starting in the second group, soon found himself playing the first group members. He achieved a good victory over Dab Wheeler and only lost to three players who all played extremely well in the tournament namely, Alex O'Connor, Dennis Moorcraft and Chris Williams. He lost to Chris by just 3 points and as Chris went on to win the Gladstone Trophy, by winning 8 out of 9 games, this was a considerable achievement.

Chris carried all before him, only being beaten by Peter Darby and was a worthy outright winner of the Gladstone Trophy. Second was Dennis Moorcraft who won 7 out of his 9 games, only losing to Peter and Chris. Peter was lucky to play him on the first day before Dennis had acquired his magic mallet which arrived in the morning of the second day. This mallet with a slightly longer head is imbued with magic powers enabling Dennis to make consistently long roquets and to run impossible hoops. Another player with a similar mallet was Bernard Weitz and he showed a welcome return to form. He seems to have given up his habit of sticking in hoop 1 and often gets as far as 6 or 1-back before achieving this feat.

It was a pleasure to see Laurance and Debbie Latham and Debbie was second in group 2 behind Des Willetts. In group 3, Kathy Turtle who won 4 out of her 6 games was second to Alex and in group 4 Peter Mayers was outstanding in winning 7 of his games. Graham Fowler also played well in this block to win 5 out of his

8 and was runner up. Don Lenfesty received a special prize, having the next best result in group 4 and it was good to see Don playing some excellent croquet, most notably in the accuracy of his long shooting which was the despair of many an opponent.

An international flavour to the tournament was the presence of Barbara and Bob Sumwalt from America. They are now regular summer visitors to this country and we all hope that they will grace our lawns next year as well.

The Hands system seemed to be generally popular. The advantage was that you could either play one or two games in the afternoon depending on your own wishes. Many people after a hard game of doubles in the morning were content with one game of singles per day but the younger members, and particularly those who did not enter the doubles, were keen to play two games. Only one player played as many as ten games and that was Bernard Weitz who was also playing in the doubles in the mornings.

The system by its flexibility may not produce an obvious winner, for instance if one player has won 4 out of 5 and another has won 7 out of 9, there can be problems. Also the better you play at the outset the better the quality of opponent you meet towards the end. Everyone seemed to enjoy the flexibility sufficiently not to mind the slight potential disadvantage of sometimes not having a clear cut winner. As it happened all the winners in this tournament were perfectly clear cut, so there was no problem.

The tournament was managed in his usual unflappable calm manner by Peter Leach who did an immense amount of work to make the tournament as successful and enjoyable as it was.



Jeff Dawson pegs out during the Woking Triples week.

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Tournament Reports

Mallets

With Mallets Aforethought or A Balanced View of Mallets

by Martin French

Introduction

You may think that this is not the time of year to improve your play, but one constructive thing that can be done in the off-season is to look critically at your mallet. If you want to get a new mallet, or improve the feel of your present mallet, you should find the following useful.

A mallet is a very personal thing: what one player loves, another cannot get on with. However, there are some guiding principles for choosing a mallet that can be stated. Inevitably, the author's own prejudices abound in what follows!

Weight

Quoted mallet weights always refer to the complete mallet - head, shaft, and grip. In the main, mallets range from about 2lb 13oz to 3lb 5oz - garden mallets are often lighter, reflecting the use of cheaper materials. In practice, mallets can be categorised into 'light' (say 3lb) and 'heavy' (say 3lb 4oz).

A light mallet helps the player develop touch, i.e. a better judgment of pace; this is particularly of benefit on fast lawns. It enables very 'stoppy' stopshots, but makes big rolls more difficult.

A heavy mallet helps shooting accuracy, by acting as a 'good' pendulum. It does not help good stopshots, but facilitates rolls.

Personally, I would avoid mallets significantly below 2lb 15oz or over 3lb 4oz.

Size

The 'standard' head size for many years has been 9ins long with a 2 1/4in to 2 1/2in cross section. However, just as square heads have steadily replaced round mallets over the decades, the move to longer heads seems inexorable. Heads up to 12ins are no more awkward to manoeuvre, and are widely held to improve both long hitting and accurate hooping

and rushing - my own experience confirms this. To me, heads over 12ins have only novelty value; remember, size isn't everything!

In the last 5 years, the use of long heads has become established among many of the top players. I know of no-one who has tried one seriously and who then chose to revert to using a standard length head.

Greater length does allow smaller cross sections; I would suggest no skinnier than 2in square.

Balance

In many ways, this is the most important factor, and often the least considered before purchase. Test the balance on a finger - if the balance point is more than 5in or 6in up the shaft from the top of the head, the mallet will feel more like swinging a bare pole! The closer the balance point is to the head, the better the stability of the pendulum when the mallet is swung. A really well-balanced light mallet can give all the accuracy of swing of an indifferently-balanced heavy mallet. Balance is most easily altered by changing the type of shaft.

I believe it is vital that a light head is combined with a light shaft, such as ash, aluminium, or a lighter grade of hickory. Glassfibre shafts, in particular, are best suited to heavy heads. The following section elaborates.

Shaft

Shaft length depends on the height and grip of the player - I will say nothing further, save to note that it is easy to lengthen, as well as to shorten, a wooden shaft. A scarf joint can be hidden under a new grip.

Ash is very whippy, fairly strong, light and cheap. Hickory is a little less whippy, stronger, heavy and dear. Note that the density of hickory varies greatly, depending on the



Kim, only daughter of Major & Mrs Len Hawkins, of the Ramsgate Croquet Club, practising to put her future husband - Captain Robert Todd, REME - through the hoop. "They said I had to wear white for the match!"

closeness of the grain. I have weighed two similar sized hickory shafts - one weighed 15oz and the other 13 1/2oz. The greater strength of hickory means that very thin shafts of great whippiness and acceptable strength can be produced.

Aluminium tube shafts are inexpensive, but can bend. Their feel appeals to a few users but not to others. Glassfibre shafts are very whippy and strong, but are usually very heavy once the grip has been added.

Grips

Aluminium and glassfibre shafts require bulking out to provide an acceptable grip. Aluminium shafts are covered with a thick rubber grip. Glassfibre is usually built-up with quite a heavy wooden grip - bear this in mind when considering the balance of a light mallet. The wooden grip can make the shaft itself top heavy, and badly balanced.

On top of a basic wooden grip, leather, suede, rubber or towelling may be added. Rubber wears out, and can be sweaty on hot days. Towelling has a nasty habit of oozing its self-adhesive glue after a bit of use. I would steer clear of both of these!

There are plenty of good players who have a plain or varnished wooden grip; if you want to cover it, use leather or suede.

Head material

Surprisingly, one of the less important factors. Most heads are wood - it is cheap and easy to work. To resist wear from trundling balls around, plastic side pieces, or even an all-aluminium head, can be considered. Traditionally, lignum vitae made the best heads, as it was both very dense and very hard. However, supplies of good quality lignum vitae are now exhausted, and the immature timber currently available is now only really suitable for regular use if fitted with plastic faces.

So to get a robust, reliable mallet that will last a few seasons of regular use, it will need plastic faces whatever the body of the head. One possible exception is the laminated material called Permalite, but even that can sometimes delaminate if plastic faces are not applied. Given that a

wood head will carry plastic faces, it matters less what kind of wood is used - any that is reasonably tough and has the required density to give the right weight will do.

Polypropylene, polycarbonate and Tufnol are all suitable for faces. Nylon can be too hard. A slipperiness when first used in the wet soon disappears with use. Fixing the faces to the head has proved problematic for several suppliers. The most reliable now are 2-layer. The first is glued and screwed to the head, and the second is glued on the first.

Suppliers

Many of the mallet makers who have sprung up in recent years will happily make a 'bespoke' mallet, to your specification. It will inevitably be dearer than an 'off the shelf' mallet from the same supplier, but it still need not cost a great deal. Similarly, most suppliers will sell shafts, grips, and so on, so that your existing mallet can be modified.

Mallet recipes

To simplify the range of choices, the following combination of options can be recommended to a player of one or two seasons, ready to move on to tournament or club match play.

1. Light mallet - for developing touch and/or regular play on faster lawns.

Weight: 2lb 15oz to 3lb.

Head: 2 1/4in square by 11in or 12in long (9in if you really must).

Faces: Polypropylene, polycarbonate, or Tufnol (preferably 2 layer).

Shaft: Ash, or open-grained hickory (for lightness and balance).

Grip: (optional) Leather or Suede.

2. Heavy mallet - for accurate shooting and/or regular play on slower lawns.

Weight: 3lb 3oz to 3lb 4oz.

Head: 2 1/4in to 2 1/2in square by 11in or 12in long (9in optionally).

Faces: 2 layer plastic, as above.

Shaft: Hickory or Glassfibre.

Grip: (optional) Leather or Suede.

Finally, if you feel you have a rather erratic swing at present, it may be worth beginning with a well-balanced heavy mallet, and working down to a lighter mallet as your natural swing improves.

Letters to the Editor

By Allen Parker (Parkstone)

Aunt Emma Justified?

(This article appeared under 'Notes' by the Editor in the Croquet Gazette dated 2nd August, 1906. - Allen Parker)

A correspondent protests strongly against our reporter's account of the final of the Ladies' Opens at Buxton, in which the winner is described as having played 'a very careful and far from sporting game, seldom making more than one hoop at a time, and leaving Mrs Talbot no chance for one of her brilliant shots'. Our correspondent, who witnessed the match, denies the accuracy of this account, and states that Miss Taylor 'played remarkably well - not a bit of an unsporting game - made breaks, and left Mrs Talbot plenty of shots'.

We are not responsible for the opinions of the writer of the report, but we may state here our own, - viz: that there is no such thing as 'unsporting' tactics. As well might the batsman complain that the bowler has sent down an 'unplayable' ball, or the lawn tennis player that his opponent has made an untakable smash, as the croquet player that he has had no chance of bringing off one of his brilliant long shots. Every player should play the style of game that suits him best, whether that be the 'forward' game or not. Breaks, fortunately for some of us, have not yet been made compulsory.

The 'forward' game is at present the fashion; but the other game - the game, for instance, of which Mr Holland is such a deadly exponent - is a pleasant variation from the routine of break-making, and may well afford a more intellectual pleasure to the player who has mastered it. At any rate the question whether Miss Taylor made large breaks or not is not to the point. If she had gone out in two breaks and a wire, Mrs Talbot would have got fewer chances than she actually did.

We may add that the paragraph complained of would not have been passed unless we had been convinced, firstly, that the phrase 'far from sporting' was to be interpreted merely in its customary croquet sense 'devoid of risk'; and secondly, that any adverse opinion based on the paucity of Mrs Talbot's chances would carry with it its own refutation. If we were mistaken in either of these suppositions may we beg our readers to remember that the Editor has usually less than half-a-minute to decide such matters, and that it is not a light thing to tamper with what was presumably the official report of the tournament. It is unnecessary, perhaps, to add that we are extremely sorry if the report has given any offence to Miss Taylor or her friends.

Croquet in Paris

(This letter was published in the Croquet Gazette of 4th October, 1906.

The court setting referred to was similar to, though not identical with, the early court settings in vogue before the introduction in 1872 of the Hale setting with 6 hoops and two pegs. - Allen Parker)

Dear Sir,

The enclosed cutting is from an American paper which I was reading a few days ago in Paris. It may interest your readers to know that when driving with my wife in the Bois de Boulogne last Sunday, we noticed that the Parisians have developed a perfect mania for croquet. The games were being played in the pine woods on rough ground covered with pine needles, and the settings in all cases appeared to be three hoops on each side, and in the middle from the winning peg two hoops, then crossed hoops in the centre, two more hoops and the turning peg. The hoops were not less than one foot in width, and the balls and mallets were small. All kinds of people were playing, ladies and gentlemen, nurses, children and soldiers in uniform. There were no boundaries, and the trunks of pine trees seemed to form excellent natural bunkers. However, the players seemed to derive a vast amount of pleasure from the game - a happy result which we on this side of the channel endeavour to arrive at by somewhat different methods.

I am,
Yours faithfully,
Percy A. Bull.

The following is the cutting mentioned:-

Games pass over the land at intervals, some regular as the seasons, others vaguely periodic like panics and the locust. Tops, baseball and marbles may be counted upon to appear with the certainty of current months and with much the same pervasiveness from one generation to the next; but other pastimes such as hockey, tennis and croquet are more sporadic in their visits. The last named contest, exercise and relaxation has lately been restored to a popularity which

Your Letters

Cont'd from page 15....

We love hosting the Inter-Counties which brings all the top players and, as proved by Don Gaunt's questionnaire, they enjoy coming to 'Southwick'.

I ask the CA and all Croquet players to back us up - all of you can have a great influence on the future of 'Southwick', where Croquet has been played since the beginning of the Century.

Diana Brothers,
Brighton.

Early Days


escape into a world of revelry that is calm.

CROQUET PROPER

(This short poem appeared in the Croquet Gazette dated 21st November, 1907. In those days the balls were played in the sequence blue, red, black, yellow - Allen Parker.)

Crossed on vert table
Hammers of Thor,
Azure and Sable
V. Gules and Or.
'Gules upon Azure'
Opens the fray;
Be but your play sure,
Conquer you may.
Here for a week? Whence?
Sure of the rules,
Stick to the sequence
'Sable on Gules',
'Or upon Sable',
'Azure on Or';
Crossed on vert table
Hammers of Thor!

★



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Aston French, aged 15 months, practising corner cannons.

Coaches Corner

Ardingly 1990 Summer School

Report from Monica Catling

Forty-eight of us from twenty-two clubs congregated at Ardingly College on Sunday August 5th for a most enjoyable and instructive week.

Ardingly is a co-ed Day and Boarding School for boys and girls aged 7 to 18 years. It is an inspiring building with extensive playing fields and we had comfortable though small single study bedrooms in the new VIth Form block. We ate (far too much!) in the Masters' dining room and after a good hot meal on Sunday, our first night, the school chaplain took us on a very comprehensive tour of the buildings, the grounds and sports pavilions, the swimming pool, the staff houses and the large chapel and crypt. We also saw his micro light flying machine which was apt to fly over us at night during our 'Fun and

Games'. Ardingly is in a particularly lovely part of Sussex, the nearest town being Haywards Heath.

We had practice in strokes in the mornings, split up by topics and coffee, then later a problem. These all provoked much discussion and sometimes arguments but not blows. I am sure we shall all make a class players shudder when we make our breaks with 1½ bisques! Our coaches were Alan Stockwell from Vine Road Club; David Collins from Eden Park; Geoff Coker from Beckenham (always ready with tea and coffee etc.); Gordon Drake from Compton; Vincent Camroux from Dulwich; Nick Waters from Ardingly College who saw that everything at the school ran smoothly; and David Higgs from Caterham, who



The coaches at Ardingly (L to R): Vincent Camroux, Gordon Drake, Alan Stockwell, Nick Waters, David Higgs, Geoff Coker, and David Collins.



Relaxing at Ardingly between topics.

organised the summer school.

In the afternoons we played Short Croquet matches, one before and one after tea. The victor at the end of the week was Michael Beard with Margaretha Regan and Alison Thursfield as joint runners-up. The lawns were not as good as could be desired and proved to be a test of care and patience as much as anything. The following was overheard on one lawn when Colin's ball went off after a beautiful split roll.

Monica: 'That's heartbreaking.

Colin: 'I can stand the emotional stress but not the mental torture!'

After dinner we sallied forth once more and took part in 'Fun and Games'.

On Monday night we played One Ball Golf Croquet, a very fast moving game. Tuesday was Roquet Croquet. Wednesday was Pirates, when Alan was heard to say 'There's Pauline who couldn't run a hoop or roquet a ball

all day and now she isn't missing anything!' On Thursday we played One Ball Croquet (rather serious this!) and on Friday we lined up in teams and played Elimination Croquet. What a massacre!

Two afternoons were free when some visited Wakeham Place, the annexe to Kew Gardens, and others had a ride on the Bluebell Railway or took themselves off in their own cars or stayed and had another game of Croquet. At night Nick, the school chaplain, took the thirsty ones to a different pub each evening and a few members even found time for a swim in a lovely open air pool.

In all, we were a very happy party and it was not surprising to find that some people had come for the second time.

One member was heard to say at the end of the course, 'I think we can go home and have a lot to think about!' How true! Roll on next summer!

section extremely useful.

Bill explains the basic principles of break play, and how to move up from 2 to 3 to 4 ball breaks. Tactics cover the standard (and not-so-standard) openings, wiring leaves, 2 and 3 ball endings, and timed endings in just sufficient detail to make them understandable without giving too much detail to confuse the reader. All this is crisp and to the point, providing a number of useful points for consideration.

Under handicap play, he provides some excellent advice for high-bisquers when playing A class opponents, but as with every other croquet book, I felt the need for someone to do for croquet diagrams what Victor Sylvester did to choreograph ballroom dancing. For the improving player, Bill goes on to explain a variety of lift leaves in advanced play, but surprisingly draws the line at trying to explain the execution of a triple peel, referring the reader to more advanced books.

Perhaps his comment explains why. 'If you play for fun, an attempt at a TP is great fun. If you play to win, your safest course is to forget about

the TP and to take the second ball to the peg with the easiest possible break and finish with a good leave.'

My only reservations are where Bill has attempted to describe the mechanics of swing, which is a difficult thing to do in print, and has also included some thoughts on what makes each shot work - how the position of the hands affects the flexibility of the shaft, application of spin for going through hoops, and so on. Being a physicist, Bill knows about these things, but as with doctors, should the patient really be told?

In his concluding chapter, Bill comments 'Many players reach a plateau in their performance which is below their potential. In many cases, this is because their game has got into a rut, either tactically or technically, and they have not realised it. They go on playing the game in the same way, using the same strokes and the same tactics which have stood them in good stead on their way down through the handicap range. They do not appreciate that becoming a better player is not just a matter of sticking

in fewer hoops or missing fewer roquets. Good players have command of all the strokes but make the game easier for themselves by thoughtful play.

'If you have reached a plateau or want to improve more quickly, do not be afraid to ask a better player for advice after a game, whether you have won or lost. Most players are pleased to be asked, although not many will offer unsolicited advice, perhaps because advice is not always welcome. Listen to the comments of knowledgeable players when they are watching others in play and ask yourself whether they would apply to your play.'

How right he is! But, from my own experience, it does not necessarily have to be a better player than yourself to point out the error of your ways - often a (supposedly) weaker player can point out a far safer move which had completely escaped you!

All in all, I thoroughly recommend this book for the nuggets of wisdom it contains, and for its sheer readability and excellent presentation.

Himley: 29-30 September

Leicester Win Closely-fought Contest for Longman Cup

Report by Lawrence Whittaker

The last four teams in this year's Longman Cup - Bath, Wrest Park, Leicester, and Worcester - played out the final stages at Himley on the weekend 29-30 September. The Saturday - semi-final - suffered from intermittent rain throughout. Wrest Park v Bath started first and Wrest Park took both the morning doubles, with John Bevington (5½) and Paul Sharrock (12) comfortably beating Maurice Boardman (4½) and Ken Bright (6) +20, while Adrian Craxton (8) and Rodney Ward (10) held off Kay Yeoman (5) and Simon Munton (12) +4 on time.



Wrest Park's John Bevington (left) and Adrian Craxton.

In the afternoon, John Bevington and Adrian Craxton made fairly quick work of Maurice Boardman and Kay Yeoman +19 to give Wrest Park a winning lead. The singles were shared, Rodney Ward beating Ken Bright +11, and Simon Munton overcoming Paul Sharrock +10: Wrest Park 4, Bath 1.

The other semi-final was a much closer affair. For Leicester, Richard White (9), who won the All-England Handicap on the same lawns the previous weekend, and his partner, Gary Yates (11D10) made a good start against Worcester's David Coates (4) and George Dawson (16). David couldn't get going and George was stuck for some time at 4. However, the Leicester pair failed to make the most of their chances and David and George took control, winning +9. In the other morning doubles, Dave White (6½) and Richard Whiting (11) of Leicester had an interesting tussle with Roy Milner (5) and Malcolm Shepherd (5). Towards the end, Richard, attempting to take off from near 4-back to the opponents in corner 1, finished well short but in position to run Rover (his hoop). This he did, and although several mistakes followed as time approached, the point proved crucial, Leicester winning +1 on time.

In the afternoon it soon became clear that Roy Milner would be able to despatch Richard Whiting - he won

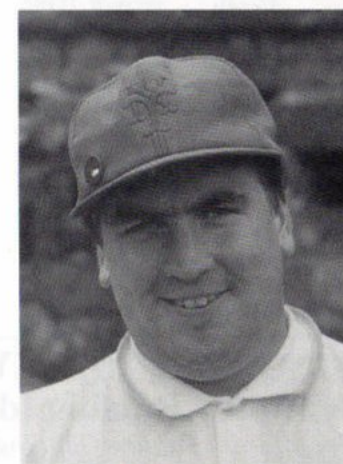
+16 - and that Gary Yates was likely to prove too strong for George Dawson (Yates won +12). So the result of this semi-final depended on an absorbing game between Leicester's White brothers and Worcester's David Coates and Malcolm Shepherd. The Worcester pair coped well with their dangerous opponents and extracted 2½ of the 3½ bisques while taking a useful lead. The Whites took their final bisque when Richard was for 3. Guided continually by Big Brother, Richard made his way nervously but flawlessly to Peg. Worcester shot and

Yates.

The afternoon doubles produced the best croquet of the weekend. John Bevington (Wrest Park) startled the White brothers on the third turn by taking his Red to 4-back, where he stuck in the jaws. Dave White shot at him from B baulk but missed, finishing near hoop 4. On the fifth turn, John completed his running of 4-back and also - somewhat riskily - made Penult. Shortly afterwards, Dave White got in and picked up a good break, going round to peg out the Red after a nice angled Rover peel going to 3-back. Adrian Craxton (Yellow) had a few shots but never took croquet as Dave again guided his brother round for a +13 win.

So Wrest Park needed to win both the singles. Paul Sharrock duly obliged, beating Gary Yates +17 without using his bisque, but Richard Whiting (Leicester) had taken an early lead, getting his first ball to Rover against Rodney Ward. Rodney fought back, however, and the gallery were in rapt attention when at 4-back and 4-back against Peg and 4-back Rodney went off in corner 2. Richard made 4-back and missed his return roquet. Rodney had several close shots at his Red in corner 2, while Richard kept the innings but made no progress. Finally, Rodney got in with two minutes left and took Yellow to peg where, time having been called, he attempted to peg it out in error. Even had he realised his mistake, he would not have been able to peel Red through 4-back from corner 2, so Richard had won +1 on time to clinch a 3-2 win for Leicester, who thus took the Longman Cup at the second attempt. The Leicester hero was Dave White who didn't lose a game throughout the competition.

The format of the weekend effectively reduced the number of rounds by one, so far as through-season timing was concerned, and produced an interesting climax for the qualifying teams. It is well worth repeating. Himley is not, however, a



Richard White (Leicester).

suitable wet weather venue and is not able to provide the kind of hospitality which an event of this kind deserves. Most contestants also considered that the CA should have ensured the presence of a manager and referee. In the circumstances, they were grateful to Keith Fennell - who arranged matters as well as he could, given that it was necessary for him to be at work for part of the weekend - to Maurice Boardman of Bath, who acted as referee on the Saturday, and to Chris Hudson, who refereed on Sunday and presented the Trophy.

NATIONAL COMPETITION RESULTS

SECRETARY'S SHIELD

(8 entries)

1st Round

Edgbaston bt Reading 5-2
Vine Road bt Parkstone 4-3

Semi-Finals

Vine Road bt Edgbaston 4-3
Bowdon bt Leicester 4-3

Final

Bowdon bt Vine Road 4-3

INTER-CLUB

(14 entries)

2nd Round

Ipswich bt Parkstone 5-1
Colchester bt Roehampton 6-1

Semi-Finals

Colchester bt Ipswich 6-1

Bowdon bt Harrow Oak 6-1

Final

Not yet played

MARY ROSE

(16 entries)

2nd Round

Bowdon bt Glasgow 4-3
Surbiton bt Himley 7-0

Roehampton bt Cheltenham 4-3

Semi-Finals

Bowdon bt Colworth 4-3
Surbiton bt Roehampton 4-3

Final

Bowdon bt Surbiton 4-3

LONGMAN CUP

(45 entries)

3rd Round

Ellesmere bt Tyneside
Leicester bt Beverley 5-0

Worcester bt Cassiobury (wo)

Ipswich bt Woking 3-2

Wrest Park bt Compton 4-1

Bear of Rodborough bt Parkstone 4-1

Bath bt Cheltenham 4-1

4th Round

Leicester bt Ellesmere 4-1

Worcester bt Hurlingham 4-1

Wrest Park bt Ipswich 4-1

Bath bt Bear of Rodborough 3-2

Semi-Finals

Leicester bt Worcester 3-2

Wrest Park bt Bath 4-1

Final

Leicester bt Wrest Park 3-2

RYDE Ryde stage two successful weekends

The first Ryde weekend tournament, held on 16-18 August, was an open event managed by Roy Newnham. Joe Jackson was the winner with Philip Kennerley as runner-up. Unfortunately, the summer drought chose to end that weekend, and although the lawns were almost unplayable on the Sunday, six rounds had been completed by Saturday evening. The weekend was a successful first 'open' weekend for the Club.

KINGTON LANGLEY A Money Raising Idea

Report from Pauline Gunning

Dennis Regan has proved a master in designing gymkana games for Kington Langley Croquet Club.



Play in progress at a Gymkhana organised by Dennis Regan at Kington Langley Croquet Club.

Six games are laid out on a half sized lawn and test croquet skills ranging from hoop running to pegging out. The degree of difficulty can be adjusted to suit the skill of players. White flags, string, and bisques indicate the outlines of each game, and hoops and pegs are used for targets. 'Run from Dover to Calais'. A channel tunnel made of hoops is a

DOWNHAM A Trio of Weekends

Report from Jonathan Toye

With the approaching end of the season, Downham Croquet Club's players have had an interesting trio of weekends. The Stow Pan was played on Saturday 25th August and won by Jonathan Toye. (The pan in question is a large, weighty utensil I discovered whilst clearing out the former game larder at Stow in which the club stores its equipment).

On the following weekend, the Champagne Knockout provided a close final between David Young and Jonathan Toye - with the latter scraping through by just four points. Hopefully, the medium sized bottle of bubbly presented to the runner up was sufficient consolation.

And on Sunday 16th September, six clubs from the region met on the billiard table lawns of Hunstanton (which were looking a trifle more

typical topical game. Playing cards adding up to a pontoon hand are represented by

tournament managed by Neil Griffin was held in fine weather over the weekend of 7-9 September. John Greenwood (Parsons Green) was the clear winner with six wins. There was a dramatic shoot out for second place, as six other competitors had four wins. Michael Llewellyn-Williams (Parsons Green) hit the peg most times and Terry Wood (Reading) was third.

As usual Ryde gave a friendly welcome and excellent food was provided by Arthur Rowlands.

squares and remind one of shove halfpenny at the fair. Players record their scores and prizes are awarded to winners.

These fun games can be eye catching events in conjunction with local fetes or 'have-a-go' sessions. They provide visual advertising and participation.

They may even show a profit!

parched than usual) for a suitable climax to the season. This was a friendly tournament and drew players from Bury, Cromer, Downham, Hunstanton, Norwich, and Soham. Teams played short croquet (i.e. six hoops rather than 12) over a one hour time limit. This provided a large number of very close finishes - generally only one hoop separating the two teams.

The eventual winners were the Soham pair, Ian Storey and Paul Day, who won all six of their matches, proving unbeatable. This is quite remarkable when one reflects that they are relative newcomers to the sport and is a tribute to the fine coaching of the late Albert Lawrance of Soham who did so much for the game.

COMPTON Ladies Day at Compton

Report from Betty Carter

Sunday June 10th saw four teams from the South East Croquet Federation meet at Compton to compete in the Ladies League (one of the events in the Calendar of the SECF).

Participants were Compton, Ramsgate, Preston Park and Havering Croquet Clubs. Extremely well managed by Denis Shaw everyone had a great day, from all the ladies many thanks Denis.

Margaret Payton and her team of ladies did us proud on the refreshments again very many thanks.

The eventual winners of the Trophy for 1990 were Havering CC. I feel however the overall winner on the day was the wonderful friendly atmosphere that emerged. A vote was taken, and thanks to the generosity of the Compton Club, the event is to be repeated annually.

NEWPORT (Essex) Successful first tournament at Newport

Report from Don Cornelius

The first handicap tournament at Newport (Essex) was held on the weekend of 23/24 June. There were 13 entries and it was played as an Egyptian which meant that with 3 lawns and double banking only one player was out at any time, including the writer who was managing the tournament and responsible for coffee and tea. In all 82 games were played over the two days, one playing 8 and three 7. Occasional rain on the Saturday and strong winds on the Sunday did not impair the enthusiasm of the players, including several home club members in their first CA tournament.

Joint winners with 5 wins out of 6 games were Mike Hammelev from Wrest Park playing off a rather high

handicap of 15 and John Farley of Newport off 10, but the lovely cut glass tankard, presented by the Club's Founder and President, John Gordon, went to Mike who had picked up a greater percentage of points from his wins.

Unfortunately the new pavilion was not ready but it is promised for early July, which should make the organisation of next year's tournaments a little easier. But all went well, with the lawns playing true and fast, and the food was excellent.

Best results were: M.A. Hammelev (15) 5 wins/6; J. Farley (10) 5/6; A.R.K. Miller (3) 5/7; C. Tattersall (11*) 4/6; W. Tapper (12*) 4/6; J.P. Goddard (6) 4/7.

POETS' CORNER Ode to Croquet

By Catherine Daniels (South Manchester Federation of Townswomens' Guilds)

Oh who would play at croquet
On Bowdon's sacred sward!
If anyone would like a game
They'd never once be bored.
The ladies of the local Guilds
Are happy to enjoy
Two hours of croquet once a week
It really is a joy!
If you want to get from here to there
Just give the ball a biff,
But if you hit another's ball
Please do not start a tiff.
Through the hoop the ball has gone.
You cheer with might and main,
Ah not so fast! the beastly ball
Has rolled right back again.
At last some person gets it through

Her bosom swells with pride.
Oh yes it's true, it's neatly through
And through the proper side.
So here's to good old croquet
Where there is fun galore
May we enjoy our happy games
For many summers more.

Ardingly

By Monica Catling

Ardingly, Ardingly,
What a course to try!
Croquet, croquet,
After all your roquet.
Coaches taught us how to rush
Also to avoid a crush
And when it came to peel
We were rushing to a meal
Or to a convenient tub
Before visiting another pub!
Sign up again next year
There's nothing to fear!
All will be fun
Even without any sun!

FUTURE ISSUES CALL FOR CLUB & FEDERATION NEWS

Issue No 213, due to be published in January 1991, will have space reserved for Federation News - details of Federation activities, Federation leagues, development work, plans for the future, etc.

Issue No 214, due to be published in March 1991, will have space reserved for Club News - achievements during last season, plans for next season, social activities, profiles of club members, liaison with

other local organisations, recruitment successes, etc.

To make these sections fully comprehensive, the Editor would welcome as many reports from Clubs and Federations as possible. Please note the deadline dates for copy: 20th November for Federation news and 20th January for Club news.

Your assistance will be most welcome!

CLUB OFFICIALS

Bush Croquet Club
Secretary: Ralph Pirrie, 12 Ivy Terrace, Edinburgh, EH11 1PQ. Tel: 031-337-6856.

New Referees
J.H. Haslam
Dr G.S. Liddiard

New Examining Referees
Dr T.J. Haste

Deaths

We regret to report the following deaths:
R.M. Morshead (Phyllis Court)
C.H. Barringer (Beverley)

Handicap Alterations

Woking: 21-23 April
M.R. Hayes 5 to 4
G. Cuttle 6 to 5

Edgbaston: 13-15 June
I. McClelland 2½ to 2

Woking: 23 June - 1 July
J. Haigh 4 to 6
Mrs I.G. McDiarmid 4½ to 3½
R. Fawcett 9 to 8
R. Hayes 3½ to 3
Mrs M.G. Tompkinson 8 to 7½
J. Smith 10 to 9

Ipswich: 18-19 August
I. Burridge ½ to 0
M. Firth 12 to 11
P. Eardley 14 to 12

Leicester: 21 August
R.K. White 16 to 14

Bowdon: 24 August - 2 September
Adrian Saurin 0 to -½
C. Haslam -½ to -1
H. Taylor 9 to 8
J. Wastell 12 to 11
D. Reekie 5 to 4

Cheltenham: 25-27 August
A. O'Connor 8 to 7
J. Sheraton-Davis 8 to 7
B. Green 7 to 6
Mrs S. Green 11 to 10
K. Hutton 6 to 5½
Mrs A. Hall 13 to 11
W. Madams 4 to 3½
D. Moorcraft 1½ to 1
P. Bristavec 9 to 8
J. de Winton 7 to 6
J. Willis 4 to 3
C. Williams 2 to 1½

Hurlingham: 25-27 August
R. Stephens 5 to 4
D. Goulding 3 to 2½
S. Allen 7 to 6

Southport: 26 August
B. Lewis 12 to 11

Hunstanton: 26-28 August
I. Storey 16 to 14
P. Day 7 to 6
N. Bircumshaw 20* to 18
J. Reeve 3½ to 4½
N. Leech 8 to 10
Mrs J. Walker 9 to 10

Parkstone: 27 August - 1 September
F.J. Exell 7 to 9
Mrs E.A. Fewtrell 14 to 12
B.L. Lewis 11D9 to 10D9
Mrs B.R. Saunders 5½ to 4½
Mrs E. Shaw 18D17 to 18D16
P. Trimmer 7 to 5½

Harrow: 1 September
P. Hanley 10 to 9
J. Bone 12 to 10
C. Wood 12 to 10

Surbiton: 1-2 September
A. Miller 3 to 2
R. Noble 13 to 10
M. Haggerston 1 to ½

Cheltenham: 1-2 September
A. Trickey 7 to 5½
L. Trickey 10 to 8
B.D. Hewitt 10D9 to 8

Budleigh Salterton: 17 September
C. Moore 18D16
D. Thompson 18D16

Colchester: 1-2 September
C. Jones 7 to 5½
N. Harris 3½ to 3

York: 1-2 September
J. Taggart 8 to 7

Cheltenham: 2 September
B. Hewitt 10 to 8

Ryde: 3 September
P. Kennerley 5½ to 4½

Dulwich: 4 September
Mrs J. Reeves 14 to 16
D. Collins 12 to 10

Mrs E.J. Derges 15D13 to 13D11
H. Gooding 19D17 to 17D15
Mrs V. Gooding 19D17 to 17D15
Mrs E. Rankin 20D17 to 18D16
H. John 29D17 to 17D15
Mrs H. John 29D17 to 19D17
Mrs M. Kinnersley 21D17 to 19D17
Mrs E. Moore 17D15 to 16D14
Hon Mrs L. Dennys 21D17 to 20D17

Cheltenham: 21-23 September
Miss A. O'Connor 5½ to 4
Mrs M. Evans 11D9 to 10D9
T. Galesworthy 10 to 8



Brian Macmillan welcomes his successor to Hurlingham. Tony Antenen took over as CA Secretary on the 1st September this year.

Cheltenham: 5-9 September
Miss A. O'Connor 7 to 5½
G. Fowler 12D10 to 10D9
M. Hornby 5 to 7
Mrs M. Hornby 14 to 16
P. Mayers 15D13 to 12D10
G. Taylor 2 to 4
Mrs K. Turtle 8 to 7
Mrs M. Warren 7 to 8
Mrs J. Paddon 7 to 8
C. Williams 1½ to 1

Budleigh Salterton: 7-9 September
I. Brand 0 to -½
A. Miller 2 to 1½

Ryde: 7-9 September
Mrs V.Y. Tompkinson 7½ to 8
Mrs J. Bonser 7 to 7½
Mrs E. Salisbury 14 to 13

Kingston Maurward: 9 September
R. Williamson 9 to 7½
J. Smith 9 to 7½

Roehampton: 10-14 September
Miss G. Curry 3½ to 3

Budleigh Salterton: 14-16 September
A.J. Waddis 8 to 7
S.D. Derges 11 to 9
G.E. Webb 7½ to 7
R.D. Webb 13 to 11
Mrs L. Taylor-Webb 6 to 5
Dr G. Yonge 7½ to 7

Nottingham: 14-16 September
J.M. Horry 9 to 8
D.M. White 7 to 6½
G. Fowler 10 to 9
R. Milner 5½ to 5
D. Carpenter 16 to 14

Guildford & Godalming: 15-16 September
J. Goddard 6 to 5
Ms C. Heritage 16 to 15

Edgbaston: 15-6 September
Miss H. Pritchard 6 to 5

Compton: 15-20 September
Mrs F. Fewtrell 12 to 11
R. Fewtrell 8 to 7½
J.K. Maguire 8 to 7
A.J. Oldham 8 to 7½
D.W. Shaw 2 to 1½
Miss D. Martin 12 to 11
W.P. Gillott 15 to 15D13
I.H. McDiarmid 8 to 7½
A.M. Hornby 7 to 6
M.J. Evenett 9 to 8

R. Goodwin 9 to 8
M. Mathews 11D9 to 10D9
Mrs L. Moorcraft 9 to 10D9

Wrest Park: 21-23 September
Mrs P. Sander 18
Mrs P. Hughes 18
J. Goddard 5 to 2½
H. Williams 9 to 7
M. Firth 11 to 9
J. Bevington 6 to 5½
J. Dyer 5 to 3
P. Day 4* to 3½
R. Atkinson 7 to 6
N. Gray 16 to 15

Woking: 22 September
T.A. Backhouse 10 to 9
R. Bell 16 to 15D13
M.R. Hayes 3 to 2½
B.M. Huxley 7½ to 7

Scottish CA: 25 September
J. Surgenor 1 to ½
R. Williams 1 to ½
D. Appleton 1 to ½

Colchester: 30 September
I. Burridge 0 to -1
C. Docherty ¼ to ½

Woking: 1 October
Mrs J.L. Wankling 18 to 16

New Associates

Welcome to....
Mrs D.L. Godfree All-England
Mrs D. Bennett Bowdon
J.E.W. Trow Cirencester
P.K. Trow Cirencester
K.G. Chisholm Harrogate
Mrs C. Chisholm Harrogate
I.S. Rogers Harrogate
R. Fitzgibbons Havering
Mrs J. McBratney Havering
M.B. McBratney Havering
G. Hesketh Havering
E.C. Salisbury Plymouth
R. Harding Ryde
Mrs D. McLean Southport
Miss P. Rimmer Southport
Mrs S. Rimmer Southport
Dr Hill Southport
Mrs J. Hill Southport
B. Ludlow Southport
Miss J. Hugall Stafford
D.W. Bueck Surbiton
P. Swaffield Walsall
P.R.G. Male Woking
D.A. Parsons Wolverhampton

E.A. Bevan
Mrs D. Blanchard
A. Browning
Dr A.A. Denton
Mrs A.P.H. Denton
Mrs M. Dimas
A.F. Giraud
Mrs E.A. Giraud
R.W. Goddin
Rev. R.J. Hall
W.T.S. Harding
Dr B. Moxley
Mrs B. Moxley
H.J. Smith
N. Stansfield
R. Vaughan
Mrs E. Vaughan-Davies
G. Vaughan-Davies
N.R. Wilson
Miss I. Winsby
T.E. Cresswell Australia
C.J. Miles Australia
H.M.L. Lacroix France
Senora M.O. Domecq Spain
P.J. Payne Switzerland

PUBLICATIONS & OTHER ITEMS AVAILABLE FROM THE ASSOCIATION

	CA Associate Members	CA Affiliates & non-members	Postage
Publications			
Full 'Laws & Regulations'	\$ 3.00	\$ 5.00	27p
'Know the Game'	\$ 1.65	\$ 1.99	27p
'12 Hints for Beginners'	75p	\$ 1.50	27p
'Croquet Handbook'	75p	\$ 1.50	27p
'History of Croquet' (Prichard)	\$10.00	\$15.00	\$1.30
'Croquet' (Solomon)	\$ 7.00	\$ 7.95	55p
'Plus One on Time' (Gaunt)	\$ 5.00	\$ 6.00	55p
'Teach Yourself Croquet' (Danks)	\$ 6.00	\$ 7.95	71p
'Simplified Croquet' (Danks)	\$ 6.00	\$ 7.95	71p
'Play the Game' (Mulliner)	\$ 3.66	\$ 3.99	46p
'World of Croquet' (McCullough & Mulliner)	\$14.95	\$16.95	\$2.10
'Croquet: The Skills of the Game' (Lamb)	\$ 9.50	\$10.95	80p
'How to Play Croquet' (Aspinall)	\$ 2.60	\$ 2.95	32p
'Croquet: The Complete Guide' (Gill)	\$ 7.50	\$14.95	\$1.25
(See 'Special Offer' details below)			
Video			
Coaching Video (Joe Hogan)	\$23.00	\$30.00	71p
Equipment			
Hoop Gauges	\$ 5.00 + 75p VAT		
Ball Gauges	\$15.00 + \$2.25 VAT		

SPECIAL OFFER

Affiliate Members of the CA may purchase 'Croquet: The Complete Guide' by Anton Gill at the special price of £7.50 while stocks last.