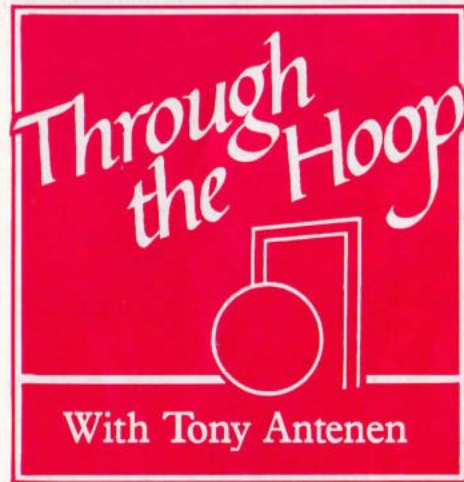


**Under-manned, under-provisioned, and under-funded, the Office battles on....  
...your help is needed**



March is almost over. April beckons. Behind me is another busy month, with three committee meetings, and the penultimate meeting of Council. Paperwork increases, and the demands for a more professional secretariat service grow. The Council meeting alone generated over 1500 sheets of paper, to be colour-coded, collated, enveloped, stamped, and despatched.

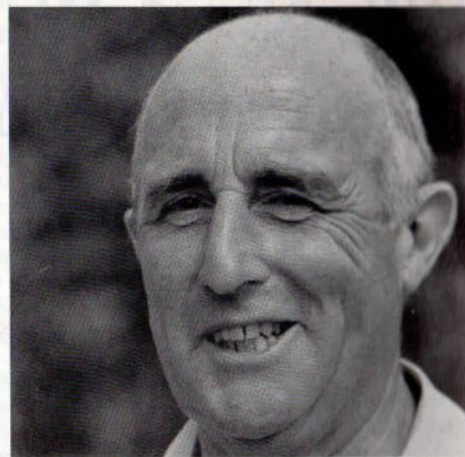
Immediately on my return from the Easter break is a job that makes the Council distribution pale into insignificance. I refer to the new handicap system. Bill Lamb's clear and concise collation and despatch instructions reminded me of a Civil Service HEO exam paper! Here I am referring to some 4500-plus sheets of paper, comprising single-sided and multi-page documents, involving specified but differing distributions to Club Secretaries, and CA and Club Handicappers. A tall

order for the ever-patient, ever-willing Alan Stockwell and the Secretary. Offers of assistance from Alan Oldham et fille and Brian Macmillan have been gratefully accepted.

This brings me to a point. Given the demands being made on the CA Office, any objective assessment would conclude that the office is under-manned, under-provisioned, and under-funded. Take but one example, that of the office photocopier. It is a basic machine, that works on the 'slide' system. It has no multi-sheet or sort capacity. Thus a 10-page document (say) has to be run off page by page, collated, and stapled. On a timed run, the machine takes 50 seconds to run off ten copies of one page. That's between 8 to 9 minutes all told, allowing for changing the papers to be copied. Then follows collation, stapling, enveloping, etc. Jobs such as a Committee and Council minutes, with distributions of 30 at a time, while not beyond the capability of the machine, are unacceptably time-consuming in a busy office with only a full-time Secretary and one part-time assistant. The fact is, however, the CA simply cannot afford to improve on the existing facilities until such times as general finances permit.

On the question of manpower though, let any locally situated member consider this. There is *always* a job to do here at HQ. So if you are within easy reach of Putney Bridge station on the District line, or can car, cycle, or walk in, and you feel like giving an hour or two, am or pm, Monday to Friday (only the Secretary works Saturdays!) just give me a ring.

Without doubt, the bright spot of the month was my visit to Parkstone in the company of Chairman Stephen Mulliner (British Open Champion and low-flying expert!). 'Greater love' thought I, as we made our way down, 'hath no Secretary than this, that



Tony Antenen, CA Secretary.

he give up his Grand Slam ticket to be with East Dorset'. It was worth it, and I certainly came out the winner. I met old friends and made many new ones, answered questions and noted comments, both general and particular, on CA matters. The Chairman was invited to address the meeting that followed an excellent buffet and refreshments, and was warmly received. Thank you all for a memorable evening.

Tomorrow being Easter Saturday, I am off to Surbiton to renew acquaintances, and next month I travel to Bristol for a first visit where, thanks to a generous offer of accommodation, I propose to spend a long weekend and visit clubs in the area.

Finally, the news you have been waiting for with bated b. Sutton contest the final of the Surrey Cup on Sunday, 7th April. WATCH THIS SPACE.

# CROQUET

## National Croquet Day 1st JUNE, 1991



Over 100,000 more players since 1985 - all prospective club members!

It's hard enough remembering what you did on New Year's Eve - let alone remembering what you promised you wouldn't do. I do however distinctly remember two of my New Year's resolutions. The first had to do with raw eggs and my next door neighbour's new Porsche. The second, far more respectable, was this - 'I must not forget this is the Year of Sport, and I must put on a pair of attractive shorts and get involved somewhere down the line.'

Thus spoke Rowan Atkinson, doing his bit to promote the 'Year of Sport', a campaign that is receiving massive support from the Sports Council.

The Croquet Association has nominated Saturday, 1st June, as 'National Croquet Day', and on that day, hopes to see many people attracted to Croquet Clubs round the country to see what our sport is all about.

Brian Macmillan is coordinating arrangements for the day. A poster has been designed by John Walters advertising the event, with a space for clubs to insert their location. Copies of this poster are available from the CA Office, and we hope that

clubs will take this chance to benefit from the publicity surrounding a national event.

'National Croquet Day' will provide clubs with an opportunity to advertise their existence, and the general public with an excuse to pay a visit to their local club.

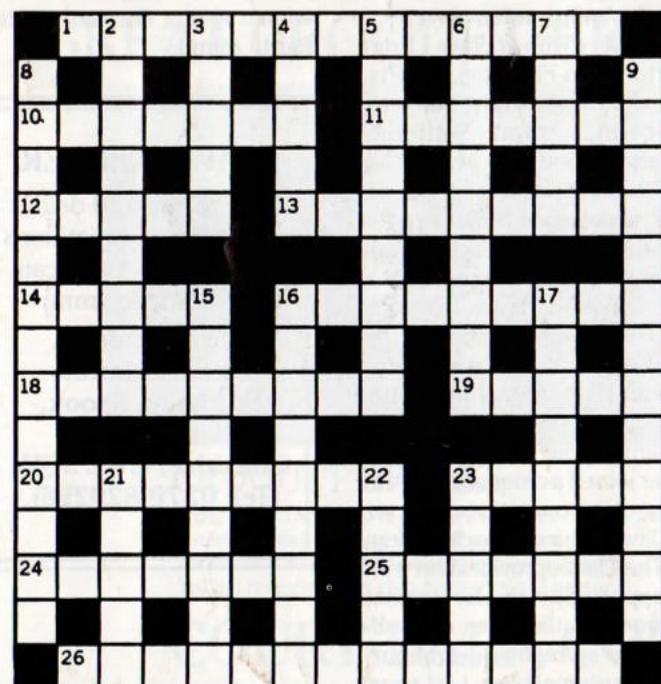
Some clubs might like to put on a demonstration and let the public have a go themselves; others might already have a match on that day, in which case club members can join the visitors and explain what is going on.

The great thing is to make everybody WELCOME! Croquet is getting a higher profile these days, and more people want to try it for themselves. 'National Croquet Day' provides an opportunity to interest them still further, as a prelude to joining YOUR club.



### CROSSWORD By 'Crofter'

No 1. (Chambers 1988 is highly recommended).



ACROSS

1. How the uninformed describe the game joint? (4,3,6)
10. Make a choice for single parent - the very best. (7)
11. How the antipodean banger goes along. (7)
12. The type of stroke we hope never to see at Hurlingham. (5)
13. Crumbly ball - note made after game. (9)
14. The Parisienne hugs John in Elgin - just like honeysuckle. (5)
16. Tangential like a funambulist? (2,3,4)
18. Sean sending two in train? D'ye ken him? (5,4)
19. Sail extender for a short run without last of crewmen. (5)
20. Twin abode shot at shove-halfpenny - quite a fair score. (3,2,1,3)
23. First tranche held in nobleman's safe. (5)
24. Did he scramble the elements of the Boer's radiotelephone? (7)
25. Altar covering badly torn but recognisable after dip in Cornish river. (7)
26. The time spent on the lawn between tea and (say) 6 o'clock? (1,3,9)

DOWN

2. Being opposed to indifferent art the soldier gets lumps on his ears. (9)
3. A mixer for the tincture from miles away. (5)
4. Conventional spelling of French name first in India & Ceylon. (5)
5. Scuba lost taking a dive under the ribs. (9)
6. Electronic machines placed in the middle of those who have arrived. (9)
7. She appears in the last fifty one collection of books. (5)
8. Subject this coy sailor to a good shake-out. (6,7)
9. Terrible rage - see about whole condition for congruence. (5,8)
15. Colour as blackcock's mate - head to tail. (5-4)
16. A vessel for cooking a pie with nobs on - nothing less! (4,5)
17. Made uncomfortable with anger about peculiar trait on first date. (9)
21. The shape of the ball when the alternative goes to bed. (5)
22. Flanders' author of French enemy. (5)
23. Pair with one who sits up at night in search of prey. (5)

The first correct solution received by the Editor will earn the sender a £5 voucher to be credited against books or goods sold through the CA Office.

Inside:

- News & Views
- Coaching Notes & 1991 Courses
- 1991 National Competitions
- 'Nerves' in 1907
- 'Crofter' Crossword ...and lots more



Published by  
The Croquet Association



## Croquet North now firmly established

Two new Federations were formed during 1990. As a result, the CA now has its full planned quota of nine regional organisations.

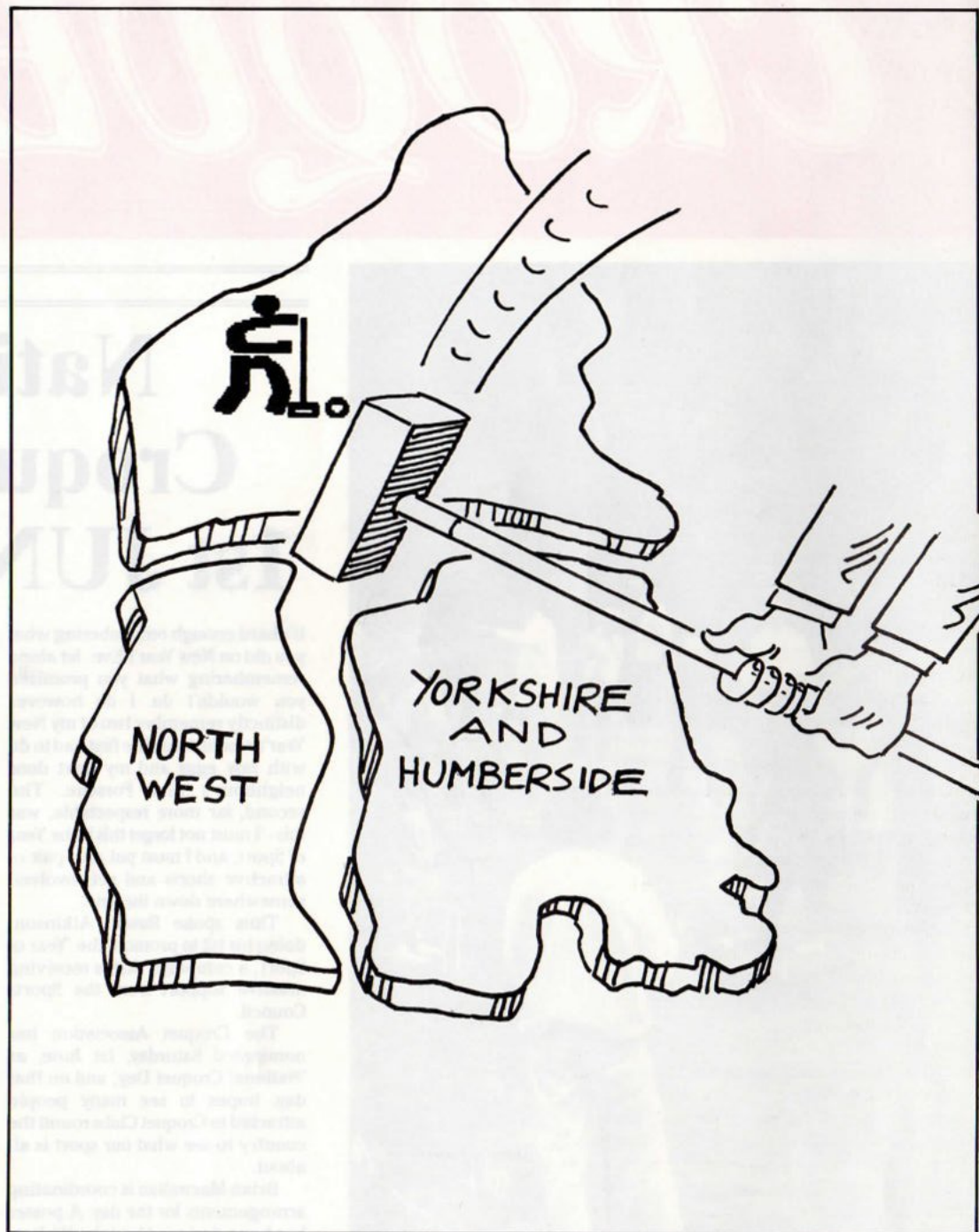
The Yorkshire & Humberside Federation covers the two counties in its title. Croquet North (the Federation of Northern Croquet Clubs) covers Northumberland, Cumbria, Durham, Cleveland, and Tyne & Wear. As with the other Federations, this coverage reflects the geographical organisation of the Sports Council regional offices.

The two new Federations were originally part of the North West Federation, which now reverts to its own region of Lancashire, Cheshire, Greater Manchester, and Merseyside.

The three northern-most Federations have decided to set up a new body called the Confederation of Northern Croquet Clubs. Their aim is twofold; to maintain close contact with each other, and to provide a structure for organising league matches between clubs that used to make up the North West Federation before the re-organisation.

Croquet North has been actively promoting the game since its formation. Development Officer Syd Jones, who organised two sponsored events at the Gateshead Garden Festival in 1990, reports that new groups are springing up in Cumbria and throughout the North Eastern counties. So 1991 should see a number of new registered clubs in the region.

The Federation's Officers are: Derek Trotman (Chairman); Bruce Rannie (Secretary & League Manager); Charles Topaz (Treasurer); John Davis (Coaching Officer); and Syd Jones (Development Officer).



## CA considers Federation Conference for November 1991

At present, many clubs and players are not able to attend the CA Club Conferences that by tradition have been held every two years at Hurlingham.

At its March meeting, Council discussed a proposal by the CA's Development Committee that the 1991 Club Conference should be replaced by a Federation Conference.

The suggestion was that the Federation Conference should be followed by each Federation holding its own Club Conference in the Spring of 1992.

These meetings would be easier for people to attend, and would enable many more people to put their views forward. If required, the CA could put items it wished to be discussed on the agendas of all the Federation meetings.

After a brief discussion, it was agreed that the matter should be considered more fully at the Council meeting in April. Some Council members felt that it would be a pity to change the existing arrangements, whilst others were keen to raise the profile of the Federations.

Syd Jones, Development Committee Chairman, is meanwhile exploring the possibility of a Federation Weekend, perhaps held in Birmingham next November.

The CA's Development Committee consists of two Council members, nine Regional Development Officers, and two CA Officers. It usually meets on a Saturday. The plan is that as many other Federation Officers as possible should join the Committee on the Sunday after their November Committee meeting for a full

programme of workshops and discussion meetings.

One of the items likely to be discussed is how Federations can best be structured to enable them to undertake a full administrative role in their regions.

At present, three Federations are actively pursuing the idea of employing a part-time paid Regional Development Officer. Job descriptions for other voluntary posts have been circulated for discussion by Federation Committees.

● Allen Parker found this article in a 1907 Gazette. It could well have been written yesterday, and can be read with advantage by high and low bisquers alike.

# • NERVES •

The croquet player who has not suffered from nerves must be a beginner indeed. Yet it is a singular fact that many players can remember a time when 'nerves' were unknown to them very early in their acquaintance with the game. But, alas, the day comes to all alike when the well known symptoms of the disease appear, and for a time at least the joy of the game is turned to sadness.

A game of croquet is not only a contest of skill in execution combined with judgement, but also a battle of nerves.

The nerve strain in croquet is in some respects greater than in any other game of the kind, for the reason that there is a very little outlet in physical exertion to steady the nerves. In such games as tennis and golf the nervousness which may be so apparent in the first few games, or on the first tee, is undoubtedly soon diminished by the severe muscular efforts which act as a safety valve to nervous tension. In croquet this tension has largely to be borne in absolute absence of effort, or in strokes which involve little muscular exertion.

It is not uncommon to come across people who profess a fondness for the game, but who say they don't play in public because they are too nervous. If this attitude is analysed it will be seen that such people only care for a debased form of the game, for it is this very nerve strain that they dread that makes croquet the great game that it is.

It may be safely asserted that without this nerve strain croquet could not have attracted the really good cricket, golf, and tennis players that it has.

Why is it that a simple stroke which can be played a hundred times or more with ease on one's own lawn suddenly fails us at a crisis in an important match? The answer is not so hard to find as it appears. By constant practice the particular stroke, like a habit, is done without thinking. The crisis of a game occurs and our whole attention is concentrated on the stroke; we realise how much we shall lose by failing in it, and what is normally almost an unconscious stroke has to be performed with the whole play of the conscious mind endeavouring to help, but in reality embarrassing our action.

How many players have missed a two foot roquet? And yet, how could one miss such a shot unless one tried? That is in fact what we do. Our mental effort really amounts to an attempt to miss. The many muscles that in practice are guided in their combined action by a gentle nerve energy are hampered and held rigid by a storm of conscious impulses that defeat their own end.

Humiliation, wrath, despair, follow. We blame our carelessness, the ground, the mallet, a



The ultimate test of nerve! British Open Champion Stephen Mulliner sizes up a hoop shot in the President's Cup.

spectator, anything we can think of; but in our own hearts we know the real reason.

It is generally in the first big tournament that the aspiring player discovers this 'Colonel Bogie' in the game of croquet, and it is a bitter pill after the sanguine hopes that have possibly been engendered by a recollection of his standard of play at home, coupled with what seems a generous allowance of bisques.

'Tournament nerves' come to all, but it is a faint heart that does not fight against them, and win some measure of success.

The writer, smarting under the humiliation of defeat due to nerves in his early tournament days, asked a very good player who had witnessed his failure whether he had ever suffered from nerves. The answer given was to the effect that for a whole season, playing continuously in tournaments, he was unable to play without suffering from nerves. This, from a player ranking among the best half dozen exponents of the game, should be a comfort to any sufferer.

What is the treatment for this disease? First and foremost, one must strive to live up to the motto,

'mens sana in corpore sano.' It is not likely that a well-balanced nervous system can be developed in, or maintained in a body that is not fit and sound. Tournament play is a great strain on body and mind alike and especially to those who only occasionally indulge in it. Do we not commonly come across a young player of whom everyone says he or she 'is dreadfully steady and has no nerves'? It is impossible not to associate the good nerves of these young players with the perfect state of fitness of their bodily condition. The irregular hours of feeding, and the mental excitement inseparable from tournament play, make it by no means easy to take proper meals. The author is a firm believer in playing croquet on a full stomach, and if the vulgarity may be pardoned, the fuller the better. Another point is rest. There is much needless standing and fatigue in croquet. Force yourself to sit down when not actually playing. Above all, 'early to bed'; croquet and bridge don't go well together.

Lastly, the more you suffer from nerves in tournaments the more you must play in tournaments to succeed. According to temperament and constitution some amount of nervousness will remain, but a large proportion will be overcome by persistent play. Was there ever a singer who was not overcome by nervousness at the first public concert? Was there ever one who did not live it down more or less completely when they had performed some dozen times or more? An interesting characteristic of 'nerves' is the utter impossibility of predicting when they will arise to confound the player. Very often the relation between the player and his opponent may have much bearing on the point. Many people are 'put off' by some mannerism or peculiarity of their opponent. A very slow and cautious player may quite unsettle the game of one who is by nature quicker in his game. The best plan for such is to devote their attention when not in play to a neighbouring game.

It would be an interesting experiment to arrange a game so that the opponents were unaware of each other's identity, and unable to watch each other play. Crack players would probably be more often beaten by one-, two-, and three-bisquers under these conditions than at present. Generally speaking, it is easier to play well against an opponent who is bisques higher than oneself. The knowledge that one is playing against a very good opponent is a distinct handicap. It follows, therefore, that the more a nervous player plays against a stronger opponent the better.

'MEDICUS'



## NOTICE BOARD

## Croquet News

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If you would like to continue receiving your own copy of Croquet News, please send your annual subscription of £2.00 to 'Croquet News', The Croquet Association, c/o The Hurlingham Club, Ranelagh Gardens, London, SW6 3PR. (Tel: 071-736-3148).

Please make cheques payable to 'The Croquet Association'.

The annual subscription for the combined 'Croquet News and Croquet Gazette' is £15.00.

## AFFILIATE MEMBERS TIES

These are now available, with a single motif gold CA logo and a blue background.

Price **£11.67** (including VAT and postage)

Please order from the CA Office.



The Editor at work!

## PRINCIPAL CROQUET FIXTURES 1991

4-6 May	The Western Championships - Cheltenham Croquet Club, Old Bath Road, Cheltenham, Glos, GL53 7DF.
25-28 May	Inter-County Championship - Sussex County Croquet & LT Club, Victoria Road, Southwick, Brighton, E. Sussex.
29 May - 3 June	The Men's Championship, The Women's Championship, The Mixed Doubles Championship - Cheltenham Croquet Club, Old Bath Road, Cheltenham, Glos, GL53 7DF.
15-16 June	The Home International Championship - Glasgow Croquet Club, Glasgow Green, Glasgow.
15-17 June	The British Student Championships - Oxford University.
1-8 July	The Eastern Championship - Colchester Croquet Club, Elianore Road, Colchester, Essex, CO3 3UN.
10 July	The ROYAL BANK OF SCOTLAND National Schools Championship Final - Bowdon Croquet Club, St Mary's Road, Bowdon, Cheshire.
18-20 July	The Junior Championship - Bowdon Croquet Club, St Mary's Road, Bowdon, Cheshire.
20 July	The GIEVES & HAWKES British Seniors Championship Finals - The Hurlingham Club, Ranelagh Gardens, London, SW6 3PR.
21-28 July	The ATCO British Open Championship, The ATCO British Open Doubles Championship - The Hurlingham Club, Ranelagh Gardens, London, SW6 3PR.
17-26 August	The Northern Championships - Bowdon Croquet Club, St Mary's Road, Bowdon, Cheshire.
8-15 Sept	The World Croquet Championship, held under the auspices of the World Croquet Federation (Details to be confirmed) - The Hurlingham Club, Ranelagh Gardens, London, SW6 3PR.
14-22 Sept	The South of England Championship - Compton Croquet Club, Saffrons Sports Club, Compton Place Road, Eastbourne, E. Sussex.
5-6 October	The CROQUET ASSOCIATION National Club Championship Finals - Cheltenham Croquet Club, Old Bath Road, Cheltenham, Glos, GL53 7DF.
9 October	The ROYAL BANK OF SCOTLAND National Schools Handicap Final - Bowdon Croquet Club, St Mary's Road, Bowdon, Cheshire.

## CA National Finals Weekend welcomed by clubs and players

Cheltenham Croquet Club will host the CA's first-ever National Finals Weekend on 5th and 6th October this year.

The final of the Mary Rose team competition will take place on Saturday, 5th October. The Inter-Club final will be played on the following day. Both these competitions are played under advanced rules.

The semi-finals and final of the

Longman Cup will be played in parallel with the other two events. Played under handicap rules, each match consists of 5 games - two singles and 3 doubles. The holders, Leicester, beat West Park in last year's final.

The National Finals Weekend will provide a grand finale for players and spectators alike at the end of the season.

## PUBLICATIONS &amp; OTHER ITEMS AVAILABLE FROM THE ASSOCIATION

	CA Associate Members	CA Affiliates & non-members	Postage
<b>Publications</b>			
Full 'Laws & Regulations'	£ 3.00	£ 5.00	27p
'Know the Game'	£ 1.65	£ 1.99	27p
'12 Hints for Beginners'	75p	£ 1.50	27p
'Croquet Handbook'	75p	£ 1.50	27p
'History of Croquet' (Prichard)	£10.00	£15.00	£1.30
'Croquet' (Solomon)	£ 7.00	£ 7.95	55p
'Plus One on Time' (Gaunt)	£ 5.00	£ 6.00	55p
'Teach Yourself Croquet' (Danks) *	£ 6.00	£ 7.95	71p
'Simplified Croquet' (Danks) *	£ 6.00	£ 7.95	71p
'Play the Game' (Mulliner)	£ 3.66	£ 3.99	46p
'World of Croquet' (McCullough & Mulliner)	£14.95	£16.95	£2.10
'Croquet: The Skills of the Game' (Lamb)	£ 9.50	£10.95	80p
'How to Play Croquet' (Aspinall)	£ 2.60	£ 2.95	32p
'Croquet: The Complete Guide' (Gill)	£ 7.50	£14.95	£1.25
<b>Video</b>			
Coaching Video (Joe Hogan)	£23.00	£30.00	71p
<b>Equipment</b>			
Hoop Gauges	£5.00 + 75p VAT		
Ball Gauges	£15.00 + £2.25 VAT		
		CA Ties £11.67 (including VAT and postage)	

## \* SPECIAL OFFER

A bumper bundle. Two books by the late Peter Danks 'Teach Yourself Croquet' and 'Simplified Croquet.' Associates £7.50. Affiliates \$9.00. Both plus £1.00 postage.

## CROQUET

## Economic necessity creates new opportunities for CA's magazine

**T**HIS ISSUE marks one more turning point in the history of our magazine.

The 'official organ' has reported many changes in the game over the years, and its quality and size has reflected the economic position of the Association at the time. Alas, Council now finds itself in a position where it has to cut the magazine budget, and the Editor is left with the task of doing his best with the money available.

However, this could be a blessing in disguise, as it provides an opportunity to change direction in an effort to improve our magazine still further, whilst bearing in mind comments recently received.

Some members think the magazine contains too much material and takes too long to read, so a reduction to 24 pages might come as a welcome relief to them. Others would like to omit particular parts of the magazine, but this is a difficult area, as what appeals to some may not appeal to others.

The conclusions I have reached are demonstrated by this issue.

1. I shall endeavour to retain the same mix of material as previously, but authors of articles will have to be crisper, as there will be less space.

2. I shall endeavour to recruit some reporters, in the newspaper sense - people who are prepared to take up the phone, and interview others to find out what is happening.

In this connection, much has been said recently about having a non-playing reporter at tournaments. The idea failed because we just cannot afford the travel and accommodation expenses involved. However, modest telephone charges could be paid out of the magazine budget to reporters keen enough to chase up those taking part and to write their report that way.

This idea might be extended to reporting the progress of our national club tournaments, to finding out what is going on at Headquarters and in the Federations, at Council meetings, and so on. If there is anyone out there who would like to help, please get in touch.

3. As National Development Officer, I believe that 'Croquet News' has an important part to play in the long term development of our Affiliate membership scheme. On its own, it is expensive to print, but as a 'run-on' of the magazine, it is much more viable. I am therefore proposing to combine 'Croquet News' with 'Croquet' by creating 'Croquet

News' from the first and last four pages of 'Croquet', as in this issue.

In the (much) longer term, Associate members could receive the combined 'Croquet' and 'Croquet News', with Affiliate members receiving a 'run-on' copy of 'Croquet News', distributed through their clubs.

4. The magazine will become more of a newspaper, with the major decisions of Council and CA Committees being reported as individual articles. More news will be put in headline form, so that a quick glance through the headlines will bring members up to date immediately with the more important developments since the previous issue.

5. There will be a regular crossword, produced by a professional compiler (at least for the next six issues whilst its popularity is assessed). The first puzzle by 'Crofter' appears in this issue on the back page.

Comments from readers on the above proposals will be most welcome. As I hope I have demonstrated, all is not gloom, and there are brighter times ahead. The Sports Council has again generously funded our development programme, this time for 4 years (1991-1994), and our grant increases from £23,000 in 1991 and 1992 to £28,000 in 1993 and 1994.

Similarly we look forward to increased sponsorship. Although sponsors have been severely affected by the current recession and the Gulf War, I am confident that the situation is likely to improve, particularly with the prospect of TV coverage for our sport.

Having said that, we can do a lot to help ourselves. There is considerable evidence that where clubs make a positive effort to enrol members for the Association, they are very successful - totals of 10 or more new CA members from one club in a season are not unknown where strong efforts are being made. May I commend to you the CA recruitment scheme outlined elsewhere in this issue, in the hope that we can increase CA Associate membership to over 2000 this season. 'Help us to help you' is not a bad slogan!

Finally, at a time when the CA is actively considering a change of printer for the magazine, I would like to thank DDS Colour Printers and all their staff for the magnificent support they have given me as Editor over the past six years, and to congratulate them on the quality of work they have produced. I hope we shall be able to stay with them, but at the present time costs are paramount.

CHRIS HUDSON

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## CROQUET

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**Advertising:** Brian Macmillan, The Croquet Association. (Details as above for CA Secretary).

## Publication Details

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**Contributions:** (except tournament reports and results) and photographs (preferably black and white) should be sent to the Editor. They are most welcome and will be acknowledged when published.

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

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

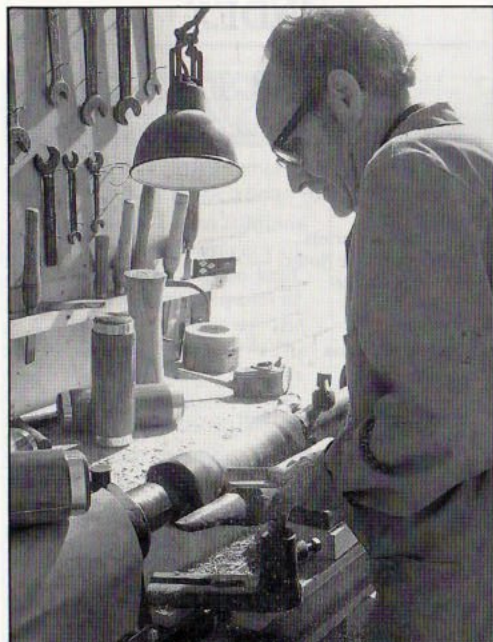
**Photographs in this issue by:** Peter Alvey, Andrew Bennet, Ray Hall, Mike Hammalev, Chris Hudson, Brian Macmillan, Martin Murray, Eric Purchase and John Walters.

## Editorial Team

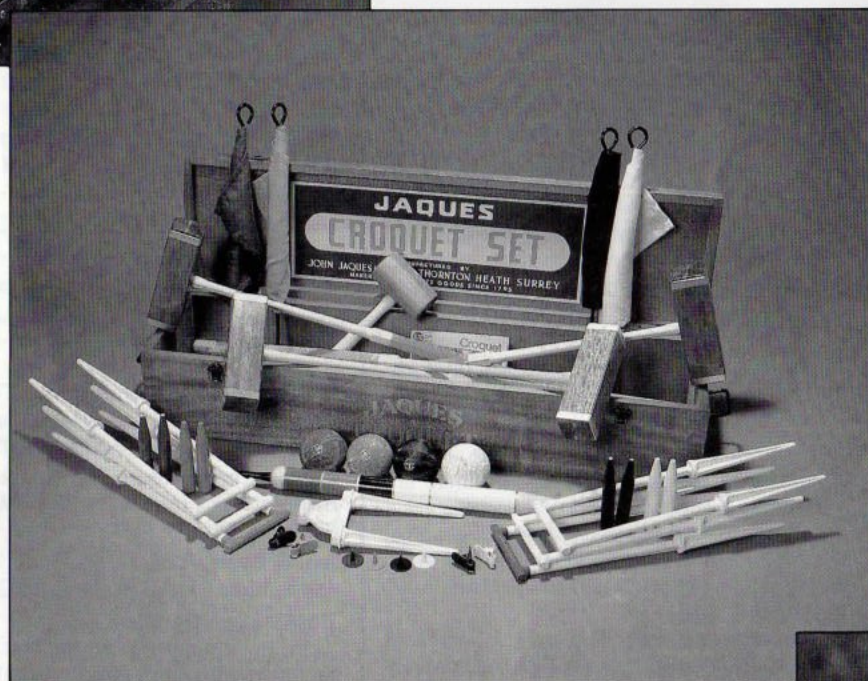
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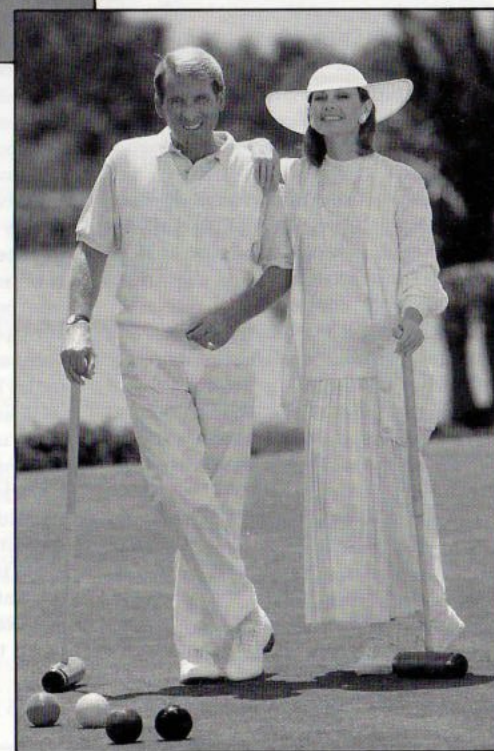
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**MEMBERSHIP**



**AFFILIATE MEMBERSHIP  
 More Clubs  
 Join Scheme**

Ninety-six registered clubs have now joined the CA's new affiliation scheme. This represents some 70% of all registered clubs, excluding schools and universities. By the time the next issue of this magazine appears, the total should be well over a hundred.

Schools are being invited to join the scheme and to nominate 6 of their players for affiliate membership - an offer that could be used as an award scheme, with schools awarding CA affiliate membership to their six best players.

The CA is gradually moving to a position where club membership lists supplied at the end of each season could be used to calculate the following season's registration fees. Using the lists, the CA could update its membership records during the winter ready for the next season.

In developing more benefits for clubs and their members, the CA will maintain preferential treatment for its Associate members. In due course, the hope is that Affiliates will become Associate members of the Association, and receive all the benefits and privileges open to tournament players.

Overall, the affiliation scheme provides benefits for everyone in Croquet - the CA, the Clubs, and the individual players. All clubs who have not yet joined the scheme are urged to do so. Full details from Chris Hudson (Tel: 0270-820296).

The CA and Yorkshire TV are planning to stage a 'Speed Croquet' match on the CA's Indoor Carpet.

If all goes well, the event will take place at a Sports Hall in Doncaster in June this year. It will feature two matches between top-ranking players, and will provide a 1-hour TV programme.

'Speed Croquet' is a game developed specifically for the Indoor surface. Instead of a time-limit per game, each player has a time limit. An electronic display, used in the same way as a chess clock, shows how much

**T.V. edges  
 closer**

time each player has left. The introduction of a time element into the game produces some very exciting finishes.

For top-class play, a 20-minute limit per player has proved to be enough to achieve a peg-out in a 14-point game.

If a player runs out of time when leading on points, then

that player is allowed only one shot for each succeeding turn, and this shot must be played within 5 seconds of the start of the turn. Points can be scored in the normal way after time has run out. The wiring rule is discarded.

*Photo (L to R): David Openshaw, Linda Baron, John Solomon, and Donald Sinden take a break during a Pro-Am Charity Match at Leeds Castle.*

**CA RECRUITMENT DRIVE**

**Personal recommendation brings results**

The drive for more CA members continues. For every 3 Associate members recruited, the Association has been offering a £12 voucher. This offer has now been extended to cover the 1991 season.

Clubs must register to join the scheme through the CA Office. Once registered, anyone who joins the CA from that club as a new Associate member counts towards the three members necessary for the voucher.

The £12 voucher can be put towards the payment of any future subscription, and can be used by the club in any way it wishes. For example, it could be used as a prize for a club tournament.

Personal recommendation about the value of CA membership has brought some spectacular results in

previous years. 12 clubs have already achieved situations where more than half their members are Associate members of the CA.

Several clubs have recruited over a dozen new members for the CA in a single season by determined recruiting on the part of the Club Secretary and other club members.

**New Members**

Welcome to the following new members who have joined the Association since our last issue:

- H.M. Caldwell
- Mrs J. Powell
- Mrs M.S. Regan
- G.P. Thompson
- Mrs B.A.M. Reid
- Miss D. Shammah
- K. Bailey
- Mrs M. Bailey
- Bath
- Cheltenham
- Chippenham
- Compton
- Hurlingham
- Hurlingham
- Kington Langley
- Kington Langley

- Mrs P.C. Hammond
- Mrs B.D. Potter
- Dr A.J. Abbott
- R.W.O. Beney
- R. Schofield
- Mrs E. Girdwood
- Mrs Z. Stirling
- Mrs C.J. Penny
- Mrs J.M. Cayton
- M.C. Belcham
- A.H.R. Craxton
- S. Gardner
- Mrs R. Gee
- T. Howard
- I. Mantle
- S.T. Strong
- G.L. Tedder
- G.A. Verinder
- Mrs S. Verinder
- A.M. Wadley
- C.J. Miles
- P. Tavender
- (Total: 30)
- Leicester
- Leicester
- Nailsea & District
- Nottingham
- Pendle
- Phyllis Court
- Phyllis Court
- Rottingdean
- Shrewsbury
- Tunbridge Wells
- Australia (Kinara)
- Australia

**INSURANCE**

**LOWER PREMIUMS  
 THROUGH CA  
 MASTER POLICY**

Clubs enrolled on the CA's affiliation scheme can obtain public liability insurance through the Association.

Twenty clubs have now joined the CA's Master Policy, and obtained up to £2,000,000 cover for an annual premium of £20. The premium remains unchanged for the coming season.

Employer liability insurance cover is also available for an additional £5,000 annual premium, and some clubs have taken out building and contents insurance related to their particular needs.

In several cases, clubs have saved over £60 on their previous premiums by insuring through the CA. Clubs taking out cover can obtain a copy of the CA's Master Policy from the CA Office on payment of a £1.00 administration fee.



## Gieves & Hawkes Senior Championship over-subscribed Surbiton hosts 3rd qualifier

The qualifying tournaments at Cheltenham and Hunstanton for the inaugural Gieves & Hawkes British Seniors Championship are both full.

Consequently the CA Tournament Committee has authorised a third qualifier at Surbiton, to be held on 22nd and 23rd June.

Entries should be sent to the CA Office, with the entry fee of £10. Entries close on 8th June. Matches will be single games under advanced rules.

Because of the introduction of a third qualifying competition, three players will now go forward to the finals from Cheltenham and Hunstanton (not 2 as previously). Two players from Surbiton will join them, making 8 in all.

The quarter-finals will be played at Surbiton on Friday, 19th July. This will determine the four players to go through to the semi-finals and final at Hurlingham on the following day.



Robert Gieve with the trophies for last year's President's Match between Great Britain & Ireland and the USA.

### Council Abolishes CA Prize Money

Prize money in CA tournaments has traditionally been justified as a contribution towards engraving costs.

At its last meeting, however, Council decided that the Association should take direct responsibility for engraving trophies presented at CA tournaments.

This decision makes the payment of prize money unnecessary and, with the possible exception of sponsored events, it will no longer occur at CA tournaments.

In future, each trophy will be retained by the CA following presentation to the winner. The CA will then immediately arrange for the trophy to be engraved, and it will be available for the winner to collect no later than one month after the event.

In this way, Council hopes to ensure that in future all CA trophies are engraved on time and in the appropriate style.

#### FIXTURE BOOK AMENDMENTS

**Compton: 31 May - 2 June**

**Secretary:** Mrs Margaret Ward, 2 Beristede Close, Carlisle Road, Eastbourne.

**Himley: Abnalls Singles (Page 51)**  
Date should be 29/30 June, not 1/2 July.

**Roehampton: 17-18 August**

Draw for advanced weekend 11 August, not 5 August.

**Inter-Club**

Coal Research Contact: Ian Maugham (Tel: 0242-234737).

## The draws have been published for the CA National club tournaments: Manager Don Gaunt reflects on this year's entries Edgbaston bid again for Secretary's Shield

The draws for the 1991 National Club events were made on March 20th.

This year's Longman Cup has a slightly lower entry. The draw has been made on the usual regional basis to avoid too much travel for clubs in the first round. The problem remains, however, that if the area for groups is made too small, clubs tend to meet the same opponents each year. If too big, there is a lot of travel.

New clubs to the competition this year are Northampton, Ormesby Hall, Cirencester, and Plymouth. Last year's winners, Leicester, take on Roehampton in the first round.

There is an increase in the entry for both the Mary Rose and the Inter-Club, reflecting the growing number of low-handicap players. An exciting early clash (in the Mary Rose) will be Bowdon, 1988 and 1989 winners, against Bristol, whilst two new entries, High Wycombe and Woking, have been drawn together in the first round.

In the Inter-Club, Coal Research looks to be a dark horse. Appropriately, they are based near Cheltenham Race course, and will be taking on last year's winners,

Colchester. Parsons Green, who meet Bristol, are a welcome new entry.

Congratulations to Edgbaston, who have won the Regional Finals to qualify for the third year running for the play-off in the Secretary's Shield. In the first round, they take on Leicester, who qualified for the play-off last year as well. Dates and venues for this event will be announced shortly.

There has been a suggestion that the Longman Cup should be played under the same format as the other events (ie one doubles and 6 singles) instead of 2 singles and 3 doubles. Also that clubs be allowed to enter more than one team in the Inter-Club.

If clubs feel *strongly* about either proposition, either way, they should write to Don Gaunt.

#### THE DRAWS

##### 1991 Inter-Club

Roehampton v. Cheltenham  
Coal Research v. Colchester  
Hurlingham v. Surbiton  
Bristol v. Parsons Green  
Woking v. Harrow Oak  
Southport v. Parkstone  
Wrest Park v. Nottingham  
Ipswich v. Bowdon

##### 1991 Mary Rose

High Wycombe/Woking v. Dyffryn/  
Roehampton  
Ipswich v. Pendle  
Cheltenham 'A' v. Hurlingham  
Surbiton v. West Park  
Southport v. Colworth  
Bristol v. Bowdon  
Edgbaston v. Nottingham  
Tyneside v. Cheltenham/  
Parkstone

##### 1991 Longman Cup

Bear of Rodborough v. Dyffryn/Bristol  
Plymouth/Parkstone v. Sidmouth  
Cirencester v. Bath/Ryde  
High Wycombe v. Worcester  
Harwell v. Cheltenham/Reading  
Letchworth/Roehampton v. Harrow Oak  
Ipswich v. Colworth/Norwich  
Hunstanton v. West Park.  
Southwick v. Parsons Green/Surbiton  
Woking/Hurlingham v. Ramsgate  
Bretby v. Oxford University/Northampton  
Leicester v. Stourbridge  
Edgbaston v. Nottingham/Bowdon  
Ormesby Hall v. East Riding  
Pendle v. Ellesmere/Edinburgh  
Tyneside v. Southport

##### 1991 Secretary's Shield

Dyffryn v. Bowdon  
Edgbaston v. Leicester  
High Wycombe v. Ipswich  
Ormesby Hall v. Vine Road

## ● Freshly returned from the United States with her husband Goronwy, Dorothy Rush puts pen to paper for another of her inimitable short stories

'Sit down, 007.' M was at his most peremptory this afternoon. Must have imbibed too much of the old Infuriator at lunch, decided Bond, taking his usual seat on the other side of M's desk and opening his gunmetal cigarette case from which he removed one of his favourite Morland Specials. 'And I'd rather you didn't smoke.'

Bond replaced this cigarette with a quizzical lift of an eyebrow and settled back to await M's pleasure. It must be something very important indeed to make M this short-tempered. Moneypenny might have warned him but she, too, had seemed strangely distracted when he passed through the outer office, failing, for once, to bestow on him the customary look of dog-like devotion that she reserved for the most favoured of 'her boys' in the 00 section.

James Bond watched the shiny, bald patch, worn smooth by a succession of naval hats, on the top of M's head, as the latter made great play of studying the documents before him. Bond was not fooled for he knew that M would already know every word of them by heart and was deliberately keeping the world's most famous secret agent waiting in order to establish his authority over him. M believed in keeping 007 in his place: too arrogant by half was M's opinion. Likely to be the death of him, if he wasn't careful. At last he raised his head and looked Bond straight in the eye. When he spoke his tone was suddenly softer and his manner unexpectedly diffident.

'James, I have a job for you. I know you've been fretting at the enforced inactivity since that nasty business with Heinkel and his gorilla but it takes a while to recover from a shattered spinal column and I had to be sure you'd be fit for your next assignment.' He raised a hand as 007 attempted to protest. 'And I hope you haven't been womanizing too vigorously since you left hospital?'

'Hardly at all sir. There was a brace of nurses at the...'

'I don't want the sordid details, man. Just make sure you're at peak fitness for this one. It's your most important mission yet.... and your most dangerous.'

Bond felt the lethargy which had held him in its grip fall away at the prospect of action.

'May I know what it is, sir?'

'Dammit, commander, I was about to give you a full briefing. Can't you learn to control your blasted impatience?'

The voice which had reduced second lieutenants to jelly at the height of a force 9 gale boomed at Bond from the other side of the desk. The world's most imperturbable secret agent looked suitably contrite and awaited the promised briefing. M pushed a photograph across the desk.

'Take a good look at that face, James. It's the face of a mass-murderer.'

'She looks quite harmless to me, sir, though perhaps she'd look more forbidding if she had clothes on.'

'What? Give me that!' A warm flush suffused M's already ruddy cheeks. 'Gave you the wrong picture - that's my...er...my niece. Here, look at this one.'

Bond studied the replacement photograph and for the second time that day raised a quizzical eyebrow.

'Nasty looking customer, sir, and taken using

## Croquet, Mr Bond?

two photoflood lamps, four feet away, with a one second exposure at f4.5. Oh, and with the correct photoflood filter, if I'm not mistaken. Probably with an old focal plane camera of the Goerz type.'

M looked at Bond as if he were mad.

'Commander Bond, if your encounter with that gorilla has had this effect on your faculties, I can only suggest that you return to the convalescent home and we give this job to 006.'

'Sorry, sir. Just observing. We're trained not to miss a thing, you know.'

M swallowed hard and continued the briefing.

'This man is known to the intelligence services of the world by a variety of aliases, the most appropriate of which is the Grinder, but he is of mixed Chinese and Negro parentage and his real name is Huan Bacantu. While you were wasting crates of Bollinger on nurses probably too young to drink, this man has been holding the world to ransom.'

For an unprecedented third time, Bond's eyebrow rose a fraction.

'Exactly how, sir?'

M consulted the documents on his desk before replying. When he did, his delivery was terse and his eyes took on a haunted look.

'By devious and highly illegal means, including murder, arson and piracy on the high seas, Huan Bacantu has cornered the world market in biocrystophanium. Unless we accede to his vile demands, he threatens to withhold all supplies of this essential chemical or even to destroy totally every single particle now in existence.'

'Biocrysto...what?' Abandoning all attempts at insouciance, James Bond allowed both eyebrows to shoot ceilingwards.

'Biocrystophanium,' repeated M, pleased to discover that Commander James Bond, possessor of the coveted 00 code and the world's premier secret agent, did not know everything. 'It is a vital component of the glue which secures

the hair-pieces of some of the most distinguished heads of government in the Western world - though not, for some reason, the Eastern world. Without biocrystophanium, a sudden gust of wind could expose our most respected public figures, revered above all for their luxurious growth of hair, as nothing but insignificant baldies!'

M leaned back to judge the effect of his words on Bond, who was surreptitiously feeling the top of his head, a look of acute alarm on his face.

'Good Lord, sir, what's to be done? What are the fiend's demands?'

'Nothing less, James, than the opportunity to pit his wits against you in the game at which you excel above all others, the game at which you are undisputed world champion.'

'Good grief! You mean this inexorable villain wants to take me on at baccarat?'

'No, not baccarat...'

'Jo-jotte?'

'No, not...'

'Quadrille, then?'

'No, no...'

'Fronton?'

'No...'

'Real Tennis?'

'James! Be quiet a moment and listen! Huan Bacantu - the Grinder - wishes to challenge you at croquet.'

'Croquet! But of course. I am the world's only minus ten. Very well, where is it to be, and when?'

'At Hurlingham, of course. This Thursday. The winner to dispose as he wishes of the world's supply of biocrystophanium.'

'Then I'd better be off. Bond rose to go. 'I shall ask Moneypenny to ring Jaques. I need a fitting for a new mallet. My old Solomon's got a nasty dose of Jamaican oil beetle and is losing weight daily.'

M waved Bond back into his seat.

'No need, James. Q has been working with Jaques on a number of refinements to their equipment, plus a couple of wrinkles of his own. He'll also brief you on the game plan.'

H pressed the intercom button.

'Moneypenny, tell Q we're ready for him now.'

As the door opened 007 turned to greet the inventor of the many devices which had saved the secret agent's life when his own impetuosity had put him in imminent danger of extinction. As ever, ignoring all pleasantries, the old boy came straight to the point:

'Right 007, just listen and don't interrupt. If you have any questions, keep them till the end. A lot of research has gone into this briefing and I'd be glad if you would at least pay attention.'

Bond gave M a 'get her' look as Q continued:

'Now, it's obvious that the equipment used in the match will be crucial to your success, especially since we cannot be at all sure that you will win by your own efforts alone. We do not need a repeat of the Goldthumb fiasco, where you tiddled instead of winking and lost Fort



## Townsend Award goes to York

From Margaret Garner

YORK CROQUET CLUB was founded in 1988 with a steering committee of 4. We finished last season with over 40 members and a strong nucleus of active players. Now, to our delight, we have won the Townsend Award for the most progressive club under 3 years old.

Regular publicity using posters, newspaper reports and photographs, demonstrations, direct mail, and interviews on local Radio, have gradually made the club better known, although on analysis we found that the majority of members joined because they already knew someone involved, either locally or through the CA.

Introductory and improvers' courses were organised, as well as free 'have a try' sessions.

A full-lawn Doubles tournament started the 'in-club' competitions, with Jane Garner and Francine Cross making Dan Beech and John McCullough work hard for their box of chocolates!



The full-bisque short-lawn handicap knockout tournament gave us an exciting finish between Julian Tonks and Roger Foster. With breath held, Julian managed to win the Haslam Trophy +3.

Julian and John McCullough were selected from a knockout to play in the Regional Final of the All-England Handicap which was hosted by York.

Eleven members were interested in the National Short Croquet competition and two blocks were used to select Jane Garner and Mike Haslam for the next round. Both

were disappointed when the venue of the finals was changed at the last moment, which meant that neither of them could play.

Two Golf Croquet events were arranged to encourage new members to meet others in the club.

A Ladder was organised but little interest was shown, unlike some other clubs. Maybe this was because of lack of time due to the commitment of members to play in the East Pennine full-lawn League, and the Yorkshire & North Humberside short-lawn League.

Seventeen members played in the League matches and it was a pleasant surprise to find that York had won the short-lawn League.

All in all, a good season, offering social and competitive play. We have one full lawn divided to make two short lawns, and although we have to share the ground uneasily with bowls players, I feel this coming season will see more and more members getting hooked on this strange and wonderful game.

### Croquet Mr Bond?....

Knox to that damned Kraut. Therefore, 007, whether you win or lose, we must discover the whereabouts of the biocrystophanium before the end of the game, so that if Bacantu wins we can still deprive him of his spoils. You must goad him into revealing where he has stashed the chemical.

'With this in mind, we have concealed a transmitter in each of the balls to be used in the match. The extra weight will, no doubt, produce bias but as Bacantu habitually uses Richmond balls he is unlikely to notice the difference.

'And while we're on the subject of balls, Huan Bacantu plays a rushing game so we've chosen to play with Sussex balls - should give you an edge. First colours, of course, so make sure you pick red and yellow; the Grinder's chosen a 1/16" setting for the hoops and black will be bound to stick in more than one of them. Play your shots hard from the very beginning and you should find the outer skin begins to peel off red and yellow, giving you another 1/32" clearance. Got that?'

Without waiting for Bond's reply, Q moved on:

'Right! Mallets. Forget your Solomon - you can't use it for reasons which will become obvious. You see, 007, you may have to shoot

your way out at the end so we've converted a Walker tournament model into a spring-loaded dart gun which will kill at 40 yards, using sharpened bisques. Not only is the tube of the Walker shaft just the right diameter for the Walther PPK nuclear dart but it also bends easily, thus enabling you to fire round corners.

'As an alternative to the bisque or the nuclear dart, we are supplying you with six darts filled with cyanide gas. Don't use them unless you have to: we've got a Middle East assassination on next month and they're ear-marked for that. If you must use them, put a clothes peg on your nose to prevent yourself inhaling the gas. Do not, repeat do not, use the croquet clips - they're Perry's and won't clip on to anything smaller than a cricket stump. With me, so far?'

Bond opened his mouth, then closed it again as Q proceeded to his next point.

'One more thing and then you're on your own, God help you! We are fairly certain that the Grinder will be using an Everlast mallet and we had a bit of fun devising exploding heads that would detonate when the polymer facing dropped off, as it always does. However, those devious chaps at Everlasts have devised a two-layer facing which resists all efforts to knock it off. We have therefore been forced to resort to

a rather risky subterfuge: before the game, 005 will break into Bacantu's dressing room and steal his mallet. He will therefore be forced to send post haste to Everlasts for a new one and the chances are extremely high that the shaft of the replacement will be wrongly aligned. This should clinch it for you. Alright?'

And Q packed away his case of samples and left without another word through the door by which he had come.

There was a moment of almost tangible silence and then M leaned back in his chair, took his pipe and a tin of Navy Cut from his jacket pocket, indicating to Bond, with a wave of the hand, that he too might smoke if he wished.

'Well James,' he asked quietly, 'How do you feel about it now?'

James Bond considered the question for only a moment.

'I'll give you the same answer, sir, as I always give when my opponent asks me if the yellow has moved in a take-off shot.'

M blinked.

'I see. And what, pray, is that?'

'Shaken, sir, but not stirred - definitely not stirred.'

## World Championship doubt as Sponsor hits turbulence

Like most international airlines, Continental has been badly affected by the recession and the Gulf War. As a result of these two factors, the number of airline passengers has dwindled considerably, and the price of aviation fuel has more than doubled.

Continental filed for protection from creditors under Chapter 11 of America's bankruptcy code some months ago, underlining the turmoil in the airline industry and its own budgetary problems.

Analysts reckon that Continental has a good chance of re-organising its finances, and we sincerely hope that they are right. But in the circumstances,

Continental are unable to confirm their sponsorship of the 3rd World Championships, due to be held at Hurlingham from 8th to 15th September, despite their wish to do so.

Time is getting desperately short if invitations are to be issued and satisfactory arrangements made. The CA Council is determined to stage the event, and has already obtained sanction from the World Croquet Federation to do so. Alternative sponsors are therefore being sought to enable the 3rd World Championship to go ahead.

Robert Fulford, 1990 World Champion. ▶▶



## Welsh CA to stage first-ever National Championship at Dyffryn

The Welsh CA have this year joined the World Croquet Federation, and will hold their first-ever Welsh National Championship at Dyffryn Croquet Club, near Cardiff, on 28th-30th June.

Welsh CA Secretary, John Grimshaw, is looking for players eligible to play for Wales. The qualifications are:

1. Born in Wales.
2. Parent or Grandparent born in Wales.
3. Current residence in Wales of at least 5 years unbroken duration.
4. Having obtained British citizenship and elected to represent Wales.

Anyone who may qualify under any of the above headings but who has already represented one of the other home countries, is precluded.

The Welsh CA has decided

that only members of the Welsh CA can represent Wales in official tournaments. The annual subscription is £5, payable to the Welsh CA. Membership can be obtained by applying to the Secretary, John Grimshaw, 60 Coleridge Avenue, Penarth, S. Glam, CF6 1SQ.

The format of the Championship has still to be decided, but each player will have a minimum of 6 games advanced play. Entry fee is £10, payable to the Welsh CA, and is restricted to members of the Welsh CA. The Welsh Champion will gain automatic entry as a representative of Wales at the World Championship at Hurlingham.

Nine players have already entered. If numbers have to be limited, then selection will be in accordance with CA rankings as published in the January issue of 'Croquet'.

## CA Selection Committee picks 1991 National Squads

The Selection Committee obtained approval at the December Council meeting for the formation of a Great Britain Senior Squad.

There have been sufficient examples in recent years of the benefits that a team can obtain from appropriate preparation for major team events, particularly the MacRobertson Shield. The build-up of team spirit takes time, and the disappointment and exclusion felt by players who just miss out on selection could be reduced if they were aware that they were members of a well-defined squad.

The 1991 Great Britain Senior squad has recently been named as: David Openshaw, Robert Fulford, Martin French, Chris Clarke, William Prichard, Nigel Aspinall, David Maugham, Mark Avery, Colin Irwin, Mark Saurin, Ian Burridge, and Stephen Mulliner.

It is envisaged that the squad will meet on two weekends during the season, and Keith Aiton has been appointed as National Coach for the coming year. He will be assisted by Graham Jones, a Sports Psychologist from Loughborough University.

Graham has been awarded a grant by the Sports Council for this purpose.

**Solomon Trophy**  
Great Britain will defend the Solomon Trophy against the United States in Palm Beach from 12th to 16th April. The Selection Committee have picked the following players: Openshaw, Fulford, French, Clarke, Prichard, and Aspinall.

Last year, Great Britain beat the United States by 19 games to 2, but that was before Jerry Stark reached the semi-finals of the World Championship. His success will surely act as a spur to other US players, and this year's Solomon Trophy match could be much closer than last time.

**Sonoma Cutrer**  
The Sonoma Cutrer invitation event will be held this year from 12th to 18th May. National governing bodies are invited to nominate players to compete, and David Openshaw, David Maugham, Mark Avery, and Colin Irwin will be travelling to Windsor, California to represent Great Britain. 28 players will be taking part.



## ● Ian Plummer continues his coaching notes for improving players

### Section 2 THE THREE-BALL BREAK

The three-ball break is the basic framework about which the more elaborate plays such as the triple and higher peels are based. Three-ball breaks have to be played during a game until you are able to recover the fourth ball and convert to a four-ball break.

You can play three-ball breaks in two broad ways. The preferred way is using rushes and stop shots. The alternative way is to use wide split rolls.

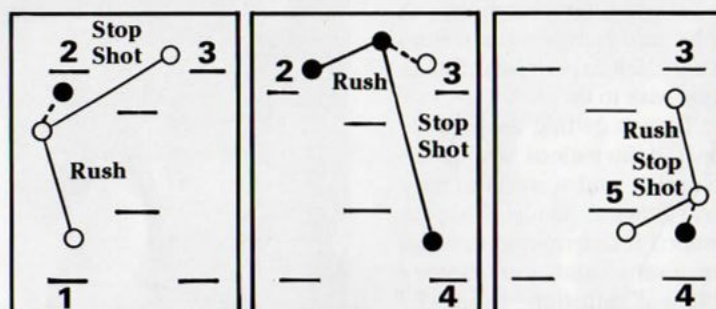
2.1 Unlike a basic four-ball break where in any one shot only one ball has to find position, in a three-ball break two balls have to be placed fairly accurately in the croquet stroke.

2.2 The essence of an easy three-ball break is to use rushes and stop shots. The rush is invaluable in allowing you to leave yourself short croquet strokes, rather than long split rolls. The ability to rush is the key to handicap reduction. As detailed in Section 1 (see Issue 214) it is vital to get on the appropriate rush line.

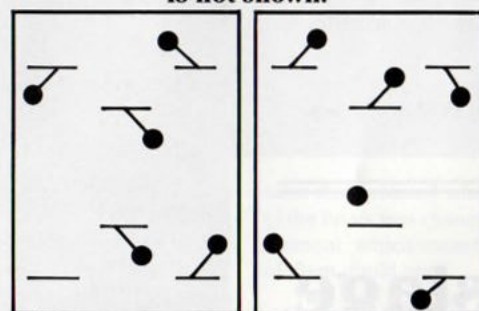
2.3 The stop shot is a very accurate way of positioning the back ball in the croquet stroke. This stroke is used to yield a perfect hoop running position or an accurate rush on another ball.

2.4 You can make most of your rushes in a three-ball break easier by rushing to a boundary. You then only need to get the direction correct and not be concerned about the strength of the shot. As an example you should aim to rush the reception ball from hoop 1 off the West boundary slightly South of hoop 2. You then stop the reception ball to hoop 3 as a pioneer and take position to rush your hoop 2 pioneer to its hoop.

2.5 The point you rush to should be the one giving you a narrow split angle on the following stop shot, AND which allows you to approach your pioneer along its rush line. The wider the split required, the more



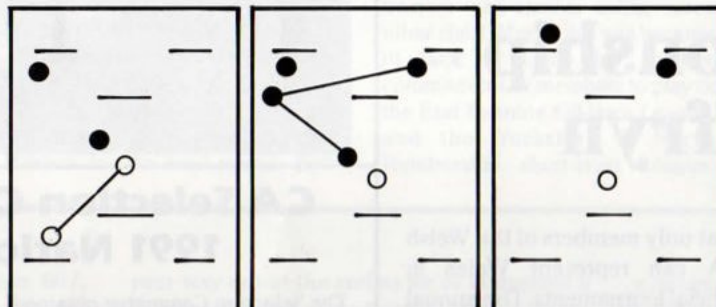
Three-ball break using rushes to the boundary, followed by stop shots to approach the next pioneer. The striker's ball is not shown.



Pioneers for a 3-ball break

Hoops 2....6.

Hoops 1-back to rover.



Changing pivot: (a) rush reception ball close to old pivot. (b) take off getting rush on old pivot to rush line of next pioneer, stop shot old pivot to hoop 3. (c) after running hoop 2, four-ball break is restored.

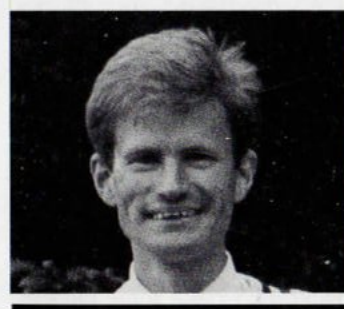
difficult the shot, and hence the more prone to error.

2.6 The most favourable positions for pioneers in a three-ball break are different from that required by a four-ball break. Since you will be mostly approaching your pioneers from the boundary, you require them to lie between the hoop and the boundary. For example the pioneers for hoops 2, 3.... should be South-West of hoop 2, North-West of hoop 3, North-East of 4. As in the last paragraph you choose the pioneer's position to give yourself a stop shot approach which does not involve a very wide stop shot.

2.7 For the hoops in the centre of the lawn there is no

need to rush to the boundary. Since small distances are involved, the shots can be accurate. The pioneer to hoop 5 is placed South-East of 5. The reception ball from hoop 4 is rushed West on to the hoop 5 rush line. The pioneer for hoop 6 wants to be South-East of hoop 6. Your stop shot sends a ball to this position and allows you to approach the pioneer for hoop 5. After hoop 5 you rush to the East of hoop 6 on to the hoop 6 rush line and stop the 1-back pioneer North-East of 1-back whilst approaching the hoop 6 pioneer.

(Previous extracts from Ian Plummer's notes were published in Issues 213 and 214.)



### Section 3 CHANGING PIVOT IN A FOUR-BALL BREAK

This is a simple procedure and an easy practice routine can be played where you change pivot every hoop. The colours of the balls cannot be ignored especially when planning a leave. The reception ball on your present hoop will become the new pivot.

3.1 Aim to get the usual rush to pivot after your hoop. Rush the reception ball close (1 to 2 feet) to the pivot.

3.2 Take-off from the reception ball, leaving it as the new pivot, to get a perfect rush on the old pivot. The required rush is to the position you would have rushed a reception ball had you been playing a three-ball break (Section 2 above). Hence after hoop 1 you would want to rush the old pivot to the West of hoop 2.

3.3 Rush the old pivot on to the rush line of the next pioneer and then stop it to your next-but-one hoop whilst approaching the pioneer at your hoop. You have temporarily slipped into a three-ball break for one hoop. The pivot is now changed and the four-ball break re-established.

3.4 Note that if you know in advance that you will be changing pivot, you would position the pioneer at your next hoop into the appropriate three-ball pioneer position (c.f. Section 2).

3.5 Often the desired rush to pivot is not there. You are left with a roll into the centre of the lawn. You only have to get the rush on the old pivot; the reception ball can go anywhere near the middle of the lawn. ■

## ● Bill Lamb, Chairman, Handicap Committee, outlines the new handicap system being introduced at the start of this season

### 1. Foreward

These Guidelines, published by the Handicap Co-ordination Committee (HCC) apply for the 1991 season and supersede all earlier Guidelines and the introductory article on the New Handicap System in the January 1991 issue of Croquet.

Council has sanctioned a two-year national trial of the new handicap system, which represents a fundamental change to the way handicaps are determined. It does not change the way they are applied to handicap play. The HCC sent a

singles game (see next paragraph) that you win leads to an increase of one in your index. Every loss reduces your index by one. When your index changes to correspond to the next trigger point, your handicap changes accordingly. Trigger points are set out in the Table below. For the trial, you should record your results (except as in Section 9), work out your new index, and if this reaches the next trigger point, the change in handicap. The change takes effect immediately, but you should get it

(d) Put the start handicap in the fourth column (or ditto marks).  
(e) Record games won and lost in that event.

(f) The new index is calculated from (old index) + wins - losses.

(g) If a new trigger point is reached, write the new handicap in the fourth column on the following line, and ensure an official handicapper initials the card to verify and record the change. Other changes made to your handicap (e.g. for level play) will be noted on your record card and initialled by the official handicapper. The previous handicap change cards will be discontinued.

### 3. Ordinary Level Singles and Advanced Singles Play

The HCC is keen to include level play in the new handicap system ('level play' is taken to include both Ordinary Singles Play and Advanced Singles Play), but it is difficult to identify a way of including level play results in the automatic scheme that is both fair to all players and simple

to operate. For this reason the HCC will be sanctioning a number of trials at level play events in the CA Calendar to test some of the alternatives.

Apart from these trials, results from ordinary level singles and advanced singles games will not be included in the automatic handicap arrangements for 1991. Instead, where the CA handicapper at such an event is convinced that a player's handicap must be changed in the light of their level play performance, a manual change may be made. Note that this is a special arrangement for 1991 only.

To make such a change, the handicapper must take into account evidence from more than one recent level play event. It will be appreciated that if performance in a level play event is significantly at odds with the general trend in handicap performance, then no handicap change should be made. The evidence from level play may result in a handicap increase or decrease.

## 'The HCC is convinced that the new handicap system will improve the standard and consistency of handicaps across the country.'

questionnaire to CA Handicappers about the new system, and received a very encouraging response. Of the 54 respondents, only 1 was against the new system, and all but 6 were in favour of incorporating level play in the system.

The arrangements for the 1991 season are described in the following article. The core of the new handicap system is in place, but the difficulties of incorporating level play in a simple and fair way mean that there are some interim arrangements for level play for 1991. It is intended to replace those in 1992, following local trials this year of various alternatives for level play.

Do not be put off by the detail in the following guidelines - it is spelled out at length because the system is new. The core of the scheme that will affect most players most of the time is simple. Official Handicappers have received further administrative details to cover starred handicaps, dormant players, and reporting arrangements.

The HCC is convinced the new handicap system will improve the standard and consistency of handicaps across the country. If you come across difficulties or ambiguities in this trial year, please communicate them to the HCC. Handicaps will become fairer, more responsive to change and more objectively determined; please give the system your full support.

### 2. Handicap Singles Play

When you receive your handicap record card, use the table in Table 1 below to find your starting index. The range of permissible handicaps remains 20 to -5, as stated in Regulation 10(d).

Every competitive handicap

confirmed by a CA or Club Handicapper who will ensure the system is being applied correctly, initial the record card and report the change to the CA. Remember to notify every club to which you have applied to enter a future tournament about your handicap change.

The following games are included in the scheme:

(a) All handicap singles games in CA Calendar Fixtures.

(b) All handicap singles games in Federation Leagues, inter-club contests, club tournaments and so on, including in both cases time-limited games, full-bisque and shortened variations, but excluding abandoned games, walk-overs, short croquet, golf croquet games and all 'friendly' games.

Handicaps will not be changed after every round in an event. Instead, changes will only normally be made at the end of an event. Where a tournament consists of a series of events following one after another, changes may be made between events. In season-long competitions, handicap changes can be made at the end of any day's play.

Your record card should be filled out as follows:

(a) Insert your name top left, current year top right, and write your starting index in the space on the next line.

(b) Use one line per tournament (when one or more events take place concurrently), or one line per event (when a tournament comprises events that take place consecutively) or one line per day's play (e.g. for inter-club fixtures, club events etc.)

(c) In the second column, enter 'CA' if an event in the CA Fixtures List, otherwise 'Club', and a brief title in the third column.



Tommy Vale coaching at Southwick.



## 1991 HANDICAP GUIDELINES

### 4. Doubles Play and Doubles Handicaps

The results of doubles play cannot contribute to the setting of singles handicaps. The highest doubles handicap remains at 17, as stated in Regulation 10(d).

Where an official handicapper thinks it is desirable, a doubles handicap may be set. These are recorded as before eg 12D10. When the singles handicap changes automatically, the official handicapper confirming the change

**'The core of the scheme that will affect most players most of the time is simple.'**

may amend or remove the doubles handicap as appropriate.

### 5. Rapid Improvers

Handicap changes for steady improvers will be handled by the automatic system described in Section 2. However, there will always

be a small number of rapid improvers whose handicaps will need to be revised by CA Handicappers to avoid their gaining unfair advantage by playing off too high a handicap. Such players can be characterised as improving from say, 12 to 4 over only 30 tournament games.

It must be stressed that the following is an exceptional procedure only to be used for the few such rapid improvers, and is not to be used to make minor adjustments to handicaps more generally. The HCC will scrutinise the use of this exceptional procedure carefully, and will reject unnecessary changes.

Where an exceptional change is needed, the CA Handicapper should report to the CA the recent history of the player, and the exceptional change made in their handicap. The change will take effect immediately. The recent history must include more than one event, and the change must be for at least 3 handicap intervals (one interval equals one bisque while over 8, and a half bisque below 8) - smaller 'injustices' will be handled by the automatic system in the course of a small number of further games. The history must provide adequate motivation for making the exceptional change.

### 6. Minus Players

Most minus players do not play a significant number of handicap games and therefore will have their handicaps determined by their ability in advanced play, as measured by the Computer Grading System. Adjustments will be made periodically by the HCC; some have been made for the beginning of the 1991 season.

Minus players who do play handicap games may also have their handicaps changed automatically under the scheme set out in Section 2. The trigger points are more widely spaced below scratch to reflect the spread of abilities of these players. Handicappers may not alter or allot a minus handicap except by the automatic scheme defined in Section 2.

**'The HCC sent a questionnaire... and received a very encouraging response.'**

### 7. Club Handicaps

Hopefully, most clubs will decide to extend the CA new handicap system to all their members - indeed, Don Gaunt has drawn up an explanation of an extension that covers club handicaps over 20 and non-CA members (copies available from Don Gaunt at 5 Rosedale Avenue, Stonehouse, Glos. GL10 2QH; enclose an A4 s.a.e.). The CA hopes to distribute to clubs sufficient record cards for all club members. This means that most new CA members will be familiar with the scheme and have a club handicap and index that should be the basis for their first CA handicap and index.

### 8. Obtaining your Record Card

Record cards and other administrative details will be sent out to club secretaries for distribution via the senior club handicapper. If you do not belong to a club, you may obtain a record card and guidance from any official handicapper, for example at your first event of the season, or from the HCC direct if necessary. You should use your record card to record all games that come under the new handicap system.

### 9. Procedure at CA Calendar Fixtures

*Handicap events*  
Much of the new handicap system could run with little need for monitoring and administration. However, as the new handicap system is being trialled for two years, it is important that it is properly

monitored. For this reason, in 1991 you should present your record card to the manager or handicapper at the start of each Calendar Fixture. Handicaps will only be changed at the end of an event. The tournament handicapper should arrange to calculate and record the index changes and complete and initial the record cards at the end of the event. You must collect your record card before you leave and notify any handicap change to clubs to which you have applied to enter future tournaments.

#### Other events

Where a CA Handicapper is considering making a change in handicap because of performance in level play, they will ask to inspect your record card to check your recent performance. For this reason, you should take your record card to every event in which you play.

### 10. Procedure at Club and Regional events

In club and regional federation matches, one-day events and rounds of season-long tournaments, changes in index and handicap will normally be calculated at the end of each day's play. The evidence of two single days in different level play events will not be sufficient to justify a handicap change under the temporary provisions of section 3.

You will normally be responsible for recording your own results, calculating your new index, and determining any handicap change. Such changes take effect immediately. However, the onus is on you to draw any handicap change to the attention of your club handicapper (or official handicapper), who will verify the change, initial the record card and report the change to the CA.

Club handicappers are asked to indicate in advance, on the club notice board or otherwise, which club events are to be included in the new handicap system. In general, all 'serious' handicap singles games should be included.

**Table: Index Trigger Points and Handicaps**

H'cap	Index	H'cap	Index
-3	283	6	140
-2½	263	6½	135
-2	245	7	130
-1½	230	7½	125
-1	218	8	120
-½	208	9	115
0	200	10	110
½	195	11	105
1	190	12	100
1½	185	13	95
2	180	14	90
2½	175	15	85
3	170	16	80
3½	165	17	75
4	160	18	70
4½	155	19	65
5	150	20	60
5½	145		

## HANDICAPPING

Dear Sir,  
I am grateful for the correspondence and interest that has been shown in handicapping and the new handicap system. There seems to be overwhelming support from players and handicappers alike for the new system. The detailed guidelines for the new system, compiled by Martin French, will be found elsewhere in this issue.

No doubt there will be disappointment in some quarters that level play results will not be included automatically. It has not been easy to find a scheme which will incorporate level play results in a way which is fair to all players and which is reasonably simple to operate. The HCC has taken the view that it would be wrong to introduce a complication to the basic scheme before the results of certain trials on level play results have been assessed. These trials will take place at a restricted number of tournaments this year.

On a purely practical point, the handicap cards will fit nicely into the protective plastic covers issued by many Building Societies and Banks for their passbooks.

Bill Lamb,  
Chairman,  
Handicap Co-ordination Committee.

Dear Sir,  
The new system being introduced this season should lead to less anomalies over time but several points seem worth consideration.

The first is whether 5 net wins/losses is too narrow a limit. My first thought was that the 10 point gap suggested by Roger Wheeler in Croquet 211 was best and that 5 was too low. However, after reviewing the following numbers I concluded that it may be quite realistic. If players win 5 out of 7 games each weekend tournament, their handicaps will be reduced by one notch every other tournament. This is probably justified whereas at present they may come second and are ignored with no handicap change. If they win 5 out of 7 one weekend and 4 out of 7 the next, their handicap will be reduced one notch every third tournament. This will stop players getting stuck at their existing handicap level unless they happen to win a tournament, whereas they may be improving steadily.

Going the other way, if players are regularly losing more than half their games, winning only 2 or 3 out of 7, then their handicaps will be increased by one notch after 2 or 3 tournaments.

The main work will be for the handicappers and those making tournament reports since once the season gets under way many players will be arriving at tournaments plus or minus 3 or 4 games. If they win or lose 5 out of 7 matches or even 4 out of 7 there will be an extensive list of changes.

The other point to stress is that someone who wins all their games at a weekend tournament, or even 6 out of 7, by a clear margin is probably worth a drop of more than one notch in their handicap. Handicappers at tournaments must still be prepared to cut an obviously wrong handicap during as well as at the end of a tournament. A lot of people's pleasure in a tournament can be removed if there is an obviously over-handicapped player beating everyone too easily. A good performance by others can be completely overlooked and their ranking under the new automatic system may be adversely affected.

With regard to level play, it must this year be left to the handicappers to make 'non-automatic' changes, and they should study the results right through the list, not just note the overall winner. Since the rating gap is now 5 instead of Roger's 10, half the change levels suggested by him might be applied - at least to the benefit of the player with the higher handicap who is beating better players.

There will be many more handicap changes including a greater number of increases than previously. Let us give the new system and the hardworking handicappers a fair trial, even if we might lose 'status' by having a bad patch.

Donald Cornelius,  
Harlow.

### Thank you

Dear Sir,  
May I use your columns to thank everybody who replied to my membership recruitment questionnaire about Southwick. The response has been remarkable, with a tremendous amount of very useful detail. Combined with the guidelines published in 'Croquet' we now have a comprehensive bank of information. I will collate it and supply a summary to 'Croquet' as I'm sure other clubs would find it interesting.

Many thanks to everybody who went to such trouble.

Simon Tuke,  
Southwick.

### VARSITY PATOIS

Dear Sir,  
May I endorse everything that Andrew Bennet says about the 'argot spoken by a certain group of players', and its effect in creating barriers. In particular I agree that it is in very poor taste to associate the name of a living player, Lionel Wharrad, with Croquet ineptitude. Lionel is held in high regard, not only for what he has done to promote the game, but also for his quality as a player and as a fine sportsman. Whether he, George Henshaw, or anyone else, 'enjoys the joke' is beside the point. No player's name should be besmirched in the eyes of newcomers by being used as

a label in this way.

What might seem to be acceptable to immature youngsters playing Croquet amongst themselves is not necessarily acceptable as established terminology. This is not how language, nor jargon, develops. I propose that the author of the original article should apologise to Lionel, and I ask that your journal acknowledge its error in allowing this Varsity patois to be presented as if it were in general use.

Eric Solomon,  
London.

### Birnam Wood

Dear Sir,  
I feel I must comment on the remark by P. Kennerley in his letter published in the March issue of CROQUET to the effect that he was turned away at the gate of Birnam Wood Golf Club in Santa Barbara, California, by two armed guards.

Like him, my wife and I have played croquet at various clubs in Australia but we were also invited to compete in a tournament at Birnam Wood Club in April 1990. Certainly we were greeted with open arms at every club we approached in Australia and greatly enjoyed ourselves.

If P. Kennerley had read accounts in Croquet of tournaments at Birnam Wood in which other English players

had participated, he would surely have appreciated that Birnam Wood is not like your ordinary croquet club. The croquet court, which is one of the best I have ever played on, is beautifully situated in the heart of the golf club. The Golf Club is one of the most exclusive clubs in California; it is frequented by film stars and millionaires and consequently entry is not gained easily but is safeguarded in the true American tradition.

However, had P. Kennerley sought to contact any officers of the Croquet Section in advance, arrangements would I am sure have readily been made for him to visit and play there. The doyen of the croquet section is the redoubtable Captain Forrest Tucker who has a soft spot for English players and refers to them affectionately as 'his limeys'. Only games under English CA rules are played there; none under American rules!

Perhaps my wife and I are slightly biased in that we were runners up in the tournament to which I referred earlier, but there is no doubt that we were regally treated and meals in the opulent clubhouse were a delight.

I hope you will be able to publish this letter as I feel it is important to put the record straight.

A.V. Camroux,  
London.



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## YOUR LETTERS



## OBITUARIES

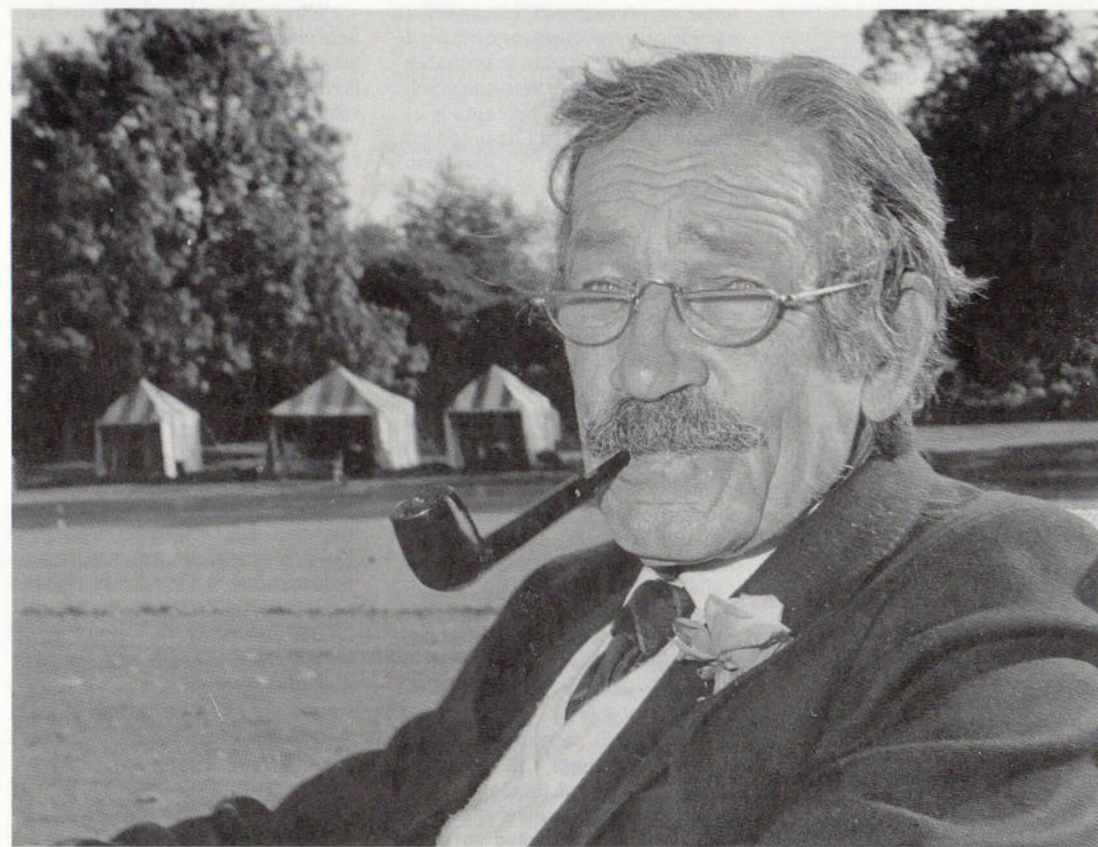
Richard Rothwell who died in February was a C.A. Vice-President and a great asset to croquet for many years, both on and off the lawns. He shared with Mrs L. Apps the honour of appearing in the Presidents Cup and also holding the office of C.A. Secretary.

Having started competitive croquet at a young age, he fitted readily into the office of Secretary some forty years later, with his wide experience of the game and the players. He took office in 1977, less than a year after serving as C.A. Chairman in 1974-76. He and his brother G.F. did much to encourage the expansion of croquet in the Thames Valley area. Perhaps his most surprising success was when in 1973 he and Nigel Aspinall representing the now defunct Caversham club won the Inter-club Championship. At that time, a club needed only two contestants to enter, and he and Nigel were in fact the only two players Caversham possessed who had any pretensions at first class play.

It is an illustration of how things have changed in the croquet world that Richard and his brother were still referred to when well into their thirties as 'the Rothwell boys'.

S.S.T.

## RICHARD ROTHWELL



## Letters... THE CROQUET CLASSIC

Dear Sir,  
The Croquet Classic presents a splendid opportunity, in conjunction with a recruitment drive, to retain the interest of your new recruits and your club members whose handicaps are 18+. Make prominent mention of it in your media and poster publicity.

If you offer beginners membership for, say, a month at a reduced fee, include entry into the classic. This will supply you with one or more American Blocks in which the beginners can start playing at a very early date. The most difficult part of recruitment is to hold onto the members you get - so many drop out, often because they are not encouraged and made welcome by all club members who must be prepared

to play with them.

We have used the Classic at Woking with great success by arranging a whole day's event on an American Formula during our open day. You will probably have to divide a lawn into two short lawns but it is well worth the effort - in any case beginners make much better progress on a small lawn and you may even encourage your better players to have a go at short croquet which is a challenging game even for the expert.

Details of the event and an entry form are on page 22 of January 'Croquet'. Give it a go, you will not regret it.

Derek Caporn,  
Woking.

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## Geoffrey Paxon

We would like to express our appreciation and affection for Geoffrey Paxon, our President for many years, who died in April 1990.

Geoffrey, a long-standing member of the Croquet Association, began over forty years of croquet at Southwick where his membership continued into his later years when he became a trustee, vice-president, and chairman of the club. In spite of interests and commitments there, he found much pleasure in regular and enthusiastic play at Hove Lawns, bringing to his Presidential duties both humour and dedication and a friendliness which extended throughout the club. He was always ready to advise and encourage other

players and to share and enjoy various social functions there.

Croquet was a source of never-failing pleasure and interest to him. Even throughout his long and painful illness to the last afternoon of his life when he was almost too frail to speak, his eyes lit up at talk of old and marvellous days of croquet, games played and the names of croquet players long since gone.

With his death we, the club, feel the loss not only of a valued and devoted President but of an understanding and affectionate friend.

Jean Browne,  
Club Captain.

## PAT TUMNER

Budleigh Salterton Club will be much poorer for the loss of Pat Tunmer who died on 22nd January aged 81.

He first became interested in croquet at Sidmouth where he helped to rejuvenate the club when it was almost on the point of collapse.

On retirement he moved to Budleigh Salterton and became one of that Club's main coaches. Many of the present members benefitted from his practical guidance and general encouragement. But visitors to Budleigh will remember him for the genial way he managed many open tournaments, including the Challenge and Gilbey in the early 1970's, the Association's Veterans tournament in 1975 and 1976, as well

as the club's May tournament for some 12 years. He had the facility of making everyone feel most welcome. He became a referee and long-standing member of the Handicap Committee and he helped the new club at Plymouth establish their initial handicaps.

He wasn't highly competitive, although he won the Reckett Cup in 1972 and 1974, but for the most part he was content to give up a lot of his time to helping others. Last year, when he found a 3 hour game a bit tiring, he turned successfully to golf croquet and rounded things off with a win in the club's Doubles Trophy.  
R.Stevens,  
L.S.Mills.

## CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

## ● Stephen Mulliner looks back over 1990 and considers the future

Traditionally, this Report provides a summary of the major events on and off the courts in the previous year. I believe it should also serve to explain current policy and future plans. The fate of the poll tax is a warning to all administrators that failure to explain persuasively can cause immense difficulties. There are, in fact, three matters worthy of attention, namely (1) the new handicapping system, (2) the way in which we pay our subscriptions and (3) our need for older administrators.

However, a brief review of 1990 is called for. The principal development achievement was the appointment of a further 141 Croquet Demonstrators to bring the total to over 200. A further 160 applications for Demonstrator courses have already been received this year. The need for more Referees has been tackled by the appointment and training of almost 40 new Examining Referees and the refurbishment of the Referees' Examination. The new Examiners have already been active and at least 20 new Referees have qualified to date. These are very encouraging signs for the health of the game.

On the courts, Great Britain & Ireland defeated the U.S.A. in the Solomon Trophy for the third time and we thank the Roehampton Club and Bombay Sapphire Dry Gin, our generous hosts and sponsors. The event was followed by the President's Match played to USCA Rules at Hurlingham which was also sponsored by the elegant gentlemen's outfitters, Messrs Gieves & Hawkes. The President's Cup was played at Bowdon for the first time, sponsored by Pilkington Glass and won by a member of the under-21 squad for the third successive year. David Maughan thereby joined the select band of victorious debutants. Nonetheless, the year belonged to another young player, Robert Fulford, who accumulated four championships culminating in a splendid win in the second Continental Airlines World Championship at Hurlingham in September. It is, of course, only the need to mention the name of Atco as the most appropriate sponsor possible, that forces me to mention that your Chairman managed to prise Robert's fingers from the Open Championship.

The demands imposed by the administration of croquet continue to increase and we are now in the middle of a significant change-round of personnel. Tony Antenen succeeded Brian Macmillan as Secretary in January and carries with him the Association's best wishes for a happy and successful term of office. Brian, having retired in name only, immediately emerged as Commercial Manager. However, this is the moment to record the CA's

true gratitude to him for his uniquely personable occupation of a difficult crease and to express our pleasure that he still wishes to be involved and help. Looking a year forward, it will be time to acknowledge the end of a term of office unique in the modern history of croquet. Good health permitting, Alan Oldham will then have completed no less than 25 years continuous service as Treasurer of the CA. We welcome Roger Bray, a previous Chairman of Council, as Assistant Treasurer and the intended next incumbent of this vital and demanding post.

I would like now to turn to the policy matters I referred to earlier. The two year trial of the Automatic Handicap System is now in operation. Cards have been distributed and have been used. Handicaps have been raised, lowered, or maintained in consequence. I am very glad to report that early indications suggest that at least 80% of those affected are either enthusiastic or at least prepared to give the new system a fair trial.

Inevitably, there have been critics and some who have threatened to resign or have resigned in consequence. I would like to offer those of this contrary view some encouragement. The new system has been introduced to tackle a genuine shortcoming in the existing state of affairs, namely the wide variation in handicapping standards across the country. It is neither desirable nor fair that major handicap competitions should be tarnished by banditry, not least because the bandits are not personally at fault and yet can be the targets of unfavourable comment. The CA has a clear national responsibility to sort out national handicapping problems and this is all that it is trying to do.

We are specifically NOT attempting to dictate to the clubs how to run club handicaps. Much of the disquiet that the new system has aroused among a section of those who play only within their own clubs would not have arisen if they had realised this fact. I gladly take this public opportunity to repeat that club handicaps are a matter for the clubs and that it is perfectly acceptable to the CA if a club handicap committee chooses not to translate increases in the Official Handicaps of club members into increases in club handicaps.

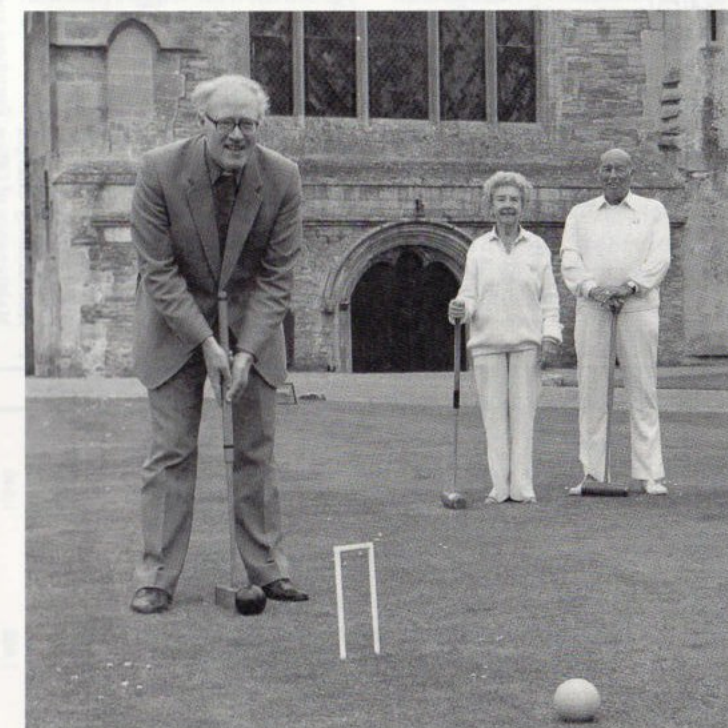
It would be a strange Chairman's Report that did not make some reference to finance. It is becoming increasingly likely that we shall have to consider introducing small annual increases in subscriptions rather than larger increases at longer intervals. Such a procedure would represent a break with the practice adopted since the foundation of the Association and I should like to make

it clear that we would not seek to introduce such a change without seeking Associates' consent in General Meeting. It is also becoming obvious that the Standing Order, that pillar of CA subscription methods, is getting past its sell-by date. There are always many Associates who forget to amend instructions to their banks when subscriptions rise, leading to voluminous and time-consuming correspondence with the CA Secretary, and the method is completely impractical if the subscription is changed annually. The increasing ease of direct debiting and credit card charging makes it possible that we shall be able to offer these more convenient payment

salute the contributions of the many young and enthusiastic members of club committees, the Federations and the Council, the reality is that most will face growing responsibilities outside croquet.

Wives, children and careers must come first and we must look principally to those for whom such responsibilities are diminishing. So, to borrow a slogan from the Sports Council, if you are over fifty, there is everything to play for in running Croquet into the next millennium.

It is usual for the Chairman to opt out of thanking individuals by name for fear of offending by forgetfulness. I hope I shall be forgiven if I thank three people individually and the rest



The Bishop of Bath and Wells, Dr George Carey, now Archbishop of Canterbury, striking the first ball of the season at the Palace Croquet Club, Wells.

methods to Associates in the near future.

Lastly, I would like to make it plain that the CA is not attempting to create a youth cult and most urgently encourage the newly-retired or those approaching retirement to step forward into the principal administrative posts at both national and federation level. This may seem a little strange coming from the second-youngest Chairman in the CA's history, but it is the product of bitter experience. The CA has grown into that uncomfortable situation where it is big enough to create a lot of administrative work but cannot yet afford sufficient full-time staff to do the work. Although I gratefully

collectively. Our sponsors, the Federation Officers, my Council colleagues and the CA Office staff all deserve our sincere gratitude for their various contributions to the game. The three people I should like to thank personally are Chris Hudson, for combining the demands of Editorship and Development so enthusiastically; Alan Oldham, for a contribution that I look forward to acknowledging in proper measure in due course; and my wife, Sarah, for indulging my love of Croquet so generously.



## 1990 ACCOUNTS

## STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS AS AT 31ST DECEMBER 1990

	1989
<b>FIXED ASSETS</b>	
Office Furniture and Equipment at Written Down Value	1,110
Croquet Equipment at Written Down Value	1,600
Trophies, estimated to realise Investments, as per attached schedule	10,000
	27,310
	40,699
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>	
Stocks of Literature and Equipment	1,800
Loans to Member Clubs	3,400
Sundry Debtors and Prepayments	6,179
Cash at Bank and in Hand	3,794
	15,173
	55,872
<b>CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>	
Subscriptions Received in Advance	4,665
Accrued Expenses	16,969
Taxation	307
	21,941
	£33,931
<b>NET ASSETS</b>	
Representing:	
Accumulated General Funds as at 1st January 1990	24,717
Transfer to Four Lawn Fund	(200)
Deficit for the Year on Activities	(7,991)
Surplus for the Year on Investment	16,526
<b>OTHER FUNDS, as per schedule</b>	
Life Membership	1,640
Apps-Heley Memorial	216
Test Tour	2,734
Benefactors	10,391
Tournaments and Trophies	2,871
Four Lawn	1,250
	£44,770
	£33,931

Signed: S.N. MULLINER, Chairman of Council  
A.J. OLDHAM, Hon. Treasurer

## INVESTMENTS HELD AT 31ST DECEMBER 1990

	\$	
<b>Unquoted Investments</b>		£39,376
Nationwide Building Society		
<b>OTHER FUNDS</b>		
Balance at 1st January 1990	1,640	1,250
Add: Interest on Invested Funds	313	150
Donations	-	1,050
From General Funds	1,640	2,450
	3,047	3,171
Deduct: Allocation in Year	766	500
<b>Balance at 31st December 1990</b>	£1,605	£2,962
	\$ 216	\$ 1,950

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Deduct: Allocation in Year	766	500
<b>Balance at 31st December 1990</b>	£1,605	£2,962
	\$ 216	\$ 1,950

## INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 1990

	1989
<b>INCOME</b>	
Subscriptions	20,886
Registration Fees	3,292
Levy	6,020
Sale of Books, Laws etc. (net)	5,701
Advertisements in Publications	2,993
Surplus on Tournaments	2,928
Investment Income on General Funds (net of tax)	2,829
	44,649
	21,161
	25,023
<b>EXPENSES</b>	
Publications (Magazine, Fixtures Book and Directory)	20,396
	24,253
<b>GENERAL OVERHEADS</b>	
Office Rent	1,680
Rent of Land	500
Staff Salaries and Pensions	14,839
Council and Committee Travelling Expenses	1,043
Postage and Telephone	1,836
Printing and Stationery	1,769
Insurance	375
Sundry Expenses	711
Accountancy Charges	1,400
Maintenance of Office, Furniture and Equipment	1,574
	25,727
	(1,474)
<b>(DEFICIT)/SURPLUS ON ORDINARY ACTIVITIES</b>	
	2,168
<b>EXTRAORDINARY ITEMS</b>	
Income	
Sports Council Grant	26,000
Sponsorship (net)	615
Coaching (net)	(3,197)
	23,418
	29,153
	27,679
	25,586
<b>EXPENSES</b>	
Development Officer's Fees and Expenses	24,066
Grants to Clubs and Federations	950
General Publicity and Development (net)	8,461
	33,577
	27,875
	\$(7,991)

We have examined the books, vouchers and other records maintained by The Croquet Association for the year ended 31st December 1990 and obtained such further information as considered necessary. To the best of our knowledge and belief the Accounts as presented by The Association on pages 2 to 4 give a true and fair view of the State of Affairs of The Association at 31st December 1990 and of the Deficit for the year ended on that date.

Alhambra House, 27 Charing Cross Road, London WC2H 0AU  
5th March 1991

NICHOLASS, AMES & CO.  
Chartered Accountants

## 1990 ACCOUNTS

## Treasurer Alan Oldham comments on last year's Accounts

Although the Association's ordinary income has reduced it should be remembered that last year we obtained an exceptionally large amount from sales and advertisements. The underlying trend for our total income remains good and, since we have retained the services of Brian Macmillan as a part time sales manager on a commission basis, some increase in our income from commercial activities can be expected in the coming year.

Apart from inflationary effects the increase in overhead costs is wholly attributable to the fact that, following the recruitment of Tony Antenen, both he and Brian Macmillan were being paid for a four-month overlap period. The cost of publications has been kept within budget for 1990 as a result of various economies, but this is a large item of expenditure in relation to the size of our ordinary income and very susceptible to cost increases outside our control; it therefore requires constant vigilance and further economies have been agreed for 1991. A Grant at a level lower than in 1989 was part of the agreed pattern of financial help from the Sports Council. Nevertheless, coupled with the fact that the Grant included no adjustment for three years' inflation, this has made it difficult to provide funds for Publicity and Development activities.

Grants of £50 were made during the year to four clubs, and grants of £250 each were made to the North West Federation, Croquet North, and the Yorkshire & Humber side Federation. A transfer of £1050 from General Funds has been made to the Four Lawn Fund and out of the latter a grant of £500 has been made to the Sidmouth Club. Short term loans of £1000 to the Newport (Essex) Club and £500 to the Sidmouth Club were made during the year. Loans of £1200 made in earlier years to three clubs have been repaid.

During the year, net amounts of £3,900 were spent on publicity (including £1000 for Croquet News and £1000 for a Press Officer); £2,600 on general development which included the Schools programme and the Garden Classic; £1,700 on the MacRobertson Test Tour, £1,100

on the Solomon Trophy Match, and £3,100 on the World Championships.

Sponsorship was received during the year from ATCO, Continental Airlines, Bombay Sapphire Dry Gin, The Royal Bank of Scotland, Gieves & Hawkes, the Gateshead Garden Festival (per Derwent Valley Foods) and Pilkington Glass. As a result, all the cost of the international activities mentioned above, all the cost of the Schools programme, a significant part of the publicity and other general development expenditure, and some of the expense of the Development Officer were directly or indirectly covered by Sponsorship money. It was also possible to provide out of the total available Sponsorship income grants of £1000 to Bowdon Club in respect of the President's Cup and £1,400 to Croquet North in respect of events staged at the Gateshead Garden Festival.

I am pleased to draw attention to the fact that the Coaching Scheme, as well as being successful in other ways, is now generating a small profit for the CA on a 'turnover' of £4,700.

Although there is a small surplus on development activities during the year, almost but not quite eliminating the deficit on our ordinary activities, the extent to which this has depended on the obtaining of sponsorship income by our Development Officer must be understood. The present economic situation in the country does not hold much hope for such substantial sponsorship in 1991 and in setting tight budgets for development expenditure in the year ahead, Council has borne this in mind.

The Association's investment in Treasury Stock was repaid at par in October 1990 and at about the same time our shareholding in Roehampton Club Limited was sold. After Capital Gains Tax the net gain to our funds was £10,000. Since the end of the year £15,000 has been re-invested in short-term gilt-edged stock, so protecting some of our investment income from the likely fall in interest rates over the next year or two.

The Benefactors Fund re-

ceived a £1000 legacy from the late Gerald Williams and, being an invested fund, has increased through interest additions. An allocation of £765 was made from the Test Tour Fund (making with the £1,234 allocated in 1989, a total of £1,999) to meet part of the cost of the January 1990 MacRobertson Tests.

Because of its financial implications I referred last year to the increasing work load on the Association's administrators. The appointment of Tony Antenen has only served to bring into high relief how much is nowadays expected from the CA Office and from the Secretary himself.

Tony has embraced his multifarious duties, many of which were new to him, with great enthusiasm and for this we should all be grateful. Working under the leadership of the Chairman of Council and by associating himself closely with the work of the Chairmen of the various Council Committees

Tony has already identified several areas where we can improve the service and efficiency of the CA Office. Nevertheless development of croquet generally, greater public awareness and our increased membership all combine to make ever growing demands on these people. Few of us realise just how great these are and we must be careful not to attempt too much, too soon, with our somewhat limited resources.

The Chairman of Council in his own Report has made reference to certain changes affecting future subscriptions which have got to be considered. I do not feel that this is the place for me to make specific comment on them but I hope that Associates will reflect upon them carefully during this next year in the light of the preceding paragraphs and remember that you will soon have a new Treasurer to supervise your finances - for my 'game' is nearly over.

## ROQUE

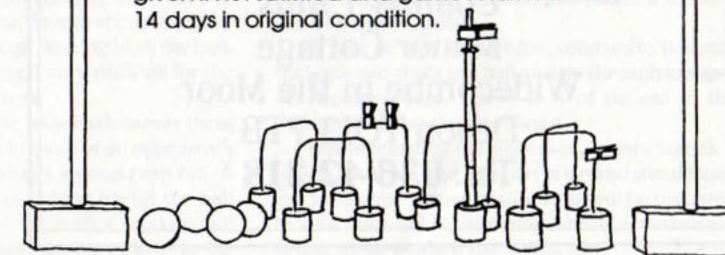
TRÓ' QUET (-KĀ-KI, TROKĀ) n.

Game played on carpet in which 25mm billiard balls are driven with 32" long Troquet Mallets through precision made plastic-coated steel hoops.

You may think that you need a spacious lawn to play croquet, but TROQUET now offers you the ideal alternative in your own home. An entertaining and skilful game for 2 or 4 people played under regulation Croquet rules with specially designed mallets and hoops. All parts fit neatly away in an attractive, quality made box.

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Please allow 28 days for delivery. Full refund given if not satisfied and game returned within 14 days in original condition.





## ● Soham Indoor Weekend: 2-3 February 1991.

Two years ago Albert Lawrance persuaded the CA to arrange a coaching weekend on the indoor carpet at the Soham Sports Hall. Twelve months later the Great Britain team played an East Anglian side at the same venue, and had he lived, Albert would surely have been proud to watch; sadly, that was not to be. However, this year the Eastern Federation organised an 'Indoor Weekend Tournament'. The Soham management, perhaps more publicity conscious(?), brazenly advertised it as the 'Inaugural East Anglian Indoor Croquet Pairs Championship'.

For some, the weekend began at 10pm on Friday night as part of a heavy gang who set out the carpet and hoops, although it was even later, as the caretaker rattled the keys, that a young man was noticed, busy with a Hoover. He said he could play and had asked for political asylum, or was it just asylum? Whichever it was, the home team's captain ensured his club membership, and at 9.30 on Saturday morning Duncan Reeve was standing on the lawn representing Soham, one of twelve croquet clubs

entered.

They came from all corners of the Anglia region; from Ipswich in the east, to Colworth in the west; from Newport in the south, to Tyneside in the north. Tyneside?? Well, Syd Jones claimed Croquet North qualified as a north Norfolk suburb. This promised to be a fun weekend!

The tournament format was

### TIME OUT!

### Report by The Bandit.

short croquet, handicap pairs, each game timed at seventy minutes, half to each team. Initially this was done using chess clocks, but they proved to be unsuccessful, since they were too small to read at a glance, or even see at a distance, and

players were concentrating more on the clocks than the croquet.

The suggestion that spectators operate the clocks met with little enthusiasm, until the manager raised the tournament level to hi-tech by miraculously producing two CA electronic scoreboards; then volunteers abounded, and the entire hall could see what was



Ancell Trust's Cliff Jones (right) and Kevin Wells receive the Albert Lawrance Cup from Albert's daughter, Gaye.

happening.

The effect on play was amazing.

During the early games, as people battled with clocks and the pace of the carpet, most sessions went to time, which resulted in the programme running late. However teams quickly copied Croquet North's Syd Jones and Derek Trotman, who were constantly seen prowling the boundaries, fielding balls, well their own at least, and ever ready to step into action and save vital seconds. As competitors saw the electronic sands of time running out, they literally started to run roquets as well as hoops! Games began to be pegged out, and even the referee, Tom Anderson, entered into the spirit with some mercurial decisions.

At the end of day one, all having played three games, Ancell Trust were leading the First Colours Group, with two wins and a draw, closely followed by Peterborough and Downham on two wins. Second Colours had a three way tie between Bury St Edmunds, Soham, and Letchworth, all with two wins. Favourite comments of the day included the philosophical, 'Ah, if only...', and the frantic 'Time Out!'.

Sunday dawned, as did the speed of the carpet for some;

Steve Comish (BT Research), completed the tournament's first rover peel and peg out, to the delight of his partner, Jill Waters, and spectators alike. Ancell Trust's Cliff Jones continued to delight everyone, not only in play, but also with his splendid array of bow ties, and with his partner Kevin Wells won both games, as did Bury's Alec Bell and John Robinette.

However, while Ancell's 4 wins +22 hoops won their group, (from Newport's Don Cornelius and John Hobbs, 3 wins +29), Bury, with 4 wins +8, had to await the outcome of the final group match between Ipswich (Lewis Palmer, Celia Steward), and Soham (Duncan Reeve, Ian Storey). The wait was short, just over thirty minutes, as Reeve made his second all round break, inspiring his partner to their second +13 victory, and group success with 4 wins +39.

The final, between Ancell Trust and Soham, began on time at 16.45. After a most exciting game, swinging one way and then the other, Kevin Wells produced a fine finish to give Ancell Trust the Albert Lawrance Cup. The Cup and the trophies for the finalists were presented by Albert's daughter, Gaye.

Thanks are due to Paul Day, who made the weekend possible by providing transport for the carpet, and special thanks to Judy Anderson who managed the tournament superbly, ably supported by Tom and Clair to name but two. Judy worried about the weekend, but I hope that she, the EACF players, and spectators, all think it was worthwhile, and will accept the Sports Hall offer to stage it again next year.

Albert would like that.

Some tournament details.

Short Croquet - Doubles.

Double Banked!! With Chess Clocks and Electronic scoreboard timing.

Total Hoops scored: 655.

Total Time: 1732 minutes (plus single ball shot 'overtime'). So a hoop was scored every 2.6 minutes.

Fastest to 14-point score: Tyneside, with 23 mins.

Fastest match total: 32 mins. Soham 14-1 (v. Tyneside).

FINAL: Ancell Trust beat Soham 14-10.

# The Stun Shot - Essential for Winning Play

## GOLF CROQUET

### Play for the Safety Square



Finalists in the Buckinghamshire WI Golf Croquet tournament.

Position for each of the hoops must be the aim of the first and third players; they not only have the advantage of playing for - concentrating on, is better - a perfect position, but they should retain command of the hoops, even if they fail to get position.

In theory, the first and third players should, one or other of them, score the hoop. The only apparent thing that can stop them is the judicious use of the stun-shot by the second and fourth players. But before bringing in these second and fourth players, let us return to the attackers, the first and third players.

Getting a perfect position for each hoop is very valuable, particularly on odd-numbered hoops. If attained, and the hoop is run smoothly and with the right strength, the player has a good chance of usurping the right of the opponents to be first at the next hoop.

Suppose that Blue and Black are the first two balls to play for the first hoop, and, though harassed by Red and Yellow, have played so cleverly - perhaps stymied Red from Black - that Black is in a perfect position for the first hoop. Black runs it with the right strength to be down by the second hoop before Yellow. Yellow dare not take position for the hoop or Black, in his next turn, will stun-shot Yellow away, retaining the position which Yellow had unwisely taken up.

Here we may say something about Red and Yellow when playing second and fourth for the first hoop. They are on the defensive from the

attack on the hoop of Blue and Black. If Blue gets position straight away for this hoop, then Red must shoot to remove it - and if Red fails, Yellow must also shoot at the Blue ball in position.

Suppose that there is no ball in position for the first hoop, what are Red and Yellow to do? They must then take up some position in the 7-yard square - the corners of which are the first hoop and the first corner flag.

The reason for this is that if they were to come up short of the first hoop, or to the right of its playing side, Blue or Black could stun-shot Red or Yellow to the other end of the court. This 7-yard square is therefore to be looked upon as the safety zone for the second or fourth players when one or other of the corner hoops are being played for.

When playing for either of the two middle hoops, there is of course no such protection; but the second

and fourth players must use their judgment as to where they take up position, and avoid getting too close to a ball of the other side. Obviously, if there is an enemy ball in good position for, say, the fifth hoop, it must be removed by one of the second or fourth players.

The stun-shot is the most valuable stroke in the game of Golf Croquet and, if not learnt, a player is under a great disadvantage. Contrariwise, if acquired, this stroke can, literally, remove a ball in position for its hoop quite 15 yards while the ball of the 'stun-shooter' takes the removed ball's place.

The shot requires practice and is well worth it. The mallet is checked when making the stroke, by grounding the heel of the head or stopping the follow through when the mallet makes contact with the striker's ball. The effect of this is that the object ball goes yards away and the striker's ball hardly moves after hitting the enemy ball. To be effective, a stun shot can only be played when the striker's ball is within, say, 6 feet of the ball it wishes to remove.

The only other removal of an enemy ball in position, namely, the long shot, has nothing like the same value as the stun shot; for both balls will be scattered by the impact of the long shot, whereas the stun shot can retain position for the hoop while driving the enemy far away. ■

## When To Shoot and When To Hold Back

An improving player is usually a good shot and happily goes for shots which, when missed, prove fatal to his chances of winning the game.

However, as handicaps come down, there is increasingly a need to think and be discreet. Watch an 'A' class game and see how often good players are forced to play away and wait their chance for a safe shot.

For example, better players soon learn that

### ASSOCIATION CROQUET

when the opponent has a rush to the first hoop and has put one adversary ball at the second and one near the third, it is very unwise to shoot with the ball at the second at the ball near the third. If this shot is missed, a 4-ball break is easily picked up. Also when one ball is out in the court within, say, eight yards of the boundary, a shot at that ball, if missed, is asking for trouble against a good player. It is wiser to put the ball on another boundary or in a corner and join up later four to six yards away. This gives a safe shot through, leaving both the balls on boundaries and making it very difficult for the opponent to pick up a break.

A player must, however, attack whenever there is a chance. It is often safe to shoot at an opponent's laid up balls if there is already a good rush out. A decision must be made as to how useful the ball would be to the opponent if the shot is taken and missed. If the balls are laid up very close to the

boundary, little harm can be done, but if one to three yards out, a stop shot may enable the opponent to start a break. If the balls are further out, it must be calculated whether the opponent will be courageous and hit back and thus make good use of the ball to get going again.

At the Peg-out, the opponent should shoot at and join up with his partner, on the boundary if possible. He should only shoot at the balls for the peg if he is likely to hit, or if the opponent is certain to go out next time. It should be remembered that the forward ball may be rushed on to the peg. Thus the turn stops, and it is most unfortunate if the balls are not then together.

A 'safe' or 'free' shot is often referred to. It means that one can shoot at a ball and go through to a spot on the boundary, where it is of no use to the opponent if the shot is missed.

While learning the necessary safety tactics, a player must not lose his enterprise and should look out for opportunities of shooting and be prepared to take reasonable risks when there is obviously a break to be made if the ball is hit.

## "Matchplay"

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## Modern History

**Queen of Games.**  
**The History of Croquet**  
by Nicky Smith  
Weidenfeld & Nicolson.  
£16.95

'Queen of Games' is a very readable book whose author has a passion for the game. She is a member of the Compton Club and writes regularly on Croquet for the *Financial Times* and *Country Life* under the pseudonym 'Arthur Mallet'.

In the not-too-distant future,

this book will form a very valuable historical document, for Nicky has talked to croquet players far and wide in her research, and set down the present state of the game.

Her chapters on Equipment and on the Ladies' Game I found particularly interesting, but there is a wide range of material to suit all tastes, including discussion of many of the issues facing croquet today.

This book conveys the atmosphere and joy of croquet. I recommend it.

## A welcome edition

Out at last (end of March) and this time, only in paperback.

However, that said, editor John Walters has vastly improved the layout of the Almanack, and has produced some excellent photos which deserved better treatment by the printer.

An innovation this year is the announcement of the Townsend Medals, Gold and Silver, for the number 1 ranked players in each

**Townsend's Croquet Almanack 1991**  
Edited by John Walters  
Eastern Rose Publishing. £6.95

country, and for special merit.

Robert Fulford collects a Silver for 50 triple peels from 107 games (best British peel performance). I reckon most of us would expect a Gold for one triple!

## Extract from 'My Life and Times'

By Jerome K Jerome

Croquet is an irritating game; but a boon to cripples. I took it up when I was suffering from a broken ankle. The more you try, the worse you play. I know a man who never touches a mallet except once a year, when he enters for the county tournament, and carries off half the prizes. Children, before they are old enough to have known trouble, make good players. What the game seems to require is a thoughtless temperament. My eldest girl, at the age of about twelve, was a demon. She'd just whack round and hit everything. It used to make me mad. I remember being Lady Beresford's partner against Lord Charles and Miss Beresford. Three times that child croqueted her mother to the other end of the lawn, and then Lady Beresford - very properly, as it seemed to me - put an end to the atrocity.

'You do that again, my girl, and you go straight to bed', she told the child. Eventually, Lady Beresford and myself won that game.

Zangwill used to be keen on croquet, but never had the makings of a great player. Wells wasn't bad. Of course, he wanted to alter all the laws and make a new game of his own. I had to abandon my lawn, in the end. I had laid it out in the middle of a paddock where the farmer kept his young bulls. They couldn't resist the sight of the fresh green grass. I had fenced it round with barbed wire, but they made light of that. They would gather into a little group and



Mr Lewis Waller, one of Jerome K. Jerome's many friends.

confabulate, and then suddenly would lower their heads and charge. Sometimes they got through and sometimes they didn't: but it used to distract us. I remember a nightingale that would perch on one of the sticks and sing - often while we were playing. Nightingales love an audience. There was another that had his nest in a garden of ours by Marlow Common. Like the swallows, they return each year to the same loved spot. If one went to the gate and whistled, he would soon appear and, perching on the branch of an old thorn, sing for so long as one remained there, listening.

## GOLDEN MALLET WI's North Wales League Teams go for Trophy

Players from the Conwy Valley in North Wales plan to mount a strong challenge for the CA's new Golden Mallet Trophy.

Last season, four WI groups played Golf Croquet regularly at Morfa, Beaumaris (Anglesey), Dwygyfwhlchi, and Nanhorne, near Pwllheli. Beti Wyn-Roberts, who taught many WI members how to play croquet in 1990, plans to organise both Golf Croquet and Short Croquet leagues for the Conwy Valley groups in 1991.

Aberconwy Borough Council and Trefriw Community Council are making cricket outfield and tennis courts available, and competitive croquet seems set for a good summer in North Wales.

Even so, the North Wales players are unlikely to have it all their own way in the Golden Mallet competition, which looks like being hotly contested. There will certainly be a keen challenge from the Romney Marsh WI's in Kent. Twenty-four of these WI members attended a one-day course

organised by Chris Hudson, CA Development Officer, in April, with the express intention of forming their own Short Croquet league after playing Golf Croquet last year.

Meanwhile, Golf Croquet is taking off in Buckinghamshire, where Kay Bradley and WI area leaders are organising croquet groups. A WI group led by Joan Buckle has formed a club at Winslow, Bucks, where they meet twice a week, and the District Council has now provided a purpose built croquet lawn at Winslow for their use. This will be the venue for one of the CA's 1991 Croquet Demonstrator courses.

Elsewhere, June Pheysey-Jones and Norma Rayne have formed the Thames Valley Croquet Club, based on the WI's Denman College, whilst Patricia Duke-Cox, another WI Croquet Demonstrator, is forming a club at Woodhall Spa, Lincs, a croquet outpost if ever there was one.

How long before someone from these groups walks away with the CA's Golf Croquet Cups?



A progressive Golf Croquet doubles tournament in full swing.

## CROQUET CLASSIC Old Hands Challenge Again

Amongst the first dozen entries for this year's Croquet Classic are some familiar names.

Jeane Ackermann, Paul Abercrombie, and Malcolm Daines mount their annual challenge to become the country's top garden player.

Jeane, who comes from Morton-cum-Fiskerton, Notts, plays for the third time this year. Malcolm, from Wellend, Borehamwood, will be making his fourth appearance.

Pride of place, however, goes to London school teacher, Paul Abercrombie, who entered the first Croquet Classic in 1987, when it was sponsored by Lassale, and has played every year since. A lover of the game, describing himself as 'the ideal garden player' because he has never joined a croquet club, Paul plays daily on a three-quarter size lawn in his own back garden.

The Classic provides him with an opportunity to play against opponents other than his half-dozen or so regular neighbourhood garden players. Last year, he lost in the first round; this time he hopes for better things!

This year, the Classic is being extended to give everyone a minimum of 3 games, even if they lose their first match. The first three rounds will be played as all-play-all competitions between four players, with the winner going forward to the fourth round.

### HOW TO ENTER

Entry forms and details of both the competitions listed on this page can be obtained from:

**Chris Hudson,  
The Oaklands,  
Englesea Brook,  
Near Crewe,  
Cheshire, CW2 5QW  
(Tel: 0270-820296).**

## GREAT CROQUET BREAKS IN GLORIOUS DEVON



### CROQUET BREAKS

2 day breaks £84.00 per person (includes 7-course dinner)  
5 days (Sunday-Friday) £210.00 per person  
**includes a bottle of champagne in your room**  
Special reductions for club parties (min. 8 persons)

- Warm hospitality and caring resident hosts
- Country House atmosphere with log fires
- Splendid traditional breakfasts
- Use of hotel's chip and putt and 9-hole putting green - reduced rates at 3 local courses
- **Full-size croquet lawn** with use of top equipment
- Enjoy **free Cream Teas** after your game (winners of Tea Council's Best Teas in Britain 1988 and 1989)
- **Daily Croquet Competitions** with free wine, for the winners.
- Meet in the intimate bar and select from 320 exciting wines (Winners of Mercier Wine List of the Year, 1989 and 1990)
- 7 course candlelit dinners complete the perfect day before relaxing in the elegant lounges with your friends.

Recommended by Egon Ronay · Ashley Courtenay · Derek Johansen  
Devon Hotels of Distinction 1991 · BTA Commended Hotel

## COURT BARN COUNTRY HOUSE HOTEL

Clawton · Holsworthy · Devon EX22 6PS · Telephone: (0409-27) 219



David Smith, Evening Standard sports writer, poses with Wendy Hardy from the Met Office before their first-round match in a previous Croquet Classic.