

**THROUGH THE HOOP**

*With Tony Antenen*

Goodbye January! and good riddance! The delayed receipt of the Fixtures Book had me fencing off telephone callers, a few of whom obviously believed I, along with a printer's devil, operated a Caxtonian printing press and produced the FB myself. The Fixture Books finally made their appearance late on the 28th, and were processed for despatch and collected by the local PO on the 30th, since when of course I have received a number of calls reporting non-delivery, one or two couched in terms hinting that I should have donned my Postman Pat outfit and popped the wretched thing through that gentleman's own front door!

January also brought a flood-tide of subscription payments, both by cheque and, at the end of the month, up to a dozen sheets of Bank Statements recording payments by Standing Order. There were, as my circular letter indicated, a considerable number of incorrect payments and the reactions to my

request for the balance and updating action ranged from a courteous response, often accompanied by a gracious 'mea culpa', to (a very small minority) the fatuous and sarcastic. So be it.

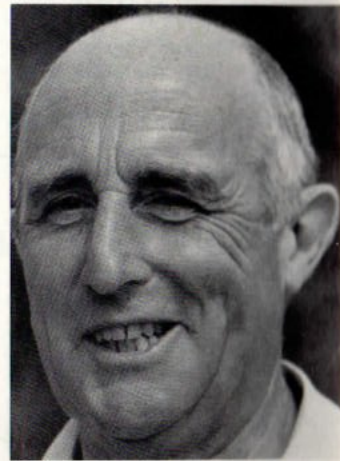
To the many who suggested almost in a spirit of helpfulness that we move to Direct Debit, to avoid the necessity of forever updating the SO, let me say this. The DD system is only cost-effective if over 80% of the membership take it on. Secondly it must be firmly rooted in a well established data base which we at HQ are striving for. (When I say 'we', I mean of course, the CO's three-half-days a week assistant Alan Stockwell, who is working on an updated version of the old package. Stick at it Alan - there is a golden future somewhere up ahead).

To the equal number of members who responded and pleaded for a much-improved entry in 'Croquet', I concur, and will seek to announce in letters of fire next year's subs in appropriate editions of the

magazine.

On a lighter note, I represented the CA at the official launch of '1991 Year of Sport' in the presence of HRH The Princess Royal. It took place against the sombre background of the opening of the Gulf War, and Princess Anne was careful to put into perspective the place that sport holds in the light of present events. She went on to say that sport for all age groups needed an impetus particularly for the young, but that sportsmanship was of even more importance. The CA is duty bound to put its shoulder firmly behind the wheel and support the 1991 initiative. You will be hearing from us, both at Club and Federation level, but it is going to need both enthusiasm and effort. Let's do it. Let's make 1991 the year Croquet got into the act. We have so much to give, in the way of sportsmanship, turnout and behaviour standards, it would be a shame to hide our light under the proverbial b.

Finally, in response to the



Tony Antenen, CA Secretary.

hundreds of enquiries as to the progress of my local rugby team, this coming Sunday sees us competing for a semi-final place in the Surrey Cup. Watch this space!

**Official Business**

**New Associates**

- Welcome to...
- B.M. Wyllie
  - Mrs J.M. Wyllie
  - H.P. Taylor
  - Mrs M.A. Cook
  - A.M. Weightman
  - Ms B. Gay
  - R.Q. Barrett
  - B.G. Townsend
  - Mrs C. Townsend
  - Mrs D. Regan
  - H.M. Dawson
  - B.J. Longley
  - Miss S.M. Anderson
  - M. Chivers
  - Mrs M. Chivers
  - A. Giraud
  - Mrs M. Glaser
  - Rev R.J. Hall
  - Mrs E.F. Robinette
  - J. Saunders
  - Mrs P. Saunders
  - Mrs L. Sheraton-Davis

**Handicap Alterations**

- Southwick: 13-18 August**
- M. Ruggins 14 to 8
  - C. Jones 8 to 7
  - M. Llewellyn-Williams 5 to 3½
  - L. Nash 11 to 10
  - Mrs D. Miller 6 to 5½
  - G. Rothwell 3 to 5
- Havering C.C.**
- Mrs P. Osborne 13
  - Mrs E. Morgan 19
  - Mrs M. Foster 16
  - Mrs D. Franks 16
  - Mrs G. Burgin 13 to 12
  - J. Burgin 14 to 13
  - Mrs J. Absalom 17 to 16
  - J. Absalom 20 to 19
  - Mrs B.E. Carter 13 to 12
- Southwick: 11-14 September**
- P. Eardley 12 to 10
  - D. Shaw 2½ to 2
  - P. Walker 13 to 12
  - B. Rennie 10 to 9
  - D. Collins 10 to 9

- C. Jones 5½ to 4
  - M. Hammalev 11 to 10
  - A. Nelson 16 to 15
  - G. Mears 11 to 10
  - D. Porcas 11 to 12
- Colchester: 5-7 October**
- J. Robinette 12 to 10
  - Mrs E. Robinette 19 to 18
  - Mrs G. Burgin 13 to 12
- Cheltenham: 5-7 October**
- Dr G. Bogle 3 to 2
  - K. Bright 6 to 7
  - C. Cardis 8 to 7
  - Mrs M. Evans 10 to 11
  - G.W. Goodwin 8 to 7
  - A.J. Mears 10 to 8
  - M. Hammalev 10 to 8
  - M. Rangley 5 to 4
- Leicester: 8 October**
- D.M. White 6½ to 6
- Edgbaston: 8 October**
- C. Bennet 6 to 4
  - P. Dorke ½ to 0
  - R. Harvey 9 to 7
- Hunstanton: 14 October**
- T.D. Sparkes 14 to 13
  - R. Gosden 5 to 4½
  - I. Storey 14 to 12
- Roehampton: 11-14 October**
- N. Jackson 11 to 8
  - D. Magee 2½ to 2
  - J.D. Greenwood ½ to -1
- Dulwich: 14 October**
- S. Badger 8 to 7
  - S. Whitely 11 to 9
  - Mrs E. Hartley 20 to 19
- Bowdon: 16 October**
- K. Cooper 7 to 7½
  - R. Deacon 7 to 8
  - R. Edwards 7 to 6
  - A. Linton 9 to 8
  - B. Storey 1 to 0
  - R. Webb 11 to 13
  - P. Walker 11 to 11D9
  - J. Wastell 11 to 9
- Surbiton: 20-21 October**
- J. Sheraton-Davies 7 to 6½
  - M. Llewellyn-Williams 3½ to 3
  - R. Jackman 6½ to 6

- A. Stockwell 8 to 7
- Southport & Birkdale: 21 October**
- J.D. Williamson 2 to 2
  - Mrs B. Haslam 8 to 7
  - Mrs M. Dalley 10 to 9
  - W. Nicholl 12 to 10
  - Mrs A. Rimmer 15D14 to 14
  - E. Cowan 18 to 17
  - Mrs M. Sweeney 19 to 17
- Cheltenham: 23 October**
- J. Willis 3 to 2½
  - Mrs J. Cima 5 to 6
  - L. Ayliffe 6 to 8
  - Mrs S. Clay 7 to 6½
  - M.I. MacBean 11 to 8
  - D.R.P. Booth 14D12 to 13D11
- Budleigh Salterton: 23 October**
- Rev C.H. Townshend 2½ to 2
  - Mrs E. Bagnall 5½ to 6
  - G.E. Webb 7 to 6
  - R.A. Scaddan 10 to 9
  - H. Gooding 12D10 to 11D9
  - J.E. Perry 12D10 to 10
  - Dr H.A. Thomas 15D13 to 16D14
  - Mrs H. Thomas 16D14 to 18D16
  - C. Moore 18D16 to 17D15
  - D. Thompson 18D16 to 16D14
- Hurlingham: 27 October**
- S. Allen 6 to 5
  - R. Stephens 5 to 3½
  - G. Wombwell 6 to 5
  - R. Hoskyns 9 to 8
- Sidmouth: 30 October**
- Miss S. Adams 20 to 18
  - Mrs V. Collier 8 to 9
  - Mrs G. Dart 16 to 14
  - P.A. Dwerryhouse 6½ to 7
  - Mrs I. Dwerryhouse 7 to 7½
  - E. Kitchener 6½ to 7
  - E.C. Owen 11 to 12
  - Mrs E. Owen 14 to 13
  - R. Peirce 8 to 11
  - Rev S. Scarr 4½ to 5½
  - L. Toye 6½ to 7
  - C. Walker 12 to 9
- Colworth: 31 October**
- T. Wilkins 8 to 7
  - A. Weightman 12 to 10
- Swindon: 1 November**
- F.J.R. Landor 0 to -½

- W.J. Airey 18 to 14
  - A.J. Burns 15
- Southwick: November**
- Mrs D. Brothers 12 to 11
  - Mrs P. Allanson 11 to 10
  - Mrs J. Huddleston 20 to 19
  - Mrs M. Green 10 to 9
  - Mrs P. Wain 12 to 11
  - Mrs J. Sanderson 14 to 13
  - Mrs H. Whitney 20 to 19
  - Mrs G. Wiggins 12D10 to 11D9
  - F. Beard 4½ to 4
  - Mrs D. Catten 11 to 12
  - Mrs E. Cox 6 to 7
- Bear of Rodborough: 14 November**
- J. Brudenell 5 to 4½
- Phyllis Court: 15 November**
- Sir A. Armstrong 11 to 12
  - B. Barnes 4½ to 6½
  - Mrs J. Barnes 8 to 9
  - B.G. Bucknall 4½ to 5
  - P. Carter 12 to 13
  - K. Cotterell 1 to 3
  - Mrs M. Cotterell 3½ to 5
  - Dr N. Morgan 13 to 12
  - A. O'Dair 15 to 16
  - Mrs J. Pim 9 to 11
  - Mrs S. Soutter 5½ to 7½
  - J. Young 6½ to 7½
  - R.F. Crane 5 to 8\*
- Parkstone: 29 November**
- R.F. Bailey ½ to 1½
  - C.F. Moon 6 to 5½
  - Miss A.R. Robertson 9D8 to 11D10
  - J. Simmonds 10D8 to 9D8
- Roehampton: 5 December**
- P.D. Hardymont 4½ to 3½
  - Mrs I.P.M. Macdonald 5 to 4½
  - D.J.F. Gurney 7 to 6
  - Mrs J. Oades 20 to 19
  - Dr G. Stringer 18 to 20
- Harwell: 1 January**
- M.J. Duck 6½ to 8
  - M. Moreton-Smith 6½ to 8
  - R. Platon 9 to 11
- Worcester: 23 January**
- R. Knowles 3½ to 5
  - D. Clay 7 to 8
  - Dr A. Laidlaw 14 to 12

**CROQUET**



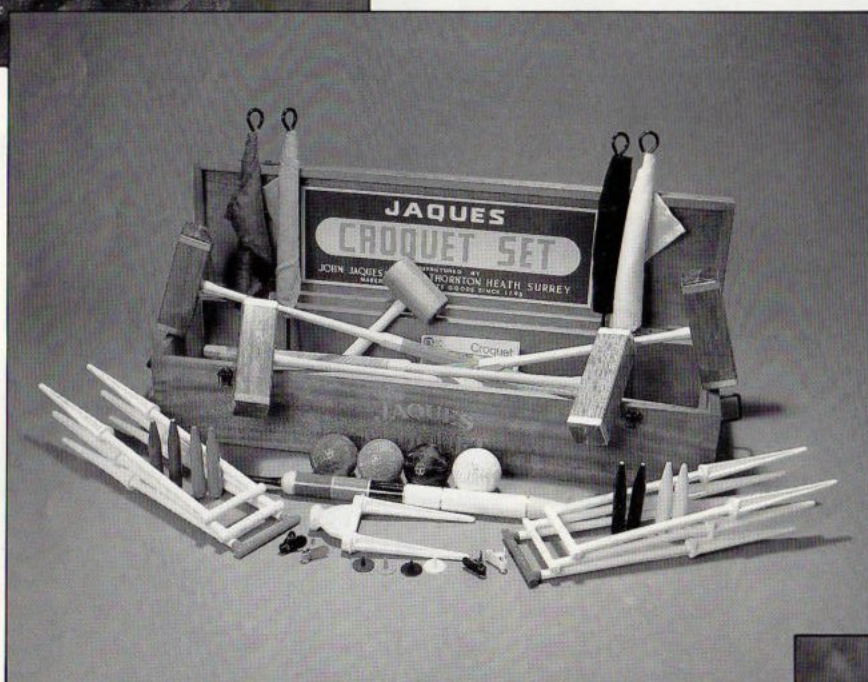
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**News & Views**  
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**How to Recruit New Members**  
**1991 Coaching Course Details**  
**Your Letters** ...and lots more

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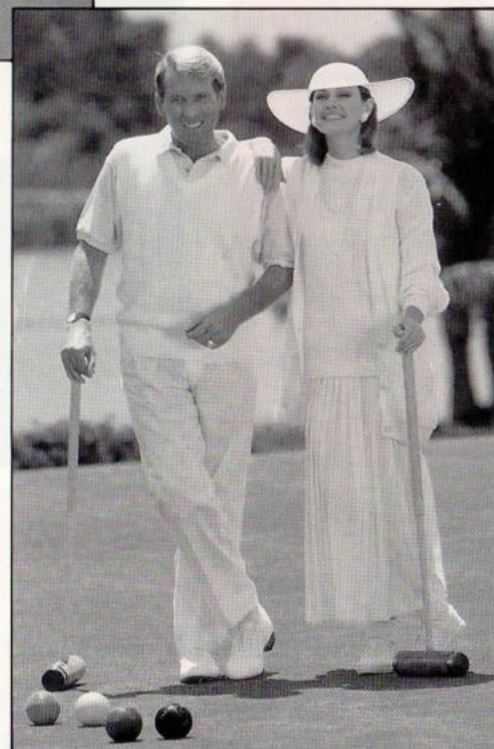
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**CROQUET**

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**Cover Photo:** Chris Irwin and Mike Sandler at this year's Northern Championships (Photo: Andrew Bennet).

**Editorial Team**

Editor .....Chris Hudson  
 Coaching .....Bill Lamb  
 Features .....Allen Parker  
 Pictures .....Chris Hudson  
 Advertising.....Brian Macmillan

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**Official Notices**

**CORRECTIONS TO THE 1991 FIXTURE BOOK**

Page 36: **Veterans** Secretary for this event is the CA Secretary.

Pages 16-17: **Men's & Women's** Events 1 & 2 are now from 31 May to 3 June. Event 4 is now a Swiss, not Draw & Process. Limits for entry are now 32 for Men and 12 for Women. The Draw for Events 1-3 will take place on 23 April, not 16 May. Surplus entrants will be eliminated by the Grading System as of 22 April, not 14 May.

Page 2: **Men's & Women's** 1991 cut-off dates, 13 May changed to 22 April.

Page 19: **Northern Championships** Secretary's telephone number is 722556, not 812556. 'Entries', add 'at 1900 hrs' after 9th August. 'Double Banking', delete reference to Play-off in Event 1. Event 5 is Ordinary Level Play, not Handicap. Page 22-23: **Irish Championship** Entries not limited to 4 in any event; should read that a player may enter only 4 events out of Events 1-6.

Page 71: **Woking Spring Weekend** Secretary's address is Hacking, not Nacking, and Post Code is GU22, not GW22. Please add telephone number: 0483-773550.

Page 37: **Bowdon May Weekend** Secretary telephone number is 722556, not 812556.

Page ix: **Nottingham** Add, Two-day

**1991 COACHING COURSES**

Grade II (Intermediate) courses are designed to assist players in the handicap range 6 to 14. Technique and tactics are equally important for players who wish to improve their game and reduce their handicap, and both are fully covered in these courses. If you fall into this handicap bracket and wonder why you are not improving more rapidly, why not join one of these courses and find out. Over 200 players have done so in the past few seasons. The courses are quite intensive, but interesting and enjoyable.

In spite of the fact that lawn and ball hire fees payable to clubs are to increase by 50% in the coming season, the coaching fees have been held at last season's level. All players must be members of the CA.

Courses will be held this season at the following venues on the dates given:

- Cheltenham 13/14 April
- Parkstone 13/14 April
- Hunstanton 11/12 May
- Southwick 8/9 June

The course fee is £23 (incl. 15% VAT). Applications should be made as early as possible to:

Bill Lamb, 5 Bondyke Close, Cottingham, N. Humberside, HU16 5ND.

Please state your name, address, telephone number, club, handicap and category of CA membership (Standard, Veteran, Junior or Non-Tournament).

Enclose an SAE and cheque for the above amount, payable to the Croquet Association.

Any player who would like to become a Grade II (Intermediate) coach and can attend one of the above courses should write to Bill Lamb.

The Grade II (Advanced) course planned for last year was eventually cancelled due to lack of applications. A course has not yet been arranged for this year but, if there are sufficient people interested in such a course this year, arrangements may still be made. Please let Bill Lamb know as soon as possible (Tel: 0482-840739).

weekend Handicap 13-14 July.  
 Page v: **Nottingham** Advanced Weekend should be 28-30, not 28-29 June.  
 Page 45: **Compton** For the weekend Handicap events, the Manager is G. Drake and the Secretary is D. Daintree, 3A

Southfields Road, Eastbourne. Tel: 0323-32864.  
 Page iv: **East Riding** 18-19 May is an Advanced weekend, not Handicap.  
 Page 81: **Loughborough Summer School** Fee should be £184, not £160.

**AGM AGENDA**

The AGM will be held at the Hurlingham Club on Saturday 20th April 1991, commencing at 11.00am.

1. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING  
 The Minutes of the previous Meeting held on 21st April, 1990, were published in 'Croquet', Issue 213, Page 29. Copies will be sent to associates residing in the United Kingdom on request to the Secretary.
2. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT
3. TREASURER'S REPORT  
 Copies of the Audited Accounts for the year ending 31st December 1990 will be available at the Meeting. Copies will be sent to Associates residing in the United Kingdom on request to the Secretary.
4. ELECTION OF TREASURER  
 The retiring Hon Treasurer, Mr A.J. Oldham, offers himself for re-election.
5. ELECTION OF AUDITORS  
 Messrs Nicholass Ames & Co offer themselves for re-election.
6. ELECTION OF COUNCIL MEMBERS  
 The following retire by rotation under Rule 2 and seek re-election under Rule 7: Mrs J. Anderson, D.L. Gaunt, W.E. Lamb, Dr M. Murray, and J.O. Walters.

- Mr B.A. Keen also retires by rotation but does not seek re-election.
- Mr DW. Shaw having decided to retire from Council, there were three vacancies following the AGM in 1990. Mrs A. Croker has resigned from Council. Mr W.P. Gillott and Mr R.D.C. Prichard who were co-opted to Council during 1990 retire in accordance with Rule 16 and now seek re-election. Mrs C. Bagnall, Mr ST. Badger, and Mr G. Cuttle seek election under Rule 7(a) (ii). There are thus 10 candidates for 10 vacancies and an election will not therefore be necessary.
- 7. MOTION. ELECTION OF VICE-PRESIDENT  
 Under Rule 5(d) Council have nominated Mrs E.A.M. Prichard to become a Vice-President of the Association.
- 8. BENEFACTORS' BOOK  
 The names of the Benefactors will be read.
- 9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS
- 10. PRESIDENT'S CLOSING ADDRESS

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## SOUTH AFRICA The Rigall Gold Trophy

Report by William Ormerod

Many visitors to South Africa return.

The Cape country is unbelievably beautiful, Table Mountain an enduring landmark, and besides there are some half dozen Croquet Clubs.

I had fond memories of several weeks touring South Africa in 1976, coaching croquet on warm sunny days to just such people. I felt I must return, and in November, with my wife Marion who took the photographs, we flew the thirteen hours direct flight from Heathrow to Capetown and stayed for three and a half weeks.

We saw the timeless Cape/Dutch architecture, several 17th Century homesteads and vineyards, golden beaches, and of course some of South Africa's colourful wild flowers.

The country has 22,000 wild flower species - 10% of the total found in the world - and most of these are in the Cape. It is one of the six floral kingdoms in the world and at its best in the spring.

I coached again and played some croquet but was always conscious of the spectacular environs. South African sport has been fully integrated for many years and this seemed to surprise Sebastian Coe

and a delegation of nine British MP's who were in South Africa at the same time.

For five days I took part in the Riggall Gold Trophy, the equivalent of our President's Cup. The event was ably managed by Carole Knox, known to some British croquet players. She fitted the competition around Tom Barlow's son Charles' wedding to Victoria.

Were it not for politics, the best of South Africa croquet, like South African rugby, cricket and South African wine, would contend with the best in the world.

Reginald Bamford, a newly qualified accountant, won the Rigall Gold Trophy in magnificent style from Clive Coulson, and after Ian Gillespie, President of the South African C.A. presented him with the trophy, it was quickly returned to a bank vault. President's Cup Hoops are used, and Leslie Riggall donated the solid gold trophy in 1978.

In 1989 Reg won the same trophy and completed seven consecutive triple Peels, possibly a record in championship play. I felt that his standard of play, comprising thoughtful tactics, unhurried single ball and croquet strokes played with



Ian Gillespie, President of the South African CA, presents the Rigall Gold Trophy to Reginald Bamford. Clive Coulson, runner-up is 2nd right, and Dick Le Maitre, 3rd right.

amazing and exceptional skill, must include him among a handful of the world's leading players, such as Joe Hogan, Robert Fulford and Mark Saurin.

One memorable match was reminiscent of a game described in John Solomon's book and was pure theatre. Reginald, playing Tom

Barlow, was completing a very difficult delayed triple - his pioneer for two back he placed at four back as getaway ball following the four back peel on his partner. His rush stroke was hampered. But a truly memorable sliced stroke, hitting his own ball on the face of the mallet engendered sufficient power to rush

the pioneer within ten yards of two back. However, he failed to complete a straight double Peel involving much cannoning but pegged out one ball.

Tom Barlow got in, being on first and second hoops. He played a fine three ball break to four back where he lost position and laid in first corner. Reg just missed a forty yarder. Tom then took his back ball from second to four back - this included a two yard second hoop and a perfect two yard rush to hoop three, with Reg's ball lying near the peg. Tom's beautiful flat swing has previously taken him to the final of the British Open Championship and in 1987 Reg was runner up in the President's Cup.

Ian Gillespie's suggestion that Association Croquet should be renamed Croquet played Under International Rules has already been approved by the Americans and seems an excellent idea for World Croquet. Barlow Balls are used and rapidly gaining in acceptance. Developed by Tom, they are now available in the UK.

## The South African Championships

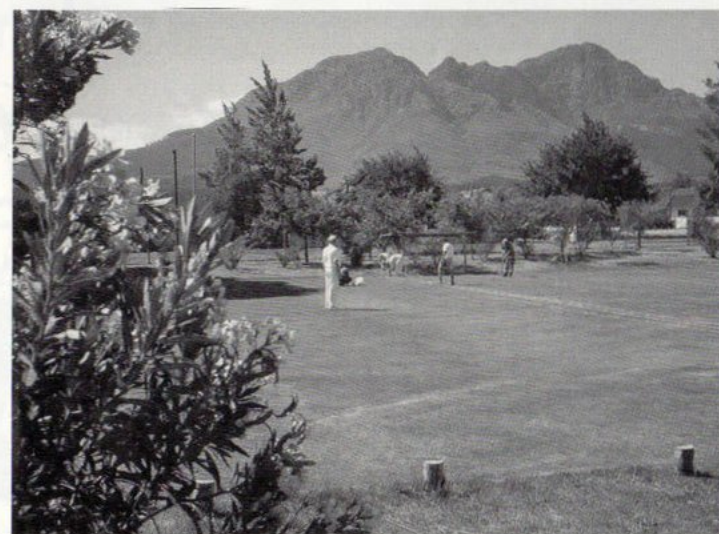
Report by Terry Burge

When I decided to visit South Africa I did not realise it would coincide with their National Championships. But I am now glad it did. The Championships were held just outside Cape Town in a delightful place called Somerset West. The facilities like the surroundings were first class, even though three different locations had to be used to make up the seven courts of play.

The tournament was split into eight different categories. The main event was the Open Singles. Red hot favourite was Reg Bamford, who is known to many over here after he competed in the President's Cup a few years ago. The format for this was two blocks, all play all, with the winners of each block meeting in the final. Up until the last day it looked as though the top two seeds, Reg and South African Croquet Association Secretary Carole Knox, would meet in the final. That is when the upsets came. Unbeaten up until his penultimate game, Reg lost his last two matches and was out. Likewise for Carole who lost her last game and was also eliminated, leaving the final between local man Dick Le Maitre and Dr Gary Culligan of Pretoria. In a best of three final, Dr Culligan started well, taking the first game, but his form then deserted him and Le Maitre went on to win 2-1.

The 'B' class event was won by

yours truly. Flying the flag for Britain, I disposed of my early opponents in the block to reach the final against a young lad from Johannesburg,



Preparing the lines for the 1990 South African National Croquet Championships. These were played at the spectacular setting of Somerset West, in the shadow of the Hottentot Holland mountains.

Andrew Hobbs. He had likewise breezed through his block. Because of the number of games to be played on finals day, we had to play away from the main club. It was their loss. After I took an early lead in the first game Andrew hit in and was on his

way round with a four ball break, his other ball for the peg, when he missed a simple two-back hoop. This let me in and I closed. An almost

and acknowledged the applause. The only other two people to see the match said it was the best game they had seen for a while.

Though I am a bit of an ageing 'nipper' at 28 it was the real 'nippers' who stole the show. The 'C' Class event was won by 20 year old Judith Downton. The Y and Z handicap singles were won by teenagers Wynand Louw and Darren Handforth. To complete the rout Allen Ware, another youngster, won the Golf Croquet. Andrew Hobbs let the side down when he was beaten in the Handicap Singles final by Carole Knox. This game swung both ways but the experience of Carole told in the end.

Not only did Dick Le Maitre pick up the Open singles but he walked off with the Open Doubles as well, this being with another local player Tom Barlow. Locals had a good tournament, all the young winners were Somerset West players and so were the Handicap Doubles partners Geoffrey Robinson and Val Durie.

Finally on the playing front there was a three-way veterans block won convincingly by Cary Carter.

Croquet is very much a minority sport in South Africa but that didn't stop Carole Knox managing a well organised tournament. The following day's play was always posted on the board each evening so

you knew exactly where you were. The thing that most people found difficult was the playing surfaces of the courts. Obviously with three



Carole Knox, Secretary of the South African Croquet Association.

different places there would be a difference in courts. But going from fastish courts for some games to a court that was similar to playing under water took some getting used to. It all makes for an interesting tournament.

From what I have seen in this competition, the standard of play is very high and the progress of the 'nippers' is very encouraging. When South Africa returns to international competition they will definitely be a force to be reckoned with.

## DUBAI

### Croquet in the Desert

Report from Frazer McKenzie.

The second annual inter emirate croquet tournament was held at the Jebel Ali Hotel Croquet Club on 8 and 9 February, resulting in a win for the home team, who thus took revenge for the defeat rather easily inflicted on them by Dubai the previous year. The day was notable for the first play on the second court, laid down as a dual purpose bowling green during the winter. The new court was not as good as might be hoped, but the surface will clearly be very level, and an improvement on the slightly wavy No 1 court, when mature.

Six players represented each Club. In the absence of the experienced Colonel and Mrs Georgina Wontner, HM newly arrived Ambassador to the

United Arab Emirates, Mr Graham Burton, and his wife Julia, were included in the Abu Dhabi team. However, neither their undoubted promise, nor the respect properly paid to them, saved Abu Dhabi from again earning the wooden spoon.

Play was to the rules of Short Croquet throughout, and yielded some rousing moments, notably when Alia Gezir, only recently a beginner and drafted into the Jebel Ali team when one of the original selection withdrew, smacked into the peg from corner spot to peg out and win 14-13. In recognition of her feat, she was invited to accept the winner's cup from Mrs Julia Burton.

Another relative beginner, Helen Sa'id, roqueted her partner ball from the

full length of the court to give herself and her husband Tariq victory over an Abu Dhabi pair. The Abu Dhabi team returned after a most enjoyable weekend, heightened by the outstandingly delicious dinner hosted by Hotel General Manager Mohammed Geziry on the Thursday evening, determined to ensure that they would emerge less modestly placed next year. Plans for improved facilities and coaching in the capital blossomed.

In Dubai the good news is of the availability of the bowling green at the world renowned Emirates Golf Club for croquet. The surface is true and disconcertingly fast, the surroundings distinguished, the Club House sumptuous. Can the players match that?

## Club News

### PARKSTONE Sprinklers & More Tournaments!

Report from Strat Lydiard

This was an exciting year for Parkstone; the first for our new pop-up sprinkler system which we can thoroughly recommend to other clubs. Our lawns remained green and fresh when many were brown and bumpy.

Our ten club tournaments produced twelve different winners which must be a tribute to the handicappers.

There was personal success for David Harrison-Wood and Strat Lydiard who won Gold Awards and became

Referees (the latter was also invited to play in the Selectors' Weekend) and for Dulcie Birrell and John Simmonds who won Bronze Awards.

The South West Federation League and Intermediate League were our most successful team tournaments. We were runners-up in both. We intend to do better in the national tournaments this coming season.

The June and September Open weeks were well attended by welcome

visitors, old friends and new, and for the first time we held an Open weekend in May. This was a great success, with Andy Symons winning a one-ball 4-way play-off. We shall be holding this tournament again in 1991 and such was its success that we shall also be holding an Open weekend for the over-5's in the autumn. Come and join us for one of these tournaments or our CA Grade 2 coaching weekend. We're easy to find - we're on the map!

### DYFFRYN League Title goes to Wales!

Report from John Grimshaw

The 1990 Federation final was contested by Dyffryn and Swindon on the excellent Nailsea lawns in stormy conditions. In the morning play Dyffryn took both singles, but Swindon took the doubles in a hard-fought game with the main feature being Philip Lewis' excellent shooting. So into the afternoon with Dyffryn leading 2-1, there was everything to play for.

Philip Lewis was receiving 9 1/2 bisques against John Evans and took his first ball to peg but used 9 bisques. This is usually fatal against John and so it proved. Within 15 minutes he had been pegged out and despite hitting in several times was eventually overcome by John who pegged his own ball out with a four-hoop lead and three to go

to make the finish a two-ball game. Swindon won the next game to finish with Mike O'Flynn defeating Adrian Trickey. Adrian had taken one ball to peg and seemed to have a break with his second but a mistake at hoop 3 let Mike take control again. John Grimshaw seemed to be well on his way to clinching the match for Dyffryn when he reached 4-back with black and was on a 4-ball break with blue when he struck in 1-back from 6" trying to run it gently (this was an exact repeat of his attempt at the same hoop in the morning double).

Although John had several opportunities later, Alex steadily clawed her way back into the game and eventually won +5. However, by this

time the level game between Paul Pristavec and Cliff Cardis had already decided the match. Although Cliff started well, making four hoops on the fifth turn of the game, Paul eventually took control and ran out a comfortable winner to give Dyffryn a 4-3 victory.

#### 1990 S.W. Federation League Final

John Grimshaw & Paul Pristavec lost to Cliff Cardis and Philip Lewis -7; John Evans beat Mike O'Flynn +7; Adrian Trickey beat Alex O'Connor +16; John Evans beat Philip Lewis +7; John Grimshaw lost to Alex O'Connor -5; Paul Pristavec beat Cliff Cardis +15; Adrian Trickey lost to Mike O'Flynn-11.

**RESULT**  
Dyffryn bt Swindon 4-3.

### DULWICH A Growing Membership

Report by Mark Everett

The Dulwich Sports Club Ltd has a Croquet Section whose membership is currently over 40 and growing. The club has two croquet lawns and Stephen Badger is the President of the Croquet Section. Previously it was mainly a Golf Croquet club, but now Association membership has grown to over half.

In 1988, the Club won the S.E. Federation 'U' League, and came second in 1989 & 1990. Last year, they

also fielded a 'B' team. The Club entered the 'All England' for the first time in 1990, and Stephen Badger and Simon Whiteley went through to the Regional Finals.

The Dulwich 1990 Open one-day Tournament was won by Cambridge half-blue Justin Goddard. Although he has a handicap of 6, he managed to complete a triple peel!

Prominent members include

Vincent Camroux, 1, a former Spencer Ell winner, and Roger Best, 5, a well-known tournament player.

Dulwich Sports Club is a private club in nice grounds only a few miles from the City. The subscriptions are moderate and new members welcome. The Club provides coaching for beginners, and anyone interested should contact the Club Captain, Mark Everett, on 081-852-3694.

## Early Days

### Handicapping in 1905

By Allen Parker (Parkstone)

Volume 2 of the 'Croquet Association Gazette' was not without its correspondents commenting on, or complaining about, the methods of handicapping in general, or their own handicap in particular. When reading the following abstracts of this correspondence, it should be remembered that up to the end of 1904, bisques could be taken only one at a time, and 1905 was thus the first year in which a succession of bisques could be taken in one turn to set up and play a break.

The first two letters provide an amusing example of complaints about a particular handicap. The last two give suggestions for improved methods of handicapping. Finally I have included an excerpt from a review of the 1905 season (published on 1st March 1906) which comments favourably on the new rule which permitted taking more than one bisque in a turn.

### Mrs Creyke's Handicap

Sir, I have been told by two people that I am accused of having 'got round Mr Croft' to make him alter my handicap. I did not know that Mr Croft had anything to do with handicaps, and have never spoken to him on the subject. Mr Du Cane told me last winter that my handicap would be 10 bisques for this season, as everyone was being put down, and I was perfectly satisfied; but I should like to take this opportunity of stating a few facts.

I was asked - even pressed - to join the C.A.; and was given 9 bisques knowing nothing of the modern game, and never having heard of a 'four-ball break'. I soon found that it was ludicrous attempting to play in tournaments (my only chance of getting any croquet) and when I expostulated was told that I was given 9 bisques because Col. Needham had heard I used to be a good rifle shot! I have used spectacles for 14 years and see all the hoops double, so the worm turned. I 'got round' somebody, with the result that I had a semi-official letter to say I was to play last season with 12 bisques. On the strength of my 12 bisques I said I would join the Roehampton Club, having received several letters asking me to do so. On my return from abroad in May, I found in the C.A. book that my handicap was 9 bisques, as before, and I absolutely refused to pay my subscription to the Roehampton Club, of which I had been made a member under false pretences.

After much correspondence, and finding I was quite determined not to pay the five guineas under the circumstances, Col. Needham wrote that the 9 bisques was a mistake and that I was to play at 12 bisques. I had therefore to explain at every tournament that the book was wrong; which always

caused a discussion.


I played in about 10 tournaments and did not win anything with my 12 bisques. Croquet is a nervous game, and if the C.A. members ask bad players to join, they ought to give them a little encouragement at first, and not do everything in their power to keep them back.

Yours faithfully,  
Caroline Creyke.

**TABLE CROQUET.**      **IMMOVABLE HOOPS.**  
**STRONG'S PATENT.**      **STRONG'S PATENT.**

All parts of this Set are reduced for the table in proportion to the lawn. It is an excellent medium for learning the tactics of the out-door game. Equally fascinating as a pastime and requires the same skill.

Boxwood ... 2/-  
Celuloid (White) ... 5/-  
Celuloid, Ivory Balls ... 10/-  
Walnut Stand extra 2/-



"I think it is a most charming game." OLIVE HENRY, Ex-Champion Lawn Game.

"It is quite the best thing I have seen, and is very cleverly and neatly arranged."  
"I think it has many merits."  
"The immovable hoops are a great advantage, and to have a game of skill instead of luck, makes it very attractive." JANE H. FAWCETT, Ex-Champion All England Club.

To be obtained from all Stores and Fancy Depositories.

An advert from a 1905 Gazette.

This was followed in the next week's issue by a letter from a member of the Committee.

Dear Sir,

You have taken a very rash step and have created for yourself a precedent, the danger of which you can scarcely have foreseen.

You have opened your columns to complaints from ladies of the injustice of their handicaps, and I expect to see shortly the columns of the Croquet Gazette rivalling in length and number those of the 'Daily Telegraph'.

I, too, see in your issue of last week that my handicap has been reduced from  $3\frac{1}{2}$  to 3. Of this I make no complaint whatever; on the contrary I consider it a compliment, however little deserved. But why have I been thus honoured? Not for any performance in a public tournament, but because (and I can find no other reason) I had the good (or bad) fortune to defeat a member of the handicapping committee, with the aid of bisques in a private tournament held in this county. Surely this is not sufficient reason, or if it is, let us be very careful how and when we play against members of that august body.

But to return to the lady whose extraordinary letter you print this week. Mrs Creyke is at great pains to explain to us that she has never resorted to the wiles of female persuasion to tempt our official handicapper from the path of duty. For this we are all grateful. But she admits to having used intimidation of the most barefaced character to attain her ends. Having been pressed from all quarters to join the C.A. and the Roehampton Club, she at last consented. All seemed satisfactorily settled, when lo! and behold, at the last moment the lady found that in exchange for her five pounds she was

receiving 9 bisques only instead of 12. She, in her own words, was 'determined not to pay'. Faced with the serious problem, the C.A. and the Club appear to have yielded, and in consideration of five pounds allotted the 3 bisques demanded.

May I express the hope that these very remarkable negotiations will not be largely followed. It would end in the financial ruin of the C.A. and

invariably that A contributes 5 shillings towards a fund in the division of which he has no chance of participating, and will have to take part in a game, the pleasure of which will be entirely spoiled, from his point of view, by his knowing, when he steps on to the court, that he must be beaten except in the improbable event of his opponent's sudden death before the completion of the game.

Endeavouring to discriminate between the capabilities of players to the fine point of  $\frac{1}{2}$  bisque is really ludicrous.

Let all Associates be divided into 3 classes, and let class no. 1 give 2 bisques to class no. 2, and give 4 bisques to class no. 3, whereby no player gives more than 4, and until this is sufficient to bring the best and the worst together, let the latter stand aside and practise at home until it is.

Possibly it may be said that a difficulty would be experienced in deciding the first class, but surely the result of the games in the late Championship Meeting held at Roehampton proves that it is impossible to say to which of the 'cracks' points are to be given, as they were continually being beaten by and beating each other, a striking proof of the failure of the present scheme of handicapping being shown by the positions, at the conclusion of the series of games, of Miss Gower and Mr Willis, the former having in handicap competitions to present the latter with  $\frac{1}{2}$  bisque.

I am, sir, yours truly,  
W.H. Game.

To which the Editor added the following note:

We totally fail to understand your arguments. The remedy proposed, apart from its manifold injustice, would promptly kill the game.

Dear Sir,

The fact that a new departure in modern tournaments has been made by dividing the Open Events into three classes has revived the suggestion I made three years ago that classes were a better mode of handicapping different players than bisques.

To make this practical, I would suggest the following instead of bisques. Give points, thus: - Class A would give Class B 7 points; Class A would give Class C 14 points; Class B would give Class C 7 points. This would at once do away with all bother about bisques, which it is obvious to everyone is a most difficult and almost impossible task.

The advantages of this system would be that it would shorten the time of handicap games. There would be no complaint about bisques. The standard of play has risen so much lately that with perfect lawns a good player has very little

### From a Review of the 1905 Season

That the greatly increased popularity which was such a marked feature of the game of croquet in 1904 was no mere passing boom was amply proved by the results of the past season. If there were any who thought that a pastime which had advanced into popular favour by leaps and bounds must soon reach a limit beyond which even the enthusiasm of its greatest devotees would fail to carry it, these pessimists can only acknowledge that another season's play has passed, not only without any sign of a waning popularity, but with all the visible marks of attaining a still greater and more permanent place among outdoor games.

A natural result of the increased opportunities for public competitions has been to improve the general standard of play, if not among the small coterie of scratch exponents, at any rate in all the other ranks of players. Such an all-round improvement has greatly increased the difficulties which even the most skilful players have experienced in successfully giving away the allotted starts, with the result that quite a feature of the season's play has been the small proportion of handicaps which have fallen to the lot of the expert exponents. In this respect it should be pointed out that the new rule, which permitted the taking of more than one bisque in a turn, has produced most gratifying issues, in that it has gone far to do away with the absurdity of a start existing, in some cases on paper only, without any real opportunity of its being usefully employed. And so a great blot on the fair name of Croquet has been effectually wiped out, namely, that there was something inherently rotten in a system of handicapping which made it impossible for the weaker player, when competing against a stronger exponent, to take full advantage of the handicap to which he was entitled. Hitherto, it has frequently been asserted, - and with unanswerable accuracy - that in no other game, or form of competition, was it possible for any set of circumstances to arise to prevent the receiver of handicap having the full benefit of the start which had been apportioned him. And, if one result of the working of the rule with regard to the taking of bisques has been, as is undoubtedly the fact, to add enormously to the difficulty of any scratch player being successful in a handicap of reasonable size, that is really no matter for regret, considering the

chance against the receiver of bisques.

Yours faithfully,  
A.C. Holland.

It seems that taking bisques more than one at a time did not meet with general approval!

many opportunities which are afforded the experts of gaining honours in the level events. That it is not an impossibility, even under the new conditions, for a scratch player to secure the spoils in a handicap of enormous entries, was proved by the remarkable success of Mrs Beaton at Eastbourne, where she was victorious against more than 100 competitors.

Perhaps one of the least satisfactory features in regard to the game is to be found in the fact that so few of the new school of players are adopting the side-stroke style. While it is generally conceded that the front style is conducive to greater accuracy, it cannot but be a matter of

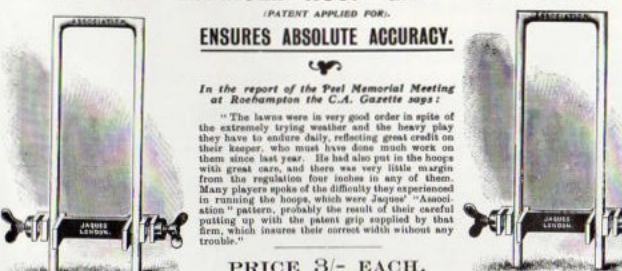
## JAQUES' CROQUET.

### THE NEW MANACLE HOOP GRIP AND GAUGE.

PATENT APPLIED FOR.  
ENSURES ABSOLUTE ACCURACY.

In the report of the Post Memorial Meeting at Roehampton the C.A. Gazette says:  
"The lawns were in very good order in spite of the extremely trying weather and the heavy play they have to endure daily, reflecting great credit on their keeper, who must have done much work on them since last year. He had also put in the hoops with great care, and there was very little margin from the regulation four inches in any of them. Many players spoke of the difficulty they experienced in running the hoops, which were Jaques' "Assol-ution" pattern, probably the result of their careless putting up with the patent grip supplied by that firm, which insures their correct work without any trouble."

**PRICE 3/- EACH.**



A 1905 hoop gauge.

regret that so few players come to the front to illustrate the greater attractiveness, at least from a spectator's point of view, of side stroke play, which from its very uncertainty has a charm which even the deadly consistency of front play cannot replace. And, if it is to be regretted that the majority of new players are exponents of the front style, it cannot but be felt that is a pity, from a picturesque point of view, that so many have acquired the still less desirable style of playing between the legs. The adoption of this means of making the stroke does much to do away with one of the great charms of croquet, as being a game in which the two sexes can meet in friendly rivalry on terms of perfect equality.

Although there is an almost universal feeling that the game, as it now stands, requires little or no alteration to make it more attractive to the great body of players, another season's results have undoubtedly tended to confirm the opinions of those who assert that some changes in the way of increasing the difficulties of the in-, and the opportunities of the out-player, are absolutely necessary, if the game is to continue to exercise its fascination over the more expert players. Even those who are most antagonistic to the introduction of any innovation must be willing to acknowledge that

### MERIT AWARDS SCHEME

From Bill Lamb: Chairman, Coaching Committee

The merit awards scheme has had a successful second season with an increase in the total number of awards made. There has been a small decrease in the number of Gold awards, as might have been expected, and a large increase in the number of Bronze awards. No one has yet achieved a full set of awards.

A query was raised at the recent in all other games it is an axiom that the greater the skill which the player acquires, the more enjoyment which is derived from it. But in croquet this is only true in inverse proportion, and

Coaching Committee meeting whether someone who had achieved a Gold or Silver might buy a badge for a lower award. It was decided that this would not be allowed. The Coaching Committee also cleared up a point relating to the Silver award. In future, a Silver award will not be gained if a player has used bisques to set up a break and then made twelve hoops without the use of bisques.

A new supply of cards should be in the hands of clubs for the beginning of the new season but a postcard giving the relevant information is just as acceptable. However, please note as for last season that the badge will not be sent, nor can correspondence be entertained, without a stamped addressed envelope.

Congratulations to the following who achieved their Merit Awards during the 1990 season:

#### GOLD (12)

Ivor Brand	K.C.T. Jones
John Evans	Dr G.S. Liddiard
Andrew Gregory	A.R.K. Millar
M.J. Haggerston	A.J. Mrozinsky
Brian Hallam	Adrian Saurin
David Harrison-Wood	Simon Tuke

#### SILVER (16)

S.G. Allen	James D. Hawkins
George Chamberlain	Andrew Holgate
Ken Cooper	John Horry
Edward Dymock	Keith Hutton
R. Fewtrell	L.W.R. James
Roy Goodwin	Cliff Jones
Ben Green	Paul Pristavec
M.A. Hammellev	Hugh Smorffitt

#### BRONZE (35)

Jean Ackermann	Neil Jackson
A.J.W. Addis	C. Jones
Norman Bircumshaw	Michael Mathews
Mrs. Dulcie Birrell	Veronica McClement
D. Carpenter	Audrey Mead
Ernest Dalley	Mrs Phyllis Osborne
Mrs. M. Dalley	D. Powell
David Drazin	John Robinette
Mike Evans	Mrs M.E. Selmes
Mrs Faith Fewtrell	Paul Sharrock
Graham Fowler	John Simmonds
Steve Gardner	Ian Storey
N. Gray	Stephen Thomas
Sally Green	John Wastell
Angela Hall	Richard White
Claire Heritage	Mrs B.M. Widdows
Brian Hewitt	K. Wells.
John Hughes	

The 'side-stroke style' referred to above is what to-day we call *golf style*, and the 'front style' is what we call the *side style*. The *golf style* was the most popular in the nineteenth century. Centre style, i.e. 'playing between the legs' was of course quite out of the question for the ladies of 1905 with their voluminous skirts.

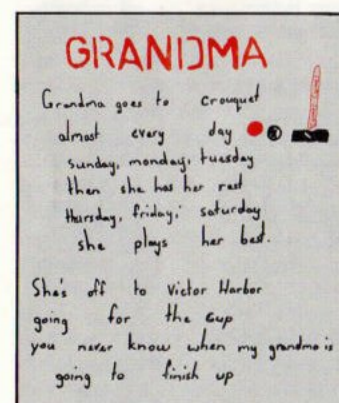
## Awards

### Handicapping Overseas

Dear Sir,  
I have recently returned from a trip to Australia, New Zealand and the USA. I played several games in Australia and New Zealand and was made most welcome at each club I played at. This contrasted with my reception at the Birnam Wood Golf Club in Santa Barbara, California (which has a croquet section) where I was turned away at the gate by two armed guards!

In Western Australia, handicaps of competition winners are automatically reduced by one and runners-up by a half. Inter-Club competitions are played with four divisions, according to handicaps. They play mainly advanced croquet and only alter handicaps on advanced play, not on handicap play, which is the reverse of our system. Croquet is flourishing in WA, with 26 croquet clubs in the Perth area alone.

The enclosed poem appeared in the Australian Croquet magazine, and as you have a poetry section, I thought you might find it of interest.  
P. Kennerley,  
Isle of Wight.



### Poetic yardage

Dear Sir,  
The other day my mind wandered from its allotted task as follows:-  
**A Dream of a Break.**  
Roqueted the tice and split it to 2;  
Fluked a cut rush on red towards 1.  
Ran controlled hoops off red and off blue,  
Sensing a dream of a break begun.  
Ran hoops galore until, at 4-back,  
Went to lay a diagonal spread.  
What happened next? Alas and alack,  
Swung awkwardly and fell out of bed.  
May I suggest that the yardage of the longest possible roquet be upped from 42 (the January issue) to 43, the distance between any corner and its diagonally opposed corner spot actually being about a foot further than 43 yards. On some lawns the peg will not obstruct a straight shot. This because of the spatial tolerance allowed in the Laws for the siting of pegs.  
Tommy Cameron.  
Clifton, York.

### Vandeleur Robinson

Dear Sir,  
Like many others, I can endorse Alan Oldham's remarks about the late Vandeleur Robinson's epistolary style. My application to join the CA in 1976 elicited a most charming, fluent and discursive reply. No doubt it reflected a weakness in business efficiency but it was certainly a triumph of public relations.

If this is how he writes a routine letter to an unknown beginner, I remember thinking, what pleasure he must give in regular correspondence.

My first coach, the late Bill Scarr, told me how Vandeleur Robinson once ran the first hoop from the first corner, whilst aiming at the tice.

He was tempted to embroider the story to the effect that the ball caught the right-hand wire so nicely that it finished within inches of the tice, but insisted that he was a voracious man.

Simon Garrett,  
Bath.



A new use for a croquet lawn! (See letter 'Llama-back Croquet').

### The Advanced Handicap System

Dear Sir,  
I have been encouraged by the number of people who have asked me what progress I have been able to make in trying to persuade the Council that we should have an advanced handicap game as a part of the laws.

I am now convinced that there is little or no chance of being able to alter the laws so that we play only to one set of rules, that is to say that we all play only the advanced game but of course with bisques in handicap events. Alteration of the laws in such a radical way would require the approval of the other croquet-playing countries, Australia and New Zealand, and I am assured that they would be unlikely to agree to such a change.

I am therefore now proposing as an alternative to a radical change in the laws that we should introduce an agreed alternative version of the game as an Appendix to the Laws, much as we have already done with several other alternative games. This, if it is passed, will allow any event either in a club or CA tournament to be played on the basis of advanced play with bisques.

For the benefit of those who are new to this discussion, I would like to give a little background. Until 1946 everybody played under the same laws. In that year, the present system of lifts and contact was introduced. These new laws were introduced primarily to deal with the problem that in level play there were so many +26 results due to the tactic of taking the first hoop from the peg and laying up in the third corner with the opponent cross-wired at hoop 1.

Prichard, in his *History of the Game of Croquet* on page 96, says: 'No

The idea of the advanced game with bisques has not seriously been debated since that time until I raised the subject at a Club Conference in 1987 and at Council in 1988 and again in 1989. The voting on both occasions at the Council indicated that more members were in favour than were against the idea as such.

Many croquet players who have reached the lower levels of handicap would like to get used to playing advanced croquet in order to prepare for the time when they can enter some of the top events. Many of those whose handicap is around the 2 to 5 level cannot find sufficient opportunities to play the advanced game, either because an event has a cut-off point on handicap or on grading. At the outset I would expect the new additional game of advanced handicap croquet would be used for B class events, although of course it would be just as desirable to use it for main handicap events if the organisers so wished.

The playing of advanced croquet with handicaps might have the effect of encouraging more low and minus players to play in handicap events. It will also go some way in removing the division which exists between those who play the advanced game and those who do not. I believe that the advanced game is a better game than the current handicap game. I cannot imagine many of the top croquet players would disagree with this. If this is so, then surely we should all wish to encourage more people to play it. I hope that those who agree with me will welcome this opportunity to introduce the advanced game to a wider range of members.

I would be grateful if all players who agree with me would drop me a card expressing their agreement, as such evidence will be very valuable in helping to convince our law-makers that such an addition to our laws would be much welcomed.  
Lionel Wharrad,  
East Clandon.

### Llama-back Croquet?

Dear Sir,  
Here is a photo of a postcard found by a friend of mine.

It is a bit pale, but I think you can see reasonably well in front of the leading llama what appears to be a croquet hoop, whilst the rider on the same llama has what appears to be a small knobbed stick just in front of his hand, with the rest of the stick on the far side of the animal. Behind the second llama, there is a centre peg.

My researches so far have unearthed the fact that the photo was taken in the late 1920's or early 30's at the home of Sir Anthony Wingfield in Ampthill, Bedfordshire, where he had a menagerie of animals including boars, zebra and ostriches which were also ridden, and bears, etc.

I have another photo of six of his keepers, all in uniform and also riding llamas.

I also enclose a modern photo to show that we are keeping the riding tradition alive. I am holding my stud male llama, Ambassador, who is being ridden by a friend's 9-year old son, and have other friends in Woking whose son rides their llama.

Maybe we could get them together and start the basis of a croquet playing team!

If you publish this in your magazine and readers have any queries or would like to visit, I have 12 llamas at present with 4 baby llamas due by early summer.

Candia Midworth,  
Effingham Common.  
(Tel: 0372-458350).



Candia Midworth with Ambassador.

### Club Referees?

Dear Sir,  
I recently attended a 2-day course on the Laws of Croquet given by a CA Championship Referee of international repute which I found very enjoyable and instructive. I and my fellow students all passed the written test at the end and some of them have gone on to do the practical and become qualified as CA Referees. As such, they are now entitled to perform the duties of Tournament Referee at CA events.

I play most of my croquet at Club and Federation level and only entered my first CA Tournaments last season. I believe that to apply refereeing standards of the kind we were taught at such a level is not necessarily conducive to enjoyable croquet. In particular I would not want, as one of a very small number of qualified referees in the club, to feel that I was in danger of being called in to watch questionable strokes on all the adjoining lawns when trying to enjoy a game of my own.

For this reason, and because I have

no confidence in my ability fairly to judge double taps, crushes etc., I have decided for the time being not to take the practical exam and become a CA referee.

Our tutor explained that the CA is trying to increase the number of referees but that the critically scarce resource is time for the practical exams. As I believe that there is great value in attending the course and doing the written exercises and test, I should like to suggest that the CA encourage more people to attend such courses by introducing a new, lower, category of referee, say a 'Club Referee' who is not qualified to perform at CA events, but by virtue of passing the written exam has demonstrated his knowledge of the laws to a level that would be very

valuable in local matches, etc.  
I do feel that the CA have a tendency to ignore the lower reaches of the game. However, they do seem to be interested in increasing the number of people who play and one way to do this is to make the system much less intimidating for newcomers.  
Michael Poole,  
Nailsea.

It is 25 years since John Solomon pointed out in his book 'Croquet' that the full-bisque game is the rational means of handicapping. I for one have been astounded by the fact that this method has not yet been generally adopted. He and other authors have noted the 'derision from those who will most benefit' (i.e. mid-bisquers) and this has been my experience too.

My congratulations to Mr Jackson for writing his letter, also to my old club for experimenting with the full-bisque game!

Ralph Lee,  
Budleigh Salterton.

### Croquet in Switzerland

Dear Sir,  
Anyone passing through Switzerland this summer will be made very welcome at CERN C.C. in Geneva. Low bisquers will be especially welcome. We have two lawns and 30 members from handicap 7 upwards. Local transport and accommodation will be arranged if necessary.

Please contact Norman Eatough beforehand: CERN, CH-1211 Geneva 23, Switzerland. Telephone office hours: +41 (Switzerland) 22 767 3333; evenings/weekends: +33 (France) 50 41 21 87.

I suppose all mention of South Africa is taboo; nevertheless, I have just spent three very pleasant weeks down there and managed three games at Rondebosch C.C. at Cape Town, including one against Ian Gillespie, President of S.A.C.A. They were glad to see someone new and gave me a great welcome. What a pity South Africa is still ostracised, but let's hope we can get back to normal some time soon.

Is there anyone in the C.A. willing to run a coaching weekend out here in June or July, in order that the pupils could put their new-found skills into operation as early in the season as possible? At CERN we have two lawns, so two coaches might be needed, but due to our courts being on CERN's front lawn, any coaching or play would have to take place outside office hours, ideally from Friday 17.30 to Sunday evening. If anyone is interested, please could they contact me.

1991 will be international year as far as Swiss croquet is concerned, for we are going to cross our borders for the first time. The 'Coupe des Alpes', a triangular match between Switzerland, France and Italy, has been rescheduled for early June near Milan. We also expect to visit a club in the Home Counties, and all being well will go to Carrickmines on the first leg of a return visit. We are invited to visit as many of the Italian clubs as we can, in Turin, Venice, Rome and Naples. All we need is elastic annual leave and a few million lire! We are, incidentally, actively preparing to form the Swiss C.A. with

a view to joining the World Federation.

Norman Eatough,  
CERN C.C., Geneva.



The 'Year of Sport' Logo.

### Publicity: 'The Year of Sport'

Dear Sir,  
It seems that the Association has missed the boat in capitalising on free publicity in this, the Year of Sport. The Sports Council's 8 page September 1990 newspaper lists 190 events, ranging from Aikido to Archery, Gliding to Judo. Many minority sports are listed. But not a word about our British Open Championships or the World Games.

Whilst the January magazine carries the Year of Sport's logo on page 13, I can't readily see any supporting copy.

Whilst I know that many Associates are content with minimal publicity, and wish clubs to remain exclusive, without double banking, they must recognise that the cost of maintaining lawns escalates annually. New members are a constant requirement if clubs are to remain healthy - and they will only know of our beginners' course if there is adequate publicity.

Local newspapers are only interested in the unusual. A photograph of David Goacher holding the Chairman's Salver, or Nicola Curry caressing the cat is of no interest to them. (Sorry, David and Nicola). They require spectacular close ups of action shots, particularly of local players. It doesn't really matter that the shot may be posed.

May I therefore ask that photographers remember this need. I am hoping to persuade local editors to print articles on croquet, during this, the Year of Sport, and I would particularly appreciate receiving unique action close ups of players in the South West Federation area. Remember, the person involved does not have to be good at croquet!

I can always liaise with the photographer over copy. Local papers are interested in a good read, and a fair amount of journalistic licence is called for if the article is to be published.

Hamish Hall,  
Publicity Officer  
South West Federation.

## Your Letters

## Croquet Jargon

Dear Sir,  
The January magazine contains two articles on jargon and terminology, but ought we not to demystify the game and simplify the language?

The inclusion of 'Wharrad' and 'Henshaw' in Keith Aiton's frivolous glossary displays bad taste. The late George Henshaw would have enjoyed the joke, but is this the way to remember him?

Each clique of players adopts a way of talking. My own contributions, in a Cambridge coterie previous to Keith Aiton's, were 'crumble', 'scoop' and 'clang', but then that says rather too much about the way I play, and I will not inflict any more of that on readers.

Even the basic terms can be simplified for coaching beginners and explaining the game to spectators.

**Rouquet:** hit.

**Croquet:** place in contact, contact-shot.

**Continuation:** extra shot.

**Peel:** put his other ball through its hoop.

**Rush:** knock the other ball to that hoop/ball for an easy contact-shot.

**Jawsing:** sticking that ball in the hoop.

I have seen interested spectators put off by the inability of an available out-player to translate what is happening on the lawn into terms which a potential recruit can understand. The argot spoken by a certain group of players is a barrier to others who might benefit from following an A-class game when watching from the clubhouse if incomprehensible jargon was not loudly pervading the air.

Readers would know the official terminology as defined in the laws and should not be expected to learn an alternative language.

When I used to edit tournament reports, I felt obliged on one occasion to supply a translator's footnote for 'wristed off the cutlet'. Translation: 'missed'.

May we all speak the same language, please?

Andrew Bennet,  
Blackburn.

Dear Sir,  
Thank you for publishing Keith Aiton's helpful explanation of some of the jargon of croquet (Croquet 213).

There are three main difficulties with the current argot: it is arcane, often pejorative, and it lacks structure. Mr Aiton attempts to combat the first of these, but does not tackle the third (root of the problem) and hence fails to alleviate the second. Alas, I have watched some of our younger and more expressive players suffer acute, though temporary, embarrassment on realising, after chiding themselves too audibly, that the eponym of their exclamation was their present

opponent.

It is to avoid such disturbances to their tender sensibilities that I have been engaged over the last three years in the Johnsonian task of constructing a Dictionary of Croquet Expressions. However, in order to impose the necessary formalism on the language I have adhered to the tenets of Adams and Lloyd ('The Meaning of Liff'), and have decreed that all expressions must be place names. A few examples may be appropriate.



*De-frosting at Surbiton afterwards! (L to R): John Greenwood, Ian Bond, Anne Robillard, Michael Stevens, Jane Chagwin (who provided an excellent lunch!), Alex Thomas, Michael Llewellyn-Williams, Adrian Judge, and Chris Osmond.*

**Acaster Malbis** (Yorkshire, interj): expression indicative of the unavailing use of a bisque.

**Ayton** (Berwickshire, vb): to complete a TPO.

**Badgeworth** (Gloucester, n): an all-round break without using bisques.

**Bentpath** (Dumfriesshire, interj): the ball has just deviated from the trajectory on which I unerringly sent it and has failed to achieve a simple 30-yard roquet.

**Broad Laying** (Hampshire, n): a double target (NB this expression is not condoned by the USCA).

**Clubworthy** (Cornwall, adj.): 1) having a handicap of 18 or less; 2) (of hoop position) about 4 yards away at an angle.

**East Blatchington** (Sussex, n): inability to hit the short lift shot (see also West Wittering).

**Godmanchester** (Cambridgeshire, n): a sloping lawn.

**Great Ayton** (Yorkshire, n): to win after Aytoning (rare)

**Henshaw** (Northumberland, n): an accidental mishit off the edge of the mallet.

**Hucking** (Kent, participial verb): twisting the mallet at the moment of impact (NB the back-formation **Huck** (n) is spurious and should only be used by coaches in the phrase 'to know a Huck from a Henshaw').

I am afraid that much work remains to be done for volumes J-R and S-Z, but I shall persevere. In the meantime, may I suggest the use of **Warslow** (Staffordshire, adj) to describe take-offs which fail to reach their goal?

David Appleton,  
Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

## Another Advanced Version

Dear Sir,  
The problem of the low handicap player versus the high handicap player, is the almost certain initial waiting period for the advanced player whilst a large number of bisques are used. This tends to make friendly games unrewarding for both players.

I have devised a friendly game for players of approximately handicaps

experienced players are that they are playing advanced players on seemingly level terms, and even if the advanced player goes round to 4-back in the 4th turn he still has the problem of the mandatory peels ahead of him.

The advantages for the advanced players are that they get the innings quite often, they practise peeling; and their game is exciting - sometimes laying up for peels in the middle of the lawn!

I have found the game to be very popular with the people I have played with so far, and finally if I lose and still have peels to do I reduce the number of peels needed the next time I play that person, and vice versa. As I said it is a friendly game,

Colin Wild,  
Altrincham.

## Surbiton Frostbite

Dear Sir,  
Winter croquet is alive and well and thriving in Surbiton. Our inaugural New Year's Day 'Frostbite' Tournament kicked off 1991 in great style despite massive hangovers from the night before for some of the eight players that took part.

The timing of the event raised interesting issues though:

1. Couldn't start earlier than 10am (too many hangovers).
2. Couldn't play beyond 2pm-ish (big lunch planned and it gets dark at 4pm).
3. Didn't want outlayers to freeze solid (thawing with blow torches too distracting for other players).

So how could such a tournament work?  
The solution was to make it a one-ball American (a Texan perhaps?) block format so that all games could be played in four hours and nobody would get too cold.

But this raised a further issue: with a group of players with handicaps ranging from -1 to 14, clearly games couldn't be level. So how should bisques be calculated? The Laws do not appear to recognise one-ball croquet, despite it being used on occasion to decide ties in CA-recognised tournaments.

Several formulae were considered but in the end we settled on:  
- handicap difference.  
- divided by three.  
- rounded down to the nearest half.  
So a difference of 4 becomes 1½, which becomes 1, and a difference of 8 becomes 2½, which becomes 2½.

Interestingly the tournament concluded with a triple tie of five wins each, the handicaps of the players being 3, 3½, and 7, which suggests the above approach to one-ball play does have some merit.

Michael Llewellyn-Williams,  
Chiswick.

## Steady Now!

Dear Sir,  
May I venture to suggest that a health warning should accompany my namesake's excellent Coaching Corner, at least when advice might be misunderstood.

A few careful experiments (using the Solomon grip as Paul Skinley appears to do in the photograph in Gazette 213) convinced me that any attempt to raise the head of the mallet above the player's head on the backswing could lead to serious discomfort with a consequent lack of accuracy in the shot. Following through to that level is of course, generally less risky and can produce satisfactory results.

Charles Townshend,  
Bishop's Lydeard.

## Advanced Play Variations

Dear Sir,  
We recently held at Woking a small internal tournament playing to advanced rules but with bisques allowed according to handicap differences. This is the second year we have run this event and it successfully demonstrated the value of this variation as a gentle introduction to the advanced game for middle bisquers.

The players handicaps ranged from 1½ up to 10 and all games seemed equally competitive. Although time limits were imposed in some cases (about three hours) only one game actually had to end on time.

Having some spare time at the end, we then played some shortened (18 and 14 point) games to a format devised especially for advanced play which also proved sufficiently effective that I thought it would be useful to write to you in case others would like to try it.

The eighteen point game starts with both balls for the first hoop, but as soon as a player's first ball makes that hoop it is then immediately for four back and is deemed to have made one back. Thus (unless peeled) the player concedes a lift at the end of the turn and (Law 53 not applying in these variants) would also concede a contact were he to continue to make four back in the same turn.

The effect of this is that a player rapidly finds himself in a classic advanced play position, with his second ball to play and every opportunity and motivation to attempt a triple. The fourteen point game is similar, but starting at the fifth hoop and has all the merits of the eighteen point game, except that the opportunity no longer exists to start the triple whilst making the third hoop.

Although we devised these variants in case we had time problems with the handicap tournament, they proved sufficiently enjoyable to suggest that they would

be better than the standard modified games whenever a shortened advanced game is wanted, and much more fun for those who like the challenge of a triple. In particular the fourteen point game goes fast enough that it could be used as a much more effective tie breaker than the one ball game or other oddities that managers sometimes have to contrive.

Geoffrey Cuttle,  
Woking.

## Gail's Guinness

Dear Sir,  
I read with great interest Celia Steward's report of the Barlow Bowl Competition in Croquet (issue 213), especially her concluding comments and questions concerning my club colleague Gail Curry.



*The Barlow Bowl, charged for the celebration!*

Personally I found it somewhat surprising that anyone should spend five days in Gail's company and ask the question whether she filled the Bowl with champagne or marbles? The answer is 'neither', as anyone in the Tyneside Club could tell you. Gail is a great connoisseur of that black velvet liquid glorying in the name of Guinness!

The Bowl was duly filled to the brim at the Club cocktail party to celebrate the event and I attach a photograph showing the Bowl and contents.

I hope this information will prevent further speculation by the other competitors of Roehampton.

Derek Trotman,  
North Shields.

## I've started ... so I'll stop

Dear Sir,  
The current edition of the Laws of Croquet includes a definition of a turn. More precisely, it states that a turn ends when the striker quits the lawn in the belief that the turn has ended. Whilst not solving any problems of which I am aware, its inclusion gives rise to a class of anomalies of which the following is an example (Wylie notation):

RY is playing a break with red. 2-back is run and in the continuation stroke blue is rushed across to 3-back where black waits as a pioneer. Blue cannons into black, and in some confusion RY continues the turn incorrectly by taking croquet from black rather than blue. Following the croquet stroke, UK forestalls. At this point RY replaces the balls with red in contact with blue, places the red clip on 3-back and quits the lawn quickly (fate had it that RY's seat happened to be at the South end of the lawn).

Whatever the reason for RY quitting the lawn (possibly under the impression that a wrong ball had been played, possibly not), unless UK has misled RY in some way, the implication of the Laws is that it is now UK to play, period. Previously of course UK would have told RY to stop being silly and to play on by taking croquet from blue. Now the situation cannot be rectified 'sensibly', whatever the views of the players.

I would be most grateful for the Laws Committee's clarification of the following matters arising:

- (a) is this situation intentional, the reason for which I am simply unaware and can be easily enlightened, or
- (b) is it a genuine oversight which will be rectified in due course, and
- (c) in the latter case, what would be the reasonable and/or desirable courses of action for me if in the meantime I should find myself in UK's position?

Phil Cordingley,  
London.

## Swiss Block Management

Dear Sir,  
I offer members of the CA a computer program to take the hard work out of managing a Swiss block. Send me a formatted disc (MSDOS) and stamped address envelope, and I will send you the program.

Working out who should play who in the next round of a Swiss block is at best tedious and often difficult. I therefore wrote a computer program to do it, strictly according to the book. As each result is entered it checks all possible combinations for any games already known in the next round. I have used this in the last two West Park tournaments without a hiccup. It will also display the current order and score table.

Eric Audsley,  
Luton.

## The New Handicap System

Dear Sir,  
I applaud the Handicap Coordination Committee's latest

## Your Letters

attempt to systematise its procedures and will happily carry a card with me.

At last the HCC seems to have recognised the need for trusting 'the skills of official handicappers' to deal with rapid improvers, following some unfortunate rejections of recommendations in 1990 which caused embarrassment to a Manager and deprived some competitors of a decent game.

There should be no 'stigma' attached to a handicap increase. I have had three and was delighted by the benefit.

I fail to see, however, that the new system will do anything to standardise the regional variations unless certain players travel more widely. The 1990 Rankings published in the January magazine provide enough evidence of status achieved on the basis of purely regional play in level competition.

I don't know the answer, unless it is compulsory redeployment to clubs never visited before, but I look forward to seeing everybody in the coming season with my record card in my pocket and wish to thank those who do the most unpopular task: the handicappers.

Another increase? Yes please!  
Andrew Bennet,  
Blackburn.

Dear Sir,  
All the experts seem to agree that croquet is a game to be played on equal terms between old and young, men and women.

Not so in our club, the Bournemouth Croquet Club, as in the last seven years since the club was formed the mixed singles club competitions have always been won by males in spite of the fact there is a ratio of more than three to one in favour of women. Also in 1990 we introduced a ladder competition with, at the end of the season, three men fighting it out at the top of the ladder. The prize for most progress on the ladder was of course won by a man.

Thank goodness for the Ladies Singles Competition!

It would be interesting to know if other clubs get the same results as we do. If so, should ladies play off a higher handicap when playing against men?  
Muriel Berry,  
Hon Sec., Bournemouth C.C.

Dear Sir,  
There has been much discussion regarding Handicaps of late, particularly with regard to their general downward drift. At Norwich we have used a variation of the Card system as the basis of our season-long Handicap Cup. After reviewing all the Games played and awarding the Cup to Ted, some adjustments to Handicaps were made.

I hope that the note that I received from Cecil Hamilton-Miller after the  
Cont'd on page 16.....

## Tournament Reports

### Fettes College: 13-18 August Introduction to Edinburgh

Report by Terry Greenwood

What a delightful way to spend a week. Playing croquet in one of the most beautiful cities in Europe where there is high quality food at prices within the reach of all tournament players. It is a toss up whether Glasgow or Edinburgh serve 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 Leith docks will suit your requirements.

For many, an evening is not complete without a drink of beer or a short. These can be found in one of the many traditional pubs - pubs like those that once dominated the local English community, but now sadly 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 Caledonian 80 and Thrixton 70 provide smooth beers that do not give you heartburn or that bloated feeling. These 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 Scottish hospitality and humour, eliminating the intensity that shows through at many English tournaments but still allowing 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 also was evident with Anglo Kiwis in the form of the quiet Bob Fewtrell and his bubbling wife Faith, and 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

and 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 which 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 English are not soft, and had secretly flown up the rubber brooms from Southport.

Another reel was danced, and 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

Scottish sage, Ian Wright. Most popular reasons banded about for this included her Mulliner-like approach to the game and 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 bisquers with their armament of bisques and uncomplicated versions of the game.

Trying to rush from corner 4 to

regular visitor, defending his title. Played with two blocks and a knock-out semi-final stage, Thompson had to work hard to reach the semi-final along with M. O'Connell. The other block was easily won by R. Williams +49 with C. van Griethuyson chasing him home.

Thompson had a comfortable win over C. van G but M. O'Connell, two years in the game with a handicap of 3, showed why he had become a rising star. Surely the experienced Williams would show this upstart a thing or two. In a game that went to time, Williams was on the wrong end 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 him a close victory.

#### I.H. Wright Trophy

One block of 4+ handicap 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 8+) had made good progress on the wet lawns against better players, the latter stages of this competition gave them a reminder that with fewer bisques they would be subjected to the problems their previous opponents had been facing. Several matches failed to finish and ran to time with less than the normal 26 points in a game.

B. Townsend and R. Fewtrell won Block A and their opponents from B were R. Owen and R. Forth. Townsend, who had been giving a good account of himself all week, won through to the final where he met Fewtrell. Townsend had won +12 in their 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 handicaps of 11+) 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 handicapped players ('didn't she, 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 were 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. Corral 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 the +1 victory was in favour of Greenwood/Weaver.

For technical merit, I would award the final 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, with Greenwood, Mann and Weaver 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 3 to

4 yards and goes to boundary. Turns round and then shoots 35 yards up the lawn to corner 2 and scores a hit on his opponent to promote a match winning position.

#### Epilogue

Ian Wright obtained a scoop by persuading the Chairman of the Edinburgh Council's Leisure Service Committee to visit the tournament and present the prizes. This was followed by an encouraging comment from the visitor who promised to pursue with vigour the improvements and expansion of the Edinburgh lawns at Lauriston Castle. If this becomes a reality, it would provide Edinburgh with one of the most attractive venues in the UK; five lawns, with a magnificent view over the Firth of Forth.

The last prize to be presented at

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, 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.

#### RESULTS

##### Cramond Cup

(Advanced play)

##### Semi-Finals

P. Thompson bt Dr.C.M. van Griethuyson +15; M. O'Connell by R. Williams +2(T).

##### Final

P. Thompson bt M. O'Connell +6

##### Ian Wright Trophy

(Advanced Play; 4 bisques & over)

### CROQUET NORTH'S FIRST TOURNAMENT



The first tournament for the new Federation was held on four near-perfect short courts at Saltwell Park, Gateshead. The maximum entry of 16 players was oversubscribed and in spite of a wet start, the day turned out warm and dry.

Entries were from a wide area covering County Durham and Northumberland, but the two winners eventually came from Tyneside, Brian Thompson winning the 'Low Bisquers' prize and the 'High Bisquers' prize going to William Hill (seen above, left, with Syd Jones). Both prizes were sculpted in metal by Ron Nixon, a local Tyneside member.

This successful and popular event, sure to be repeated next season, opens up a new high-quality venue with a very good bowling green surface, thanks to Gateshead MBC.

this tournament is rather unique. It is a wooden bowl and the significant date for the holder is represented by a 20p coin. It is given to the person who usually progresses the farthest in all competitions but never wins anything. 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 when he successfully defended this highly prized trophy and was summoned for the second successive year to receive it.

Whilst the tournament committee should be thanked,

**Winner:** F. Mann (3 wins) +35.  
**Runner-up:** C. Dinwoodie (3 wins) +18.

#### Silver Jubilee Salver

(Handicap play; 8 bisques and over)

#### Semi-Finals

B. Townsend (13) bt R. Forth (10) +7; R. Fewtrell (8) bt T. Owen (10) +12

#### Final

B. Townsend bt R. Fewtrell +1(T).

#### Walter Laing Cup

(Handicap play; 11 bisques and over)

#### Semi-Finals

N. Gardner (16) bt Mrs M.G. Wright (14) +17; A. Mann (16) bt Mrs J. Murdoch (20) +16.

#### Final

N. Gardner bt A. Mann +15.

## Notices

### Brian Macmillan Retirement Presentation

The Hon Treasurer reports that there was an extremely generous response to Stephen Mulliner's letter of 8th November to Associates, 207 of whom (including several clubs) contributed £1765 to Brian Macmillan's retirement gift. Brian received his cheque at a small retirement party in the Hurlingham Club on the afternoon of December 8th (see page 17).

The Association is not however being deprived of Brian's valuable talents as he has offered to continue to supervise the sales of books and croquet equipment from the CA Office and, operating on a modest commission basis, he hopes to extend our commercial activities in this direction.

### Club Development (4-Lawn) Fund

During 1990, three donations were received by the Fund: **Over \$100:** Jim Townsend. **Over £10:** Chris Hudson, John McCullough. Council of the CA has also transferred \$1050 from General Funds.

A Grant of \$500 has been made out of the Fund to the Sidmouth Club.

### RESIDENTIAL COACHING COURSES

Loughborough Summer School  
**29th July - 2 August, 1991**  
Details in Issue 213, Page 21.  
Enquiries to Chris Hudson (Tel: 0270-820296). Please note fee is \$184, not \$160 as stated in error in Fixture Book and Issue 213.

### Ardingly College Summer School

**4-10 August, 1991**  
Details in Issue 213, Page 23.

### Kirkley Hall Summer School

**7-12 July, 1991**  
A week's coaching and competitive games for high bisque players in beautiful surroundings.

Including time for optional excursions to the Roman Wall and the Castles on the North East Coast.

Full residential accommodation from Sunday evening dinner to Friday lunch.

Fees (incl. accommodation & coaching) £185. Excursions extra. All enquiries to Syd Jones, 13 Kew Gardens, Whitley Bay, Tyne & Wear, NE26 3LY (Tel: 091-252-2962).

## Tournament Reports

### Wrest Park: 21-23 September Who needs more than one exposure?

Report by John Bevington

I had hoped for a photographic record of the tournament, but the sprockets failed to lock on as they should, leaving me with a single multiple (x36) exposure - the ultimate group photo. We started on the Friday in a biting wind, the 28 players divided into two American blocks and a Swiss. Pam Hughes and Pauline Sander from Stony Stratford were playing in their first tournament, Pauline gaining the first of her two wins at the manager's expense.

The mental strain took its toll, as usual. Nigel Gray made 4-back, penultimate, and rover with green, leaving a rush to rover from brown. He then took a bisque and played brown, which at the end of the turn was in the jaws of rover. Enter the green clip. Players unsure. Steve Battison plays and then enquires. Error condoned. Nigel made rover and then missed Steve's ball, Steve winning +2.

Their fortunes changed later; Steve suffering some heavy defeats and Nigel finding his feet and holding his nerve, particularly in a fine single ball finish against Hugh Williams, a win which effectively put Hugh out of contention for the Swiss.

Hugh's game against John Bevington contained a moment of high drama. John was sitting quietly watching a controlled break when a passing bird took a dump on top of his head, said to be a sign of impending good fortune. Hugh promptly broke down at 3-back, leaving John the shortest of walks on to the lawn and the easiest of roquets. John later won +10.

On the next lawn, Brian Hallam

was playing Judy Anderson and was up against it. Judy was for peg and peg with a straight rush between the peg and hoop 5. Brian had a ball on the North boundary behind hoop 6. Desperate straits... the ball flew over the hoop, bounced twice (pitching in opposite directions) and hit. A shame he later stuck in 4-back.

Connoisseurs of the drawn-out finish would have appreciated Tom Anderson's game against Howard Bottomley, in which Tom was becalmed on rover and rover for over an hour.

So who won? you ask. Justin Goddard for one, who won all his games to take block A and was savaged by the handicapper as a result. The handicapper was probably right, for the following weekend he completed a triple in pouring rain during a league match against.... Wrest Park. Rodney Ward won block B, losing only to Jonathan Wolfe. Rodney can be a disconcerting opponent; there is little stalking of the ball; it is stand, stare, and strike, and don't worry about joining up in the middle of the lawn.

The Swiss was won by Jeremy Dyer, who was equal on six wins with John Bevington but victorious in the game between them. His free swing and accurate hitting served him well and justified his reassessment (a double peel finish against the handicapper might also have had something to do with it).

Come back, all of you, next year. With any luck, we will have smoothed out the worst of Wrest Park's pools of unease - the approach to hoop 5 on lawn 3.



French and Irish players enjoy a lunch break in the Park at La Rochelle, whilst French CA President Antoine Ravez (right) checks no-one is missing!

### Colchester: 5-7 October Over-50s get their Bronze Awards

Report by Pat Hetherington

With summer giving way almost overnight to autumn, the first two days of the Over-50 tournament saw squally winds and occasional heavy showers. However, happily, the 20 intrepid players were able to enjoy sunshine on the final day.

Three players were enjoying their first ever CA tournament, but most were hardened veterans of the circuit. It was therefore somewhat surprising in one game to see blue roquet brown and prepare to take croquet (or was it failing eyesight?), while in another game the first player played red on to the lawn, to be followed by her opponent playing yellow.

Thanks to a generous four hour limit, only five games went to time in the first four rounds, but to speed up progress in the final two rounds the limit was reduced to 3/4 hours,

resulting in nine games going to time. Anyway, all 60 matches had been completed by teatime on Sunday.

Outright winner, undefeated in all six rounds, was John Robinette of Bury St Edmunds, who took home the rose bowl, a CA bronze award and a two bisque handicap reduction.

Runner up was Gillian Burgin from Havering, who won five out of six games and also suffered a handicap reduction. A further bronze award was won by Phyllis Osborne.

#### RESULTS

- 6 wins: J Robinette.
- 5 wins: Mrs G Burgin.
- 4 wins: R A Gosden, R Welch, W Lamb, I McClelland, J Reeve.
- 3 wins: G Hallett, J Burgin, D S Cornelius, N Jackson, A V Camroux.
- 2 wins: C Bennett, J Williams, Mrs D E Camroux, Mrs B Gosden.
- 1 win: Mrs B Carter, Mrs M Clary.
- 0 wins: Mrs E Robinette.

## EAST MIDLANDS FEDERATION 1990 - A Year of Change and Mixed Fortunes for East Midlands Clubs

Report by Gary Norman: Chairman, East Midlands Croquet Federation

Mixed fortunes and changes were the mark of the 1990 season, with a number of clubs either changing location or consolidating rather than expanding. By necessity more attention was focussed inwards towards the existing clubs rather than looking to develop additional clubs in the region.

#### Club News

Two clubs changed their home venues in 1990, with Leicester moving to Mowmacre Sports Centre and South Derbyshire to Brethby Country Club.

East Midlands League success followed the two clubs to their new homes with their winning the Association Division and the Short Croquet Division respectively. Leicester's Richard White won the All-England to keep the trophy in the family, his brother David having won it in 1989. A tremendous season for Leicester was capped by triumph in the Longman Cup.

Since a club was formed at Collingham in 1989, the club's enthusiasm has resulted in them now having 32 members, one of the highest membership figures in the region.

Long Eaton players progressed to form a club and joined the Federation. The local council look after their lawns and the club are looking to recruit more members.

Southwell have a new pavilion and will also be launching a recruitment campaign for the new season.

Since the inauguration of the East Midlands Federation, the number of member clubs has risen from seven to twelve. Unfortunately, as pointed out at the top of this report, not all of them had particularly successful seasons. Two or three clubs suffered from drastically reduced membership numbers and may well need to look to the Federation and other clubs for some assistance in 1991.

#### Development

Despite the leanness of the season in terms of development, two particular successes are worthy of mention.

First, a new club was formed at Sapcote, near Hinckley in Leicestershire, from a nucleus of mainly WI ladies whose enthusiasm was such that they continued to play throughout the winter and have now joined the Federation.

The other main achievement on the development front was the establishment of a healthy relationship with the National Trust through two events at Sudbury Hall, Derbyshire. The first of these was a 'Come and Try It' where we helped to raise money at the national 'Enterprise Neptune' fund-raising event. Secondly, a suggestion of a regional handicap tournament was

welcomed with great enthusiasm by the Sudbury Hall staff but, after mowing the front grassed area (they couldn't really be called lawns), it became evident that they were not good enough to play matches on, especially as this area was used as an overflow car park. A change of plan therefore transformed the event into a regional coaching weekend for high bisquers. Hopefully this will become an annual event, especially given the beautiful surroundings in which to play croquet. Thanks should go to the South Derbyshire players who did the lion's share of organising and manning the events.

#### Indoor Croquet Events

The Ancell Trust (Stony Stratford) club held another indoor croquet weekend, this time at Bletchley Leisure Centre. The event, again financed by Milton Keynes Development Corporation, featured the use of both indoor carpets.

#### Federation Organisation

Major changes have begun to take shape in the way that the East Midlands Federation does business. The number of General Meetings per year has been reduced from two to one and representation on the Federation Executive Committee has been widened so that each club now has one representative on the committee. Hopefully these changes

will lead to a broader spread of the organisational workload and will bring more people into lending assistance in the region for future progress both in the short term at the existing clubs and eventually in the establishment of new clubs.

David Carpenter has taken over as League Manager from the late Jim Kirby who did so much for croquet in the East Midlands and will be sadly missed. Alan Tunbridge will be filling the long-vacant post of Regional Coaching Officer.

Thanks are extended to Geoffrey Day's company 'Matchplay' for their continued sponsorship of the East Midlands League.

#### Indoor Croquet at Ashby Leisure Centre: 16-17 March, 1991

What is hoped will be the biggest and best indoor croquet weekend is being organised by the East Midlands Federation at the Hood Park Leisure Centre, North Street, Ashby-de-la-Zouch, Leicestershire.

The event, partly financed by the North West Leicestershire District Council, is intended to raise money for Comic Relief during the 'National Week of Sport' and will take place over the weekend of 16th & 17th March. One of the highlights of the weekend will be a 24-hour sponsored croquet marathon. Is this a record for continuous playing? Other features will include a Sports Equipment Auction, Target Croquet, Fancy Dress, 'Come and Try It', Open Competition, East Midlands Tournament, and bookable playing time if paid in advance.

If anyone would like to participate in the weekend and help raise money for Comic Relief, ring Gary Norman 0530-70826. Donations to the sports equipment auction will be very welcome and should be sent to Gary Norman, Ivydene, 25 Atherstone Road, Measham, Burton-on-Trent. DE12 7LY.

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Spectators and players at East Midlands 'Come & Try It' session at Sudbury Hall, Derbyshire. This was in aid of 'Enterprise Neptune'.



The South Derbyshire v. Stony Stratford League Match at Brethby Country Club. South Derbyshire (on the left) won the Short Croquet League in 1990 (L to R): Mike Gibson, David Carpenter, Martin Willett, and Gary Norman. Pam Hughes, Stony Stratford's captain, is third from right.

## SOUTH WEST FEDERATION Support Maintained for Existing Clubs

Report by Chairman Ray Ransom to 1990 AGM

This is the end of my third and final year as Chairman of the South West Federation. I took over from Martin Murray at the end of 1987 when the Federation was just three years old and had just come to the end of a period of very rapid growth.

At that time, the Federation had 32 member clubs, over half of which were clubs formed within the

previous 3 years. Over the last 3 years the number of clubs has reduced to 25, some of the new clubs having fallen by the wayside.

Starting a new croquet club is not easy, especially in the current climate of financial restrictions. Finding a suitable ground, financing the acquisition of hoops, balls and mallets, and recruiting club

members, requires a great deal of ingenuity and effort. In many ways maintaining the existence of a new club is equally difficult. A new club will rely on established clubs for help with coaching, handicapping and providing match practice and the low proportion of established clubs did not help the situation. The current position seems to be much more

stable, with the newer clubs having gained considerable experience over the last few years.

This fact has been clearly demonstrated during 1990. This year the Federation organised an intermediate league for the first time and 15 teams entered, bringing the total for the three leagues to 51 teams, far and away a record (in 1985 it was 18).

## Federation News



What emphasises most of all the progress that the newer clubs have made is the fact that of the six teams in the finals only one was from a club which was established when the Federation was formed. The three winners were all from new clubs and not one of them entered the leagues during the first two years of the Federation.

Last year I reported the considerable success of South West players in individual tournaments. I am pleased to report that this success has been continued at all levels of play. In particular I would mention David Goacher, who won the Chairman's, Ivor Brand, successful in the Selectors, and Frances Ransom the 1990 Women's Champion.

Once again the Cheltenham and Gloucester Building Society have generously supported our league programme. At the present time financial help is not readily available so the C & G assistance is particularly welcome. Local authority grants are difficult to obtain and the Sports

## Your Letters

.....Cont'd from page 11

changes were published will be of interest to all Handicappers. I quote: 'I read the news sheet to learn, with rapture, that Ted has been reduced to 16 while I have been upgraded to the same figure - I became an Octogenarian last October. In the Spring of 1991 I look forward to renewing my battle with Ted and even, who knows, perhaps defeating him!'

Please note the interesting use of the word 'upgraded'.

Nick Harris,  
Norwich.

Dear Sir,  
I have been reading the recent correspondence about the handicap system with interest, and I'm glad that Roger Wheeler's idea is to be used this season.

One of the aims of this new system, (as stated by Martin French in his article, issue 213), is to control the downward drift of handicaps. It is this point that I am concerned about. I think that not only will the downward drift be stopped, but an upward drift will be started, which may become undesirable.

The reason for this stems from the fact that every game will result in a rating decrease and a corresponding rating increase. So on average, every handicap decrease will be matched by a handicap increase.

A typical player may start tournament play with a handicap of 20, and stop tournament play with a handicap of 4 or 5 say. Such a player thus contributes 15 or 16 handicap points to the whole system, and these must be absorbed by the pool of

Council, generous supporters of the Federation in its early years, now confines itself to central sponsorship (in our case the Croquet Association).

Finally I would like to thank Ian Maugham and Peter Bradshaw for all the work that they have done over this last year. Ian has now been Treasurer of the Federation since its formation six years ago and we owe him a great deal. As I have already said, the league programme is now particularly extensive and the organisation of the fixture list and recording of results has demanded considerable effort from him.

I wish the new committee, whoever they may be, good fortune for the future.

### S.W. Federation Committee

The following were elected to office at the AGM: Tim Haste (Chairman); Strat Lydiard (Secretary); Ian Maugham (Treasurer); David Purdon (Regional Coaching Officer); Ian Maugham (Development Officer); Peter Bradshaw (League Secretary), and Hamish Hall (Publicity Officer).

croquet players. Each year there are quite a few people entering tournament play, and a lot of players improving, and so a lot of points entering the system. All these points must be absorbed by players that lose games, and their handicaps must go up to match. Since everybody improves over their croquet 'career', everybody will add points to the system, and no-one will remove them.

The effect will be immediate and the result will be an overall increase in handicaps. The band of handicaps will perhaps move from -2 to 20, to -1 to 21, and further. The upward drift will be lessened by the 'manual' reduction of rapid improvers, since they will add less points to the whole system. This drift is desirable up to a point, but in the long run we surely want to keep the handicap band stable.

I expect the time will come, perhaps in a year or two, when the handicaps will have risen sufficiently (perhaps 0 to 22), and the new handicap card system will need revision.

I mention in passing one possible side-effect. Some players may be unwilling to play 'bandits' if at all possible, since the expected loss results in an undesired(?) rating increase. This might even lead to clubs being less willing to encourage new members - especially potential bandits who are likely to improve their handicaps largely at the expense of club members' handicaps.

A more sensitive system may be

## South West Federation: League Report for 1990 Many More League Players

Report by Peter Bradshaw

1990 saw an expansion in the leagues organised in the South West. Under the continued sponsorship of the Cheltenham and Gloucester Building Society the Federation ran three grades of competition as well as a golf croquet tournament. It also saw the use of full bisques in the B league with a 13½ base.



Bretby Country Club, South Derbyshire Croquet Club's new home.

The creation of an intermediate league in addition to the existing Federation and B leagues meant that far more players than before took part in competitive play. There was some evidence, however, of clubs struggling to raise B league teams on some occasions. This could simply reflect a raising of standards as players move up into the intermediate league.

The season was notable for the fact that all three leagues were won by newer clubs. Dyffryn take pride of place, winning both Federation and B leagues (as well as being champions of Wales?). Very well done also to Plymouth, who won the inaugural intermediate league.

On a wider note it was pleasing to see Bath and Worcester reaching the last four of the Longman Cup.

Group winners were:

### Federation League

required. One that takes into account more than simply wins and losses. Results can be put in context by considering the form of opponents. For example, suppose a player plays six games in a weekend, winning four. Then probably that player's handicap will remain unchanged. However if the two losses were against players who receive handicap reductions at the end of the weekend, then it is hardly surprising that the player in question lost those two games. The losses are not such 'Bad' losses as against a player with a stable handicap. Similarly, a win against someone whose play is worsening is surely far less an achievement than a win against an improving player.

I therefore suggest the use of an idea similar to one I have seen used for determining the winner of a swiss. The number of wins of your opponent should determine the 'value' of any win or loss. The best way to do this, I suggest, is to consider

**North:** Swindon.  
**Central:** Dyffryn.  
**South:** Kingston Maurward.  
**Play-off:** Dyffryn beat Kingston Maurward.  
**Final:** Dyffryn beat Swindon.  
**Intermediate League (Handicaps 9-18)**

**North:** Swindon.  
**S. West:** Plymouth.  
**S. East:** Sidmouth.  
**Play-off:** Plymouth beat Swindon.  
**Final:** Plymouth beat Swindon.  
**B League (Handicaps 16+)**  
**North:** Worcester Norton.  
**Central:** Dyffryn.  
**S. West:** Cranford.  
**S. East:** Sidmouth.

**Play-offs:** Dyffryn beat Worcester Norton; Budleigh Salterton (standing in for Cranford) beat Sidmouth.

**Final:** Dyffryn beat Budleigh Salterton.

Thanks are due to all who took part throughout the year, to the majority(!) of clubs for getting results in on time, and to the hosts of the play-offs and finals - Bournemouth, Dyffryn, Bristol, Sidmouth, Plymouth and Nailsea.

Result	No of games opp'n has won of last 10	Value
win	8 or more	3
win	3-7	2
win	2 or less	1
lose	8 or more	-1
lose	3-7	-2
lose	2 or less	-3

The parameters that I have used are merely example ones to demonstrate the idea. I expect that other people will be able to think of enhancements.

To what extent this idea is better than the new system (if indeed the new system is lacking at all), I'm not sure. It does of course have the disadvantage of being rather more complicated to implement. It would however be surprising if a truly accurate system were straightforward (cf. the national rankings).  
Duncan Reeve,  
Reepham.

## BRISTOL Lawns Extended and Renovated as Stage 3 Begins

Report by Hamish Hall

It's only natural that one should have a healthy respect for one's original mentor, so it was not surprising that I should cast an approving eye on Dr Guban's antics, beaver away at the roots of a cherry tree that encroached on to corner 4 of lawn 2. They had provided many an excuse for fouled up cannons from the corner spot, and I wondered what new excuse Donald would find to explain his wayward shots to future novices. But he certainly wielded his pruning saw with the precision that might have led one to believe him to be a surgeon and not a physicist.

But there was no confusion on Dr Green's calling. As ever immaculately turned out, but now in a white boiler suit and tin hat that would not have been amiss were he conducting royalty over his generating plant, he was working up steam, wielding a shovel with the exactness that one comes to expect from the head of the Green family. If only George would learn to use that head on the lawns!



The Stone Gang (L to R): Donald Guban, Frances Ransom, and Sue Turnbull.

Dr Bray, fresh from his nuptial holidays, displayed uncommon vigour in wielding the pick, gouging massive rock out of the South boundary bank of lawn 1. Good training, deduced bride Sue (nee Turnbull), wondering how she would possibly harness this tremendous energy on the back garden. Dr Tribe was on hand to minister to the cuts, bruises and aching backs, but not finding much trade worthy of her professional skills, determined to demonstrate that the weaker sex (sic!) could also play their part in this, our latest venture.

There were thousands on stones to be gathered up and dumped at the North boundary. Betty toiled till her back gave up. Roma and Gerrard Verver, who had celebrated their golden wedding earlier in the season, joined in the stone gathering gang, proving that there was work for one and all.

Finally, Dr Murray, our Honorary member in keeping with his exalted rank, inspected the work in progress, exhorted the workers, instructed his future doubles partner in the art of taking bisques - a little negative, and lacking in confidence, I thought recognising the eminence of her prospective coach - had the last ice cream in the fridge, and decided against joining the gang of over-qualified navvies. Clearly Martin had learnt how to use his head!

You may well be wondering what desecration was being enacted at Bristol. Stage 3 of our development plan was under way. All 3 lawns were being extended, or widened. The hills and the hollows were being eliminated. Apart from the banks being cut away or built up, vast areas of lawn were being meticulously cut out in foot square sections, shaved to uniform thickness and replaced. This specialist work was being executed by a professional groundsman, whose uncanny eye



Roy Goodwin, Hamish Hall, Alan Evans, and Donald Guban widening lawn 3.

spotted every imperfection. Not difficult, I can hear Alvar (the groom, referred to above), who blamed the condition of the lawns for his pathetic performance in our club competitions.

This project had certainly brought its share of frustrations to the Clerk of Works, Ray Ransom. One would not have believed that the country was wallowing in the trough of a depression. No contractor was interested in bulldozing the banks, a tricky job because of the restricted access. Assiduously thumbing through the yellow pages, boosting British Telecom's profits, bore no fruit. In desperation, we were reduced to hiring a self drive digger and dumper. More profits for BT as a rota for drivers and operators was arranged. The plant hire salesman assured me that there were no problems. If you can drive a car, it's a piece of cake. What he failed to mention was that the car that he had in mind was one of the earliest models, lacking in brakes, and with a decidedly dodgy gearbox.

The Clerk of Works took delivery of the equipment, and within the space of minutes had adjudged the dumper a beast, requiring the strength of Hercules to swing the crank handle. Voluminous quantities of poisonous diesel smoke engulfed the machine, spoiling the entertaining antics of Ray attempting to steer via the rear wheels. It may have been OK if you had experience reversing a caravan, but I sensed that Ray's actuarial skills were being sorely taxed.

Meanwhile Dr Green had arrived to inspect and test drive what wife Sally had promised to man on the early shift on Sunday morning. Using his head, George promptly disqualified Sally as a starter. He would stand in, instead. Not relishing the prospect

of widowhood, Sally promptly forbade the breadwinner from touching the machines. We quickly perceived the wisdom of these decisions, as clearly it would have been unwise to allow members to operate machinery that appeared to be dangerous. Fortunately, a couple of the plant hire workers had no such qualms, and demonstrated what can be achieved when working on piece rates. Flood lighting appeared, and work progressed into the night.

But the digger could only achieve so much - quite apart from the fact that we had restricted ourselves to a weekend hire. And rather like entering a cinema half way through the film, I have now reached the stage of my chronicle when I commented on the doctors' diligent digging. Not that they were alone, mind you. The work continued for seven weekends, whilst we were blessed with exceptionally fine weather. On one Sunday afternoon, there were 15 members, barrowing and levelling, building new banks, and sowing seed. But the undeniable truth is that members have been saved at least £2,500 in labour costs as the result of the sustained hard work of the doctors, their wives, and two or three others.

With the proviso that the weather is normal, we look forward to basking in a surfeit of expressions of pleasure at the overall improvement in our lawns. If there was to be an award for the club that achieved most over a 7-year period, Bristol would be a firm favourite to win. It is difficult to believe that 7 years ago, the men disappeared into the thicket behind our 100 year old delapidated clubhouse, whilst the ladies had to suffer the indignities of plumbing that the Romans didn't tolerate. Readers will remember that 3 years ago we completed stage 2 of our development programme, with the building of a new (second hand) clubhouse. This was enhanced last winter by Mark James and George laying a quite professional patio.

And what of the future? The Committee recognise that the playing surface was severely ravaged by the drought of 1989 and 1990. It will take several seasons work to get the lawns up to first class standard. But that is our aim. The installation of showers and a bar are low on our priority list. But visitors to our weekend tournaments can confidently expect a pleasing upgrading of the lawns.

## BRIAN MACMILLAN RETIRES AS ADMINISTRATION SECRETARY

Dear Associates,

May I thank you all for your extremely generous contributions to my retirement gift, also for the hundreds of letters, telephone and personal calls I have had wishing me well - it makes me very humble.

I would also like to thank you for the support you have given me during my eight years with the Croquet Association. It has been a pleasure to assist in its growth and to see the progress made, particularly by the younger generation. The Council's far-sighted policy of encouraging them has paid great dividends and should secure our success in World Croquet for many years to come.

With the leadership of the Chairman and Council, croquet is in safe hands and we can look forward to continued progress with more four lawn clubs, better facilities, and more coaching and tournaments for high bisque players.



Brian Macmillan and his wife Carmel with Stephen Mulliner at the presentation.

May I take this opportunity of wishing you all well for 1991.

Thank you again.  
Your sincerely,  
Brian C. Macmillan.

## INTERMEDIATE COACHING NOTES

By Ian Plummer

It is intended to run a series of coaching articles for intermediate players in future issues of 'Croquet' based on some coaching notes prepared by Ian Plummer. This will be complemented by another section of the magazine, which will provide coaching notes for those just starting to play the game.

As an aid to understanding his Notes, Ian Plummer has provided a glossary of terms, the first part of which was published in our previous issue. The second half of the glossary and the first coaching note are given here.

**Pass Roll:** A croquet shot in which both balls travel some distance, with the striker's ball travelling proportionally further.

**Peel:** A manoeuvre in which a ball, other than the one which is struck, is made to run its hoop.

**Peelee:** The ball which is peeled.

**Peeling:** To cause a ball other than the one being struck to run its hoop.

**Pegging out:** Striking a ball which is for the peg, against the peg.

**Penult:** Abbreviation for penultimate.

**Penultimate:** The eleventh hoop.

**Pioneer:** This is a ball waiting at your next or next-but-one hoop. It acts as a stepping stone to make the hoop approach easy.

**Pilot:** Another name for a pioneer ball. Often used to indicate a ball at your next hoop, whereas pioneer is used for a ball at your next-but-one hoop. The differentiation is not made in this text.

**Pivot:** The pivot is the ball near the centre of the lawn in a four-ball break.

**Primary Colours:** The set of balls coloured Blue, Red, Yellow and Black. Red and Yellow are always paired together as are Black and Blue.

**Promote:** Causing a ball which was not struck, or in direct contact with the struck ball, to move. For example a croqueted ball can be aimed at a ball in the jaws of a hoop, and that ball be promoted by the collision.

**Pull:** This describes the motion of balls in a split roll shot. Under some conditions the balls do not travel along their intended lines but curve slightly back together (towards the aiming line). This is caused by side spin developed in the roll shot.

**Reception Ball:** A reception ball is the ball you roquet immediately after running a hoop. It is usually placed on the far side of a hoop you are about to run. That being the case, you normally turn your pioneer at a hoop into your reception ball when you play the croquet shot to obtain hoop position.

**Roll Shot:** A croquet stroke in which both balls travel similar distances.

**Roquet:** When the striker's ball hits a ball from which it is entitled to take croquet. Past tense roqueted (Ro-Kay'd).

**Rover:** The final, twelfth, hoop to be run, marked with a red crossbar.

**Run a Hoop:** When a ball passes through a hoop it requires.

**Rush:** A single ball stroke in which the striker's ball roquets another ball and causes it to move some distance.

**Rush Line:** This is an imaginary line which passes through a ball to be rushed and the point to where you wish to rush it to. By approaching a ball along its rush line you avoid the necessity of playing difficult cut rushes.

**Second Colours:** A set of balls coloured Brown, Green, Pink and White to allow two games to be played without confusion on one lawn.

**Sextuple:** A rare manoeuvre in which one ball is peeled through its last six hoops and pegged out whilst the striker's ball makes a break.

**Shepherd:** A fault in a croquet stroke, whereby the mallet accelerates or deviates from its initial line once it has made contact with the striker's ball. The striker is said to be shepherding the balls.

**Shoot:** To strike a ball towards a target.

**Single Peel:** A manoeuvre in which a ball other than the striker's is peeled through rover and pegged out.

**South:** The boundary of the lawn spanning hoops one and four.

**Spin:** The rotation of a ball about horizontal or vertical axis. The former is used to assist running hoops and trueness of the balls travel, and the latter is a consequence of certain roll shots giving rise to pull.

**Split Shot:** A croquet stroke in which the balls diverge.

**Split Roll:** A roll shot in which the balls travel similar distances but with a divergence in their paths.

**Stab:** To hit a ball with a brisk stroke with no follow through.

**Standard Grip:** One of three common methods of holding a croquet mallet for single ball strokes. For a right handed player:- the left hand is at the top of the shaft with the thumb at or over the top of the shaft and the knuckles facing forward. The right hand is placed about half way down the shaft, gripping it with the palm against the shaft and facing forward.

**Stop Shot:** A croquet stroke in which the croqueted ball travels a proportionately large distance compared with the striker's ball.

**Take-off:** A croquet stroke in which the striker's ball is played off the side

of the roqueted ball. The latter hardly moves and the striker's ball travels some distance.

**Three-Ball Break:** A manoeuvre involving three balls which allows multiple hoops to be scored in a single turn.

**Time:** The call made when the time limit is reached in a timed game.

**Timed Game:** A game played to a predefined time limit. Special rules apply to the use of bisques and the determination of who wins when there is a draw at the end of the timed period.

**Top Spin:** Spin of the ball about a horizontal axis normal to the direction of travel. The direction of spin is such as to enhance the forward motion of the ball.



The 1990 President's Cup about to begin at Bowdon. The event was sponsored by Pilkington Glass.

**Toss:** A coin is tossed at the start of the game to determine who has the first choice of the opening options; colour of balls or who goes in.

**Triple Peel:** Manoeuvre where the backward ball is peeled through its final three hoops as the forward ball makes a break around all the hoops and both balls are pegged out.

**Turn:** A turn consists initially of one stroke, but extra strokes can be earned by running the correct hoop or by roqueting a ball.

**TP:** Abbreviation of triple peel.

**TPO:** Abbreviation of triple peel on opponent's ball.

**Upright:** The vertical part of a hoop.

**Wafer Cannon:** A three ball croquet shot in which the roqueted ball lies between the striker's ball and a third ball. These outer balls do not touch but are separated by a very small gap.

**West:** The boundary of the lawn spanning hoops one and two.

**Wire:** The vertical part of a hoop, and also describing the process of wiring.

**Wired:** Being unable to hit a target ball due to the presence of an

obstacle - usually the peg or a hoop.

**Wiring:** Deliberately arranging balls so that they are unable to hit one another due to a hoop or peg obstructing the shot.

**Worm Cannon:** A simple three ball cannon in which you only get two balls away from the boundary. The centre ball just overlaps the line joining the centre of the outer balls. A light tap leaves a rush.

**Yard Line:** This is an imaginary line located one yard in from the inside edge of the marked boundary of the court. It does not extend into the corners but the two adjacent yard lines meet at the corner spot.

## INTERMEDIATE COACHING

## 1. The Four-Ball Break

By Ian Plummer

The four-ball break is the basic mechanism for making hoops with the minimum of fuss. The essence of playing successful four-ball breaks is to avoid difficult strokes, e.g. wide split rolls and long hoop runs! Using no new shots you can design the break so that difficult shots are avoided and you will increase your success. The principal elements of the method are:

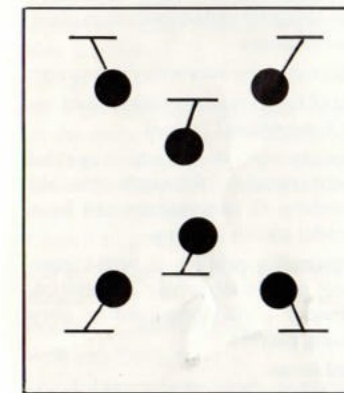
- to use rushes to reduce the length of subsequent croquet strokes;
- to use stop shots which allow you to accurately place the back ball in the croquet shot; and, most important of all
- to approach all balls along the direction that you wish to rush them.

1.1 In general the priorities of any turn in croquet are

- make the next hoop,
- maintain the break, and
- try fancy manoeuvres.

It is pointless positioning balls beautifully ahead of your break if you then fail to make the next hoop.

1.2 The stop shot is one of the most accurate croquet strokes available. It is a very accurate way of positioning the back ball in the croquet stroke. The energy of the stroke is split roughly in proportion to the relative distances travelled by the balls. Say you achieve a 10:1 stop shot but over-hit the stroke by 30%. The approximate error in the energy received by the back ball is only 3%. Needless to say the front ball still has too much energy.



Pioneers for a four-ball break.

1.3 The general recipe for a four-ball break is as follows:

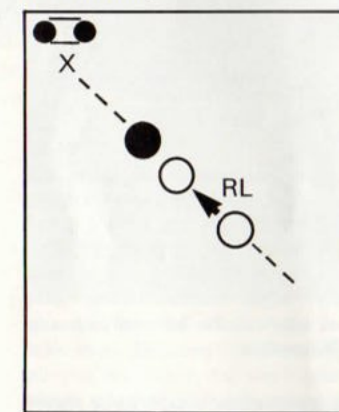
- Rush pioneers (see glossary for terms used in the text) on to the centre lines of the hoops.
- Croquet the old pioneer as a reception ball on the far side of the hoop to give yourself a rush towards the pivot after you have run the hoop.
- After that rush, from close to

the pivot, stop shot the old reception ball to your next-but-one-hoop whilst getting a rush on the pivot to your next pioneer's rush line into the hoop.

- Rush the pivot on to that rush line.
- Take off along the rush line and rush the pioneer into the hoop.

The basis of this recipe is given below.

1.4 Four-ball break pioneers should be between the peg and the hoop, say 1 yard or less from the hoop. You will always be moving out radially from the pivot near the peg and hence you do not want to have to pass your pioneer and then rush it back to the hoop. You might collide with the hoop or roquet your pioneer further from the hoop.



Approaching along rush line (RL).

1.5 ALWAYS get on the rush line linking the pioneer and the hoop. This is crucial to making the four-ball break easy. It means that you are approaching the pioneer in the direction that you wish to rush it. A variation in length of your take-off from the pivot to the pioneer of, say, one foot will still mean that you have a forward rush. If you approach the pioneer across its rush line, then the same variation will lead to a difficult rush or a long roll into the hoop.

1.6 If the pioneers are not ideally placed, you must still plan to rush the pivot on to the pioneer's rush line. This should be done even if the pivot has to be rushed completely out of the middle of the lawn to the boundary. As stated at the start, a pivot beautifully placed in the middle of the lawn is no good if you fail to get your next hoop.

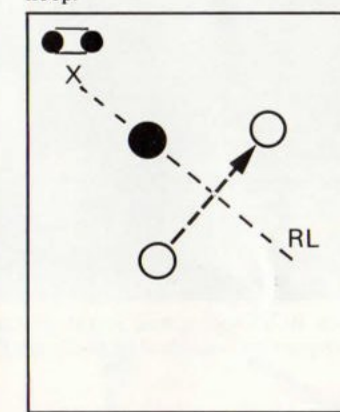
1.7 Rushing the pivot to the boundary behind a 'deep' pioneer is valuable. You stop-shot the pivot back to the peg and still approach the misplaced pioneer along its rush line.

1.8 It is bad practice to keep your pivot nailed to the peg. You should always consider moving it towards a pioneer to give yourself a shorter,

and hence easier, take-off.

1.9 Aim to rush the pioneer to the playing side of the hoop. From the playing side of the hoop, a simple roll allows you to place the reception balls for a rush in any direction once you have run the hoop. If your rush on the pioneer lands it on the far side of the hoop you will generally have to take-off to get to hoop running position. This denies you the option of setting the rush.

1.10 Aim to rush the pioneer on to the centre line of the hoop, even if it may be a little further from the hoop. It removes the need for getting precision length in the hoop approach croquet stroke, which in turn guarantees a straight hoop run. If a forward rush is needed after the hoop, then rush the pioneer slightly off the centre line of the hoop to allow you to croquet a ball beyond the hoop.



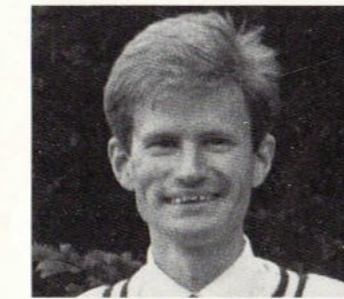
Approaching across a rush line.

1.11 If your rush sends the pioneer to the side of the hoop, then you will have to obtain the hoop running position from across the centre line of the hoop. An error of a few inches in the length that your ball travels will leave a difficult angled hoop. It is preferable to have a long straight hoop run than a short impossibly angled one. Consequently you should aim to achieve a hoop running position at least a foot or so away from the hoop.

1.12 Avoid having your reception ball too close to the hoop. You should plan to have them, say, 2 feet or more beyond the hoop. If you have to trickle exactly 2 inches through the hoop, you may well stick in the hoop, or be hoop bound if you do run it.

1.13 The precise position you want to rush your reception ball to is one where you can get a rush on the pivot, to send it on to the rush line of your next pioneer (see above), and be able to stop the old reception ball to your next but one hoop.

1.14 You want to choose the position from where you can take the subsequent croquet stroke to minimise the angle of divergence between the balls in the stroke. Wide



Ian Plummer.

croquet strokes are more difficult to play than narrow ones. You will generally have to compromise though between the narrowest croquet stroke and a short approach to get good position on the pivot.

1.15 Given the opportunity, make the pivot an enemy ball. If you break down you are likely to be in a stonger position - only every other hoop has to be made off an enemy ball and they are left in the centre of the lawn (c.f. Section 3: Changing Pivot in a later issue). A ball in the centre of the lawn is in a weak position, as you can subsequently take a 'free shot' through it and not give the a break away should you miss.

1.16 You should plan to make your last hoop off an enemy ball. This allows you to position it, then the other enemy ball, and finally have control over where you pair up with your partner. If you have to position your partner ball first, you have to get the other balls into their intended positions. Changing pioneers is dealt with in Section 3: Changing Pivot (to appear in a later issue).

1.17 During a four-ball break it can happen that the pivot is so close to your reception ball, after running your hoop, that you do not have the space to play a stop shot to send the reception ball across the lawn without losing a valuable rush on the pivot. In this case you should play the manoeuvre described in Section 3: Changing Pivot. After the next hoop or next-but-one you can always change the pivot again to restore an appropriate colour order.

## How Say?

Dear Sir,  
Andrew Bennet's enquiry about the pronunciation of 'Ranelagh Gardens' (Issue 208) is surprising, coming from an experienced mopper-up of flooded lawns at Southport.

It is, of course, pronounced 'Rain Lake Gardens'. This commemorates the possible origin of croquet as an American Indian rain dance ('croquet' perhaps being a corruption of 'Cherokee').

Martin Kolbuszewski,  
West Hampstead.

## RECRUITMENT & PUBLICITY

### What is the best time for the campaign?

From material prepared originally by Lionel Wharrad

The first part of this article was published in Issue 213. Copies can be obtained from the CA Office.

#### What is the best time for the campaign?

32. This depends upon the other commitments of the club and to some extent on the special membership terms that the club may be offering to attract members. If membership is being offered at specially low rates, then the recruiting campaign can begin much later than if no special terms are contemplated when new members will naturally want to get a full season's play for their contribution and will be reluctant to pay a full season's subscription if recruited in, say, mid season.

33. To most people croquet is a summer game. The game's image, to most people who have never played it, is of a gentle, rather leisurely game, played on a warm sunny afternoon or evening. You are almost certainly likely to attract more visitors if you can persuade the Almighty to allot to you a week of sunshine for your recruitment week.

There seems to be no virtue in trying to get people to come along and try the game too early in the season. April can be very cold, and a cold rainy weekend can be enough to put off people who had intended to participate - only those who are really hooked on croquet are batty enough to play in the rain, sleet, snow or biting wind! If the club therefore has a reasonably free choice, then late May/early June must be the favoured time. Not only is there a prospect of sun, or at least warmth, but the evenings are long for those who can only come along after work. For those who like the game there will still be plenty of time left in the season.

#### The recruiting campaign

34. By far the largest number of clubs are those falling into the category (a) of paragraph 3, that is open membership clubs where croquet is an important or the sole club sport, and although such clubs ought not to neglect any opportunity of persuading existing club members to try out croquet, they will in the main need to look outside their own club to find new croquet players.

35. A club will find it a productive exercise to determine what type of people they would ideally like to recruit in terms of age and sex. This will enable the club to draw up a list of local organisations who might be invited to be guests of the club for one day in order to try out the game. A warm personal letter to the Secretary or Chairperson will often persuade a group to come along.

36. Large organisations often have pre-retirement counselling as a part

of their personnel function and might be persuaded to recommend croquet as one of the activities that their staff should take up before they retire. The pre-retirement association has branches in many towns.

37. If the requirement for a club is for more weekend players or more younger players, then such local institutions as colleges, universities, scientific establishments or professional institutes could be approached to send along a small group. If the approach is personal and friendly it is surprising what a good response can be obtained.



Ron Welch shows how to set up a croquet shot on the Summer Schools programme organised by the South East Federation.

#### Publicity

38. Publicity may be designed for long term effect and short term effect. These notes will be primarily concerned with short term effect. Publicity can be either Free Publicity or Bought Publicity - it is hoped that the following notes on free publicity will be helpful in reminding clubs of the opportunities for securing free publicity for the game which exist and are often unexploited.

39. The outstanding example of free publicity that croquet has received is the chapter in 'Alice' which describes that famous game with the flamingoes and hedgehogs. So strong an effect has this publicity had that for many people this is still their only image of the game! Since 1979 the game has been given some quite good publicity in the press: there have been many TV mentions of croquet and only in one of these was there a slight piece of micky taking in that it tried to project perhaps too much of an up-market country house image. Generally the programmes were useful and managed to evoke some of the skills and pleasures of the game.

40. Of course a great deal more has to be done in future years through television and other media to get more people aware that the game is a disciplined game of considerable

skill with internationally accepted rules.

41. In the past, some CA members felt very strongly that the game we play is so different from the public image of croquet that we should cease to call the game croquet and should invent a completely new name for the sport. The CA however decided that it would be a mistake to give up the word croquet, for, although there are some disadvantages in the image the word conveys, there are also many favourable and pleasurable overtones - for instance, that croquet

quite a different attitude when you tell him that the game he has come to see or comment on is Association Croquet - and this will help you ensure that he sheds his pre-conceived ideas.

44. The C.A. has no doubt that in the long term the use of the words Association Croquet to describe the game will do much to improve its image.

#### Free Publicity

45. Free publicity both for the game and for the club is often there for the taking. If you have a club member who can take on the job of Press, Publicity and Public Relations, he/she will find that with a certain amount of ingenuity and a fair amount of energy he/she can get frequent mentions of Association Croquet in the press and on local radio and television.

46. Local newspapers are much neglected by many clubs as a source of free publicity. Some clubs use this medium well. It is worthwhile letting the press have frequent Press Information sheets. There are many occasions when a news item can be created:

The date of the Club's annual general meeting.

Report on the AGM - details of officers elected and so on.

The programme of club tournaments.

Any recruitment campaign.

Visits to the club of well-known players.

Results of tournaments with brief reports.

Inter-club matches.

Successes by club members in other tournaments.

Success of the recruiting campaign. Small lawn croquet - an introduction to Association Croquet.

History of the club... special anniversaries... Research into old numbers of newspapers can be a fruitful source of copy.

Personality profiles of well-known local people who play Association Croquet or of long-lived or very young players.

and so on.

47. No club needs to be timorous about giving short reports to the press on all such subjects - on each occasion ensure that the game is referred to as Association Croquet and try to work into the copy some mention of one or two aspects of the game, eg

the most intelligent of all outdoor games,

can be played by people of all ages,

a good healthy outdoor game,

in its modern form new to most people,

do not need to be an athlete to play it well,

a sport in which you can become an international at 15 or 70,

requires a combination of physical and mental skills,

people who like board games will like Association Croquet,



Members of Ellesmere Croquet Club who took part in a croquet programme broadcast on Manchester's Piccadilly Radio.

a break is often 60 to 70 shots, a very sociable game,

when you understand the basic rules a delightful game to watch,

one of the few remaining wholly amateur games,

played increasingly at Oxford and Cambridge universities and other universities,

international matches held regularly,

inter county games are played every season,

annual national championships for men and women,

a system of handicapping is designed to enable various degrees of skill to play together,

and so on.

48. In addition to the local newspapers, there are always other local publications of more limited circulation that can occasionally be used. For example,

Church magazines,

Large local companies staff magazines,

Pensioners Associations,

Women's Institute,

Local Associations, such as round table, rotary, social clubs,

It might be sensible to make a list of all societies and organisations and large firms that exist within the area served by the club (usually there are hundreds) and then consider what means they take to keep in touch with their members. If they publish a magazine or a regular Newsletter then you can be sure that they will welcome suitable copy. It is interesting how many croquet players are engineers, lawyers, scientists, researchers, mathema-

ticians... it is surprising how many organisations contain people who would love croquet if only they knew about it. Snooker clubs, chess clubs, bridge clubs, pensioners' associations, and a myriad more are potential recruiting grounds... all you need to do is to try and write a piece specifically directed to the group

concerned.

49. All that we have said about newspapers applies to the other media, radio and television. News departments are insatiable - they are there to report newsworthy items - so you must make your club newsworthy. Tell local radio and television, (BBC and Commercial) of all you are doing and particularly about your recruitment campaign. You will be surprised how often they will cover the story.

#### Paid-for Publicity

50. When deciding how much your club is prepared to spend on publicity, do bear in mind the value to the club of each new member. If your club membership fee is £20 a year, then a couple of hundred pounds spent on a publicity campaign would only need to produce 5 new members for the club revenue to increase by £100 a year... not a bad return! If the club is short of immediate cash, it might consider borrowing from members to meet the cost of the campaign, and repaying members in the following few years out of the increased club revenue.

51. Paid-for publicity is essentially short term publicity and is normally used for a specific event... paid publicity is rarely used simply to advertise the game or the club, as such. When we buy publicity we are in effect buying space to sell a product. If we treat our campaign as a marketing operation we need to have a good product (this we have), to describe it graphically but in few words, to offer an inducement to try it,

to say where and when it can be found.

52. The croquet world has tended to be a bit old fashioned in its publicity; there is a strong case for more up to date presentation, typography and language. The material used should be well designed and well printed as a means of attracting attention. The style of the material is as important as the content.

53. The media most likely to be used by clubs are newspapers, posters and leaflets. Newspaper advertising is probably the least effective of these three, although sometimes an advertisement can be used to secure a good feature-spread about the game, perhaps to coincide with the recruitment campaign, and it may have good value in such circumstances. Local firms dealing with lawn equipment and maintenance and sports suppliers might be persuaded by the newspaper to take advertising space around such a feature article.

#### Posters

54. These can be very effective. Apart from the cost of printing, there

is little additional cost. Normally they can be displayed without charge.

Posters should contain one or two selling points about the game, they should feature strongly the special offer (free membership, free coaching or whatever), they should give a clear invitation to visit the club on specific days and between specific hours, they should give prominence to two or three telephone numbers and names with an invitation to ring up for more details.

55. There are in every community hundreds of places for posters... perhaps one or two club members would undertake to research possible sites... those that come to mind are Public notice boards in many public buildings,

shops,

rear side windows of members' cars,

well sited house windows,

back or sides of local delivery vans,

local clubs and societies' notice boards,

around the fence or perimeter of the club itself.

56. Ideally two sizes of poster are needed

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For a comprehensive range of Croquet Equipment, Mallets, Balls, Hoops, Winning pegs, Clips, Corner flags, Corner pegs, etc.

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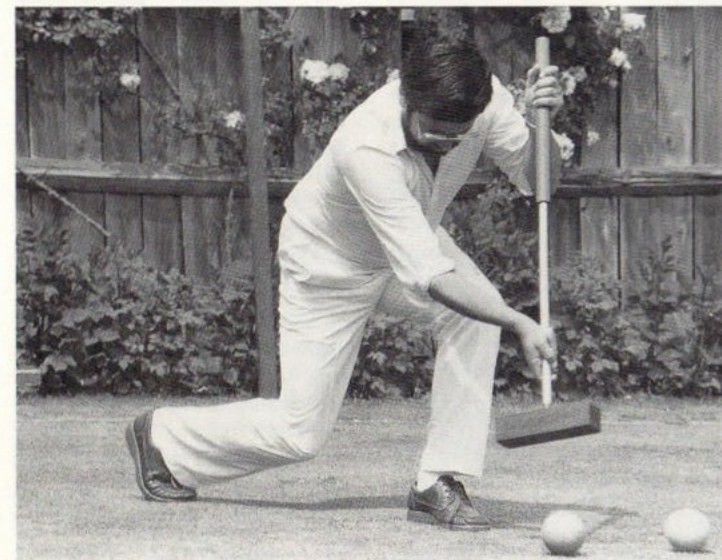
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## Recruitment

A3 16½ x 11¼ inches  
A4 8¼ x 11¼ inches

There is some evidence of resistance to the larger size, especially by small shops, and of course it is a bit too large for most cars. It makes a good bold poster however for many public boards and sites where it has to compete with the posters of other organisations. One advantage of the A4 size is that this is also the best size for a leaflet, so that clubs with more limited resources might produce an A4 poster which could additionally be used for house to house distribution.



Andrew Male playing in Woking Croquet Club's group 'Croquet Classic' competition - an excellent way to maintain the enthusiasm of beginners and introduce them to competitive play.

### Leaflets

57. This is probably the most effective medium. One attractive compelling leaflet put through the letter box of suitable houses will reap dividends. Simple research will indicate the areas of roads most likely to be fruitful. The response to a leaflet campaign will vary depending on how attractive the leaflet is, how good has been your press publicity (ie in reminding people that the game exists) how clever has been your offer of coaching and membership, and how careful you have been in putting the document into the most receptive hands.

58. If your club is lucky enough to have energetic members with equally energetic children, then door to door delivery is cheaper. Maybe there are youth organisations (scouts?) who would like to earn something for their club funds by undertaking delivery. One way that has been used is to arrange for the newsagents in the selected areas to deliver the leaflet with the morning newspaper.

59. The leaflet, if it is being separately produced, can contain a few more words than the poster (which really must be very brief). It should contain one or two striking phrases about the game, should

invite the reader to take advantage of this very special opportunity to learn about the game, and give a number of contact telephone numbers AND an invitation simply to turn up at the club on a particular day or days. Mention that the only equipment required is tennis or bowling or other flat bottomed shoes. 60. The leaflet must catch the immediate attention of the reader... the word FREE often stands out! It should be forceful, clearly printed in large type so that it may be glanced at and understood without having to put on reading glasses... and, once

again, the words should be as few as possible. Remember no one will stop to read an essay - you must try and catch the recipient's fleeting attention with a headline and make it as easy as possible for him/her to see what they have to do.

61. A good leaflet should produce a 1% to 2% response. Most clubs will need to distribute a minimum of 3000 leaflets: these should produce 30 to 40 replies which in turn should lead to 10 or so members. Expenditure on leaflets should be repaid by new membership subscriptions within a year or two.

### Clubs where Croquet is a minority activity

62. External publicity to recruit new members is unlikely to be practical but clubs in this category can use a variety of ways to increase the number of croquet players by using various devices to ensure that Association Croquet is brought to the attention of club members. Some of these are long term and some short term devices.

### 62. Long Term

(a) Ensure that all the club's literature issued to prospective and new members gives accurate information about Association Croquet.

(b) Make sure that every general circulation to members - of annual

accounts, membership renewal notices, club's timetable of events and so on always includes adequate information about the croquet section.

(c) Use the club notice boards to bring to members' attention any special events, matches or tournaments. See that the success of individual members in national or international events is given proper publicity within the club. Ensure that any material you put up on the club's notice board is well designed, up to date, and succinct.

(d) Think hard about how croquet looks to non croqueting members of the club - does it have an attractive image? A closed shop image? A fuddy-duddy image? Are club members who stop to watch made to feel welcome, given seats, helped to enjoy the game as onlookers, offered a chance to try their hands?

(e) Consider what could be done to make the game a little more comprehensible to the casual watcher? Would large, well-designed score boards on the main lawns be useful to reflect the course of play by showing the updated points scored by each side or, in a match, by each team? The CA publishes a give-away spectator's guide which should always be available for interested bystanders.

### 63. Short Term

(a) A letter sent individually to each non croquet playing club member offering trial games and coaching and demonstration games during one or two specific weekends in the summer.

(b) Arrange throughout the season for a coach to be on duty at fixed times and well-publicised times in order to offer members and friends an introduction to the game. Make sure that he/she can be immediately identified either by having a special sign near the coach's table/chair or by the coach wearing identifying clothing.

(c) For special periods of promotion, convert one of the existing lawns into two small lawns as described in paragraph 20. This will be found to encourage club members who find the full sized lawn a little intimidating to try out the game.

(d) Offer a small prize or prizes to new players showing the most promise.

(e) Run a gymkhana during the school holidays aimed at non-croquet playing members and their families. If the response is good, organise a junior event.

(f) Try to persuade the club committee to offer temporary membership to a limited number of possible croquet players who are not currently members. The need for a trial period is primarily because nobody knows if they are going to like croquet until they have tried it and the only place to try it out is on club lawns.

### Clubs with closed membership

64. There are quite a number of clubs registered with the CA where membership is restricted to the employees of the company or the organisation which owns the grounds. Exterior recruiting is probably not permitted; there are, nevertheless, numerous ways for a determined croquet section to draw attention to the game.

(a) Use all the internal publicity means available - house magazine, notice boards, staff rooms, staff dining tables, to draw attention to the game and to the facilities offered.

(b) Ensure that adequate pre- and post publicity is given to any club matches and to the success of individual club members in outside tournaments or in national or international events.

(c) Try to ensure that the use of the lawns becomes classless or rankless.

(d) Try to establish facilities for playing at weekends or evenings, if they do not currently exist.

(e) Try to widen the possible membership by allowing outsiders to play or to join.

(f) Set aside a week during the early summer in which to provide demonstration games and an opportunity for colleagues to try out the game.

(g) Run a gymkhana with simple events. Try to organise inter-departmental competitions at hoop running, long roquets, peeling and so on during lunch times in order to get more people interested in the game.

(h) Consider setting up two small lawns on one lawn for a period; this will be a great help in encouraging people to have a go. Most people can comprehend the game more easily and play it quite quickly on a small lawn.

(i) Consider using visible score boards so that onlookers can follow the progress of the game.

(j) Persuade the top echelon to try out the game.

### TO HELP YOU FURTHER.....

#### The CA can provide:

Blank posters (A4 and A5) for recruitment notices.

Leaflets explaining the Laws of Association Croquet, Short Croquet and Golf Croquet (modest quantities free of charge).

Specimen recruitment leaflets produced in the past.

Copies of the CA Coaches Handbook, which contains a great deal of useful information on coaching and practice routines for beginners. (Available from the CA Office, price £7.50 plus £1.25 P&P.)

Group Club entry to the Croquet Classic - an excellent way to raise the enthusiasm of your recruits.

A new 'Golden Mallet' competition for those who wish to play Golf Croquet.

## COLCHESTER

### A Bevy of Lady Champions

Report by Pat Hetherington

Colchester Croquet Club first came into being in November 1926, hiring 'somewhat uneven and unsatisfactory' ground offering two

courts on which 'croquet in its true sense was practically impossible'.

1930 saw the club looking for an alternative site and renting two lawns

## HIGH WYCOMBE

### Rising membership and a search for more lawns

Report by Roger Jackman

At the end of the 1989 season the club expanded the committee and appointed a match secretary and a social secretary to reduce the general secretary's work load.

Keith Brooks, the new social secretary, started with an excellent Winter Social event which took the form of a Croquet/General Knowledge quiz. Four teams (Blue, Red, Black and Yellow) could play at weekends or evenings, if they do not currently exist.

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Chairman Alan Oldham presenting the High Wycombe Club Singles Trophy to the winner, John Bone.



1990 began full of hope for a successful season but in March we were given a nasty shock by the Council. Due to the dry winter and even drier spring the half lawn was not ready for play and, as the dry summer continued, was not available at all this season.

The Council also decided to change our method of payment from £100 per season for the club to a £35 season ticket per player or £1.20 per hour. This for two evenings a week and all day on Sundays. At other times we take our chance along with the general public.

Although we knew we were getting our Croquet 'on the cheap', this swingeing increase caused us all to think carefully. Eventually most members felt this was a realistic fee and rejoined, even though a club

subscription was needed as well.

A 'Come and try it' day had been planned for May 1990, but with 22 members and only one lawn it was cancelled. However, due to players moving into the area, a rise in interest in Croquet by the public, and probably the fine summer, our membership has gone up to 37. We also have a waiting list. The arrival of four low bisquers has helped to raise our playing standards even though at times we have had to play triple banked. One of our sets of second colours now has balls with a black band.

Our matches started with a close defeat at Harwell in the Longman Cup, followed by our first-ever victory over Reading in the Southern Croquet League. A very good season

on the present Elianore Road Site - a site which was purchased by the club in 1931 for the sum of £225. Half the ground was let to Lexden Hill Tennis Club, an arrangement which continued until 1962.

The club continued in being throughout the 1939-45 war and in 1965 it amalgamated with the Chelmsford and Mid-Essex Croquet Club. The Chelmsford ground was sold for development in 1968 and plans were drawn up for the construction of the present clubhouse, which was opened in 1971.

Membership of the club has remained steady in the 75-100 range, thanks to a series of recruitment drives, and we have been fortunate in having several international players in membership. Roger Bray, William Prichard, Mike Heap and Mark Avery have all supported the club, while our policy of encouraging young players has paid off, in that one third of the players in the 1990 Oxford v. Cambridge University

match learnt their game in Colchester.

Colchester members were recipients of the CA's 'most improved lady player' award for three consecutive years (1986-88) in the persons of Debbie Cornelius, Fiona McCoig and Claire Collis, while in 1990 our club champion, Robert Fulford, became World Champion.

With such stalwarts to call upon as Robert Fulford, Chris Clarke, Ian Burridge, Michael Heap, Mark Saurin and Fiona McCoig, Colchester won the Inter-Club Championship for the very first time in 1990. We also staged five successful tournaments and one or two other national CA events.

Two long and exceptionally dry summers, together with an infestation of fungi, have caused considerable damage to Colchester's renowned fast, true lawns, but £2000 is being spent on their refurbishment over the winter and hopes are high for a successful 1991 season. Why not come and try out our facilities?

### 1991 National Under-18 Junior Squad

Applications are invited from junior players to join the CA's National Junior Squad for special coaching. Those under 18 at 1st

September 1990 will be given priority, but there may be some places available for those above this age range.

## "Matchplay"

### Bespoke Croquet Mallets

The Quality is Right  
and the Price is Right

\*\*\*\*\*

Send or telephone for a copy of our updated bi-monthly Newsletter giving availability and prices of all mallets.

Evening calls welcome.

\*\*\*\*\*

GEOFFREY H. DAY  
Country Crafts  
Manor Cottage  
Widcombe in the Moor  
Devon TQ13 7TB  
Tel: 036 42 218

was crowned by our winning the league, having a finalist in the All England Handicap, winner and runner-up in the National Short Croquet Competition, and some good performances in tournaments.

The club competitions were very well supported, except the doubles, and thanks to the generosity of four members we now have some handsome trophies to compete for in our competitions.

For the future, we hope to consolidate our membership and continue our search for an area where we can have two full size lawns. We need a referee in the club and are trying to put on a referees' course in the spring. We hope to continue to raise the standard of play in the club and we look forward to the Secretary's Shield in 1991.