

COMMENT

A Visit to the South Coast, and the ATCO Opens...

June, and four South coast Clubs visited. Worthing, Sussex County, (a.k.a Southwick), Hove Lawns (non-CA) and, briefly, Preston LT & CC.

WORLD CROQUET CHAMPIONSHIP CHAMPIONSHIP DINNER

The Championship Dinner will be held at the Roehampton Club, Roehampton Lane, London SW15 on Friday 13th September at 7.30pm for 8pm. The Guests of Honour will be Mr Ashley Heenan, OBE, President of the World Croquet Federation, and Mr John Currie, Chairman of the All England Lawn Tennis & Croquet Club.

Members of the Croquet Association and their guests are cordially invited to join the Guests of Honour, the competitors and officials of the World Croquet Federation by purchasing tickets at £19.50 per head. The price covers cocktails, a three-course meal, and half a bottle of wine. Additional wine may be purchased at the bar. Tickets may be obtained by applying to the CA Secretary and cheques should be made payable to the Croquet Association. If you would like to attend, please apply as quickly as possible, as we need to know the final numbers by Wednesday, 11th September at the latest.

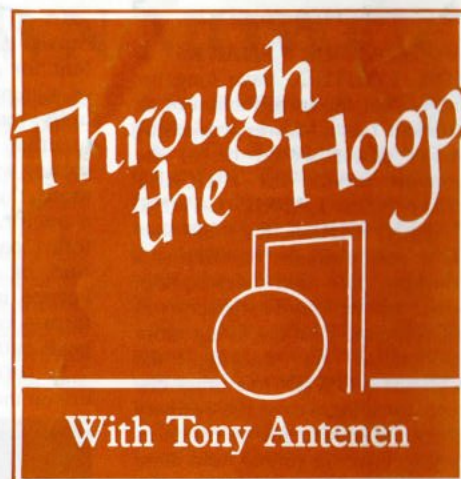
Please support what should be a most enjoyable and significant occasion. By long tradition (dating back to 1990), a representative of each country providing a competitor will be called upon to address the company briefly in a manner and language of their own choosing. The evening will conclude with the presentation of the Fun Cup, a trophy donated by the Associazione Italiana Croquet in 1989 for the competitor judged to have made the most original contribution to the Championships.

I was met and conducted to Worthing CC by Pat Shine and, along the way, given a comprehensive briefing on the state of the game in that part of the world. Worthing's proud croquet history needs no emphasis from me and on the day of my visit, croquet was in progress as it has been for a very long time. One can well understand why this is such a popular venue with so many of the croquet fraternity.

We were joined at lunch by Ron Smith, OBE, one of those tireless workers that one finds in just about every club one visits. We had a long informative discussion and I left feeling confident that Worthing's future was in good hands.

Ron Smith then drove me over to Southwick. It was my first visit to those rolling acres so how could I not but be impressed with all that acreage of playing surfaces. I suppose that if the CA were ever in a position to seek out and establish its own "centre of excellence" away from Hurlingham with "HQ" accommodated within the precincts of a thriving club, with the facilities to stage show-piece tournaments, then Sussex County Croquet Club would be a serious contender, given that the support was forthcoming from within the club itself. Now that is an internal matter for the Club and if a change of attitude or direction was required, then every club has within its charter the means by which such a change can be democratically effected.

On then to a brief look-in at Preston (I had not notified the club that I would be in their area and I never "trespass") via



Hove Lawns, a "links" court on Brighton sea-front which, I suspect, came as something of a surprise to Ron S. But, there it is, being run on the "hire-a-deck-chair" system! Finally, following a welcome sun-downer with Ron and Joan, it was time to head homewards after a very rewarding and informative day.

July was, of course, ATCO British Opens month which, from my point of view as a "first" passed off without undue calamity.

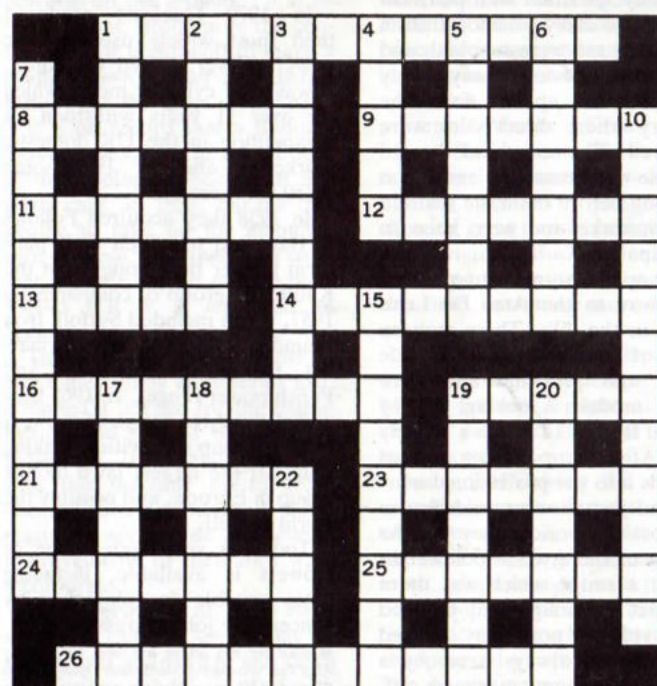
Much learned. Much to record and note for the future. Now we begin the run up to the World Championship in September. I hope as many of you as possible will be present - remember, your 1991 CA Associate Membership card gains you free entry to watch, along with the use of Hurlingham's refreshment facilities.

There are other matters I intended to touch on, but space is limited and time presses. More next time. Enjoy your summer days.

CROSSWORD by "Crofter" No 3.

(Chambers 1988 is recommended)

See Page 21 for information about the Crofter Crossword.



ACROSS

- Drain layer initially executes a design for this part of the lawn (4,4,4).
- Row is appalling in a residence when the wind blows thus (3-4).
- Wilfully disregards order resign about nothing (7).
- Descriptive of the man who tops the bill with indifferent dealing (7).
- Non-resident sea swallow seen in the river (7).
- It can be recognised in a 100 mph chase (5).
- Has poet to be treated by this practitioner? (9).
- To get up surrounded by unusual stimuli strikes one with wonder (9).
- Intense beam starts from long and short electrical resistor (5).
- The generosity of magnanimous saints (7).
- A rustic worked on the site of a wartime hospital (7).
- For the most trim it's diet that needs attention (7).
- A wrong doing no draw match currently in progress (2-5).
- Procure dry fuse liner so as not to be off-putting (4-8).

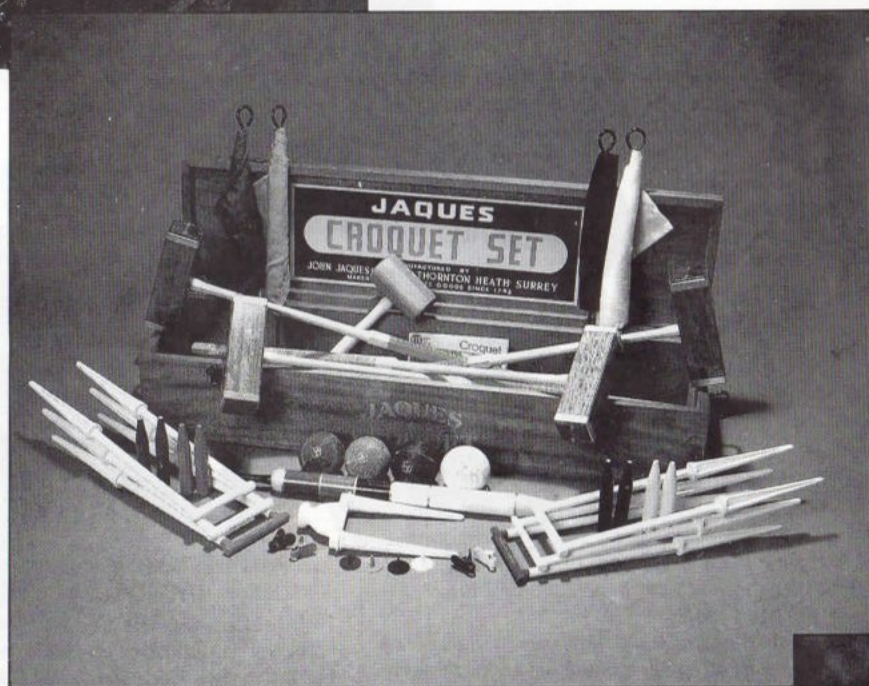
DOWN

- Mad 'Arry would need to be tipsy before going aloft to this (4-3).
- Wine from Rhine - quiet please (7).
- It's disputable to write settled invoices about a general issue (9).
- For the first person to be in the centre of the wheel is ingenious (5).
- An abstainer discovered in the year of the orange pigment (7).
- Refracted air true for Josiah's ware (7).
- Usually acute, could be obtuse but never reflex (5,2,5).
- Do collies aid and abet these faults? (12).
- Tries cylindrical sample but sometimes posted at the Oval (4,5).
- Red rose specially nurtured for the back of the altar (7).
- Old English erred badly if one of these was poached (3-4).
- Idled and positively vulgar about duff gen! (7).
- To lacerate mark the condition unknown (7).
- Trays circulated by a woodland god (5).





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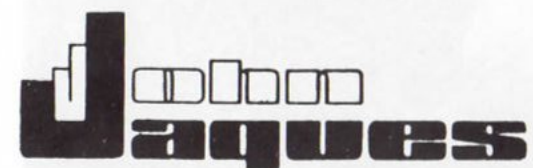
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MATCH REPORT

Balliol And A Bally 'Ole

A match between Ludlow College and an Oxford University team

From Peter Dorke

Every few years Ludlow College's moribund croquet club flares into new life as a new batch of students takes a particular shine to the Great Game. When this happens we nip down to Oxford and thrash the University in a very serious friendly. Dr Plummer and his lads try to buy us off with free food and draughts of powerful liquors but we are practised freeloaders and take all this in our stride.

Thus it was on May 15th as Ludlow romped home 5-3, though this score included, it has to be admitted, a game of Advance Womble which young Plummer would never have taken on if he had known his opponent was a specialist in the genre. This game was due revenge for a doubles match in which 'Coach' Plummer showed us how to direct a high bisquer through a long and well-played break before personally administering the coup de grace. Well, perhaps it was not that straightforward, but a slight stumble at the end only enabled Ian to set up for his partner, Andrew Byford, the satisfaction of finishing the game - a win by 23 and a pleasure to watch.

Having lost our morning game of doubles, Greg Field and I went on to play extremely badly in the singles. Not much

consolation, I agree, for Paul Watson, who deserved a win that sadly (heh, heh! Who am I kidding?) eluded him at the last. Our team-mates, Paul Heath and Phil Rees, having defeated Kevin Cooper and Mike Porter +2 on time in a match distinguished by the length of time spent by the Oxford pair in what might have passed for debate of a high intellectual order, had they not both been scientists, went on to win 2 out of 3 singles in the afternoon. Ironically for Oxford, Kevin Porter, a former student of Ludlow's old rivals, Vesey's, dispatched Phil Rees so efficiently in their handicap match that there was time for an Advance game, which Phil won. Without this extra game and the illicit womble the match would have been tied.

Which disposes neatly enough of the croquet and brings me to a more important matter: Oxford.

What a contradiction this place is, full of young people eager to play croquet, blessed with many acres of lush grass, absolutely dripping with money but cursed with one of the most disadvantaged croquet clubs it will ever be your misfortune to see.

Far be it from me to deny the convenience (pun certainly



The Shropshire Schools Croquet League. Teams from Ludlow (left) and Wrekin competed in the League final at Shrewsbury Croquet Club. The Royal Bank Shield was won by Wrekin.

intended) of the thick lawnside bushes but they are the nearest thing this club has to the necessary offices. The shed - I cannot say clubhouse - is an adequate store for equipment but performs no other useful function. The lawns are poor; one is dreadful, inevitably so because of surrounding trees.

In marked contrast to this unhappy stretch of turf is the superb court lovingly created by Balliol's groundsman on that college's cricket field.

I have seen no better lawn anywhere and was delighted to have the chance to play there in the morning (the Curator of the University Parks having refused permission for play to take place in his bailiwick before 1pm).

Even at Balliol, they are limited to one lawn and would probably not have even that one were it not for the enthusiasm of Ian Plummer.

Now I have not researched this question with complete thoroughness and perhaps other Oxford colleges have immaculate croquet lawns hidden away in private quads where languid dons perform perfect sextuples before breakfast but even if this were so, why does the University, the home of so much brain power (and I grudgingly include the scientists in this) not encourage the most intelligent of ball

games by providing decent lawns and an adequate clubhouse. Oxford University Croquet Club has 55 members, most of them, inevitably, beginners, though fast-improving ones, I bet. They deserve something better than this.

A final word in my defence: a reporter's lot is not always a well-understood one and in writing the above criticisms I run the risk of appearing to complain about the conditions that Ludlow had to endure at Oxford.

Nothing of the sort - we had a great time and the croquet was as good as our own inadequate skills could make it. Nor would I have the aforementioned Curator of the University Parks assume that Ian Plummer or any other Oxonian Croquet Players had been whingeing about either lawns or clubhouse.

No, this is strictly between me and the stingy blighters who happily maintain a cricket pitch where first class matches can be played and whose pavilion would not look out of place at any county ground but banish the croquet players to an unsuitable corner of the Parks, where their weird rituals will not frighten the tourists.

Perhaps, if they read the quality sporting press, they will do something about it now!



Ian Plummer (2nd left) with some of his Oxford colleagues.

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 'Croquet' magazine is £15.00.

England Nominate Four for World Championship

The Selectors today announced that Robert Fulford, Stephen Mulliner, Chris Clarke, and David Openshaw would fill the four places England has been allocated in the World Championship.

Surprise omission was perhaps David Maugham who has shown formidable form this year, but he receives a World Croquet Federation wild card to ensure his place in the Championship, along with New Zealander, Steve Jones.

The 3rd World Championship will see many national champions in action from emerging croquet

countries, including Jean-Baptiste Grochain (France), Luigi Colombo (Italy), Masaaki Yamada (Japan), Norman Eatough (Switzerland), and Ian Burridge (Wales).

From Australia come George Latham, Mark Kobelt, Ashley Faulkner, and Ken Boale; from New Zealand, Joe Hogan (1989 World Champion), Bob Jackson, Paul Skinley, and Tony Stephens; whilst the United States fields Jerry Stark (semi-finalist last year), Jim Bast, Tremaine Arkley, Erv Petersen, and Wayne Rodoni.

Key question is whether the British Government will issue a modified Gleneagles agreement in time for South African Champion, Reggie Bamford, to take part.

George Noble and David Goacher have qualified at Surbiton for two of the four places available to those who fight their way through the qualifying rounds. The second qualifier, at Southport on 17/18 August has attracted a large entry.

This may be the last World Championship to be held in England for some years, as the WCF's intention is to rotate the Championship around its member countries.

Spectators are welcome to visit Hurlingham to watch these world-class players in action. Admission is £6.00 (Associate members of the CA are admitted free on production of their membership card).



Toru Takano, Director of the People Fitness Corporation and Japanese Croquet Champion, demonstrates a "split" shot at the World Championship last year. Japan will be represented in this year's Championship by Masaaki Yamada.

MAJOR FIXTURES STILL TO COME

4-7 September	The ANGOSTURA President's Cup - Colchester Croquet Club, Elianore Road, Colchester, Essex CO3 3UN.
8-15 September	The World Croquet Championship, held under the auspices of the World Croquet Federation - The Hurlingham Club, Ranelagh Gardens, London SW6 3PR.
14-22 September	The South of England Championship - Compton Croquet Club, Saffrons Sports Club, Compton Place Road, Eastbourne, East 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.

Debbie Cornelius to play in Angostura President's Cup

From Chris Hudson

Debbie Cornelius made history at the beginning of August by being selected to play in this year's President's Cup, sponsored by Angostura.

She is the first lady to play in this prestigious event since 1970, when New Zealand's Mrs Jarden was invited to take part. In fact, it was as long ago as 1963 that an English lady player, Miss Warwick, last made an appearance.

The other seven players invited this year are Chris Clarke (winner of the President's Cup in 1988), Martin French, Robert Fulford (the reigning World and British Open Champion), Chris Haslam, Colin Irwin, David Maugham (current holder of the President's Cup), and Stephen Mulliner, who has won the President's Cup on four previous occasions.

Five of the eight players are under 25, and this year's event should see some titanic battles between them. Indeed, Chris

Haslam, 6ft 7inches and still growing, is not yet 18, but has already established himself as an up-and-coming player, narrowly losing to David Openshaw in the final of the Mens Championship this year.

Stephen Mulliner, on whom the hopes of the old guard rest, will have to play brilliantly to keep out the challenge of Maugham, Clark, and Fulford. To beat one of these young players is an achievement, but to take on all of them consecutively over four days (as he has to if he wants to win the President's Cup) is an uphill task that can be likened to facing a charge of Chinese infantry.

Debbie may have to rest content this year with gaining experience at this level, but it is one of the most encouraging signs in English croquet that she has reached this stage. Let us hope that many more ladies will follow her example.

PUBLICATIONS & OTHER ITEMS AVAILABLE FROM THE ASSOCIATION

Publications	CA Associate	CA Affiliates	Postage
	Members	& non-members	
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 Kills 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
Video			
Coaching Video (Joe Hogan)	£23.00	£30.00	71p
Equipment			
Hoop Gauges	£5.00 + 75p VAT	CA Ties £11.67	
Ball Gauges	£15.00 + £2.25 VAT	(including VAT and postage)	

*SPECIAL OFFER

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

CROQUET

National Croquet Day HOW WAS IT FOR YOU?

Well, for "Croquet North" the "National Croquet Day" was great! It all started in mid-May by contacting the press and sifting posters, and some preliminary local radio items. We fixed venues, organised the staffing, and hoped for good weather.

My day started at 8.15 with a live interview on "Sunderland FM" and then a dash to Ormesby for further live items on Cleveland Radio's morning show, plugging our four regional venues. Then over to Richmond to hold the day event there.

Many clubs have written in to tell me what they did on "National Croquet Day", and how well (or not) it went. We are hoping to hold another "National Croquet Day" next year, and look forward to doing even better at publicising Croquet.

Syd Jones

WHAT HAPPENED AT THE CLUBS

RICHMOND

No Club here yet, but we organised our event at the Hartforth Hotel and had eleven people come along to play. This brought together some possible members and a better chance of forming a club at Richmond.

We showed people how to play Golf Croquet to get their interest, and then did some basic coaching. Then back to games when everyone seemed to enjoy playing even more.

ORMESBY HALL

The Club chose Sunday as "the day", because the National Trust had a band in the gardens then. Unfortunately they also had the rain! Using publicity by posters, press, and local radio, we offered a free try at Croquet and the music of course.

About a dozen people attended with a chance of a new member, and the National Trust were pleased with the event, even though the band played inside the Hall out of the wet.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

NOTICE BY CA SECRETARY

The response to my letter of 7th June 1991 was very satisfactory, but I regret that I must now give formal notice that those members from whom no membership subscription for 1991 has been received will now be deemed to have lapsed and their names will be removed from CA records.

Youngsters trying to understand the mysteries of the game whilst the Seniors were hard at it on the lawns during the Crawley Open Handicap Weekend.

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CROQUET

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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 the Editor.

Photographs in this issue by:

Peter Alvey, Atco Ltd., Andrew Bennet, Debbie Cornelius, Gieves & Hawkes, Hamish Hall, Huddersfield Daily Examiner, Chris Hudson, Syd Jones, Jean Nash, Gary Norman, Northern Echo, North of England Newspapers, Ian Plummer, Andrew Saurin, and Mark Wood.

Cover Photograph:

Tyneside Croquet Club members holding a session for visitors at Newcastle University sports campus as their contribution to "National Croquet Day".

Editorial Team

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



New Sponsor for the President's Cup

Angostura Aromatic Bitters are to be the new sponsors of this year's President's Cup, to be held at Colchester Croquet Club from 4th-7th September.

Whilst Angostura has been actively involved with sailing at its home base in Trinidad, this is the company's first venture into sponsorship in the UK.

Originally produced over 150 years ago and now sold throughout the world, like croquet itself, Angostura's origins are somewhat mysterious.

It was about the same time that croquet first emerged in the early 1800's, that an Austrian doctor based in Venezuela created this exotic blend of herbs and spices, developed as a cure for the stomach disorders of General Bolivar's troops during the battle for South American independence. From these strange beginnings Angostura has gone on to achieve worldwide success, and although many restorative claims are still attributed to Angostura, the continuing popularity of these aromatic bitters is based on taste, rather than on their legendary powers.

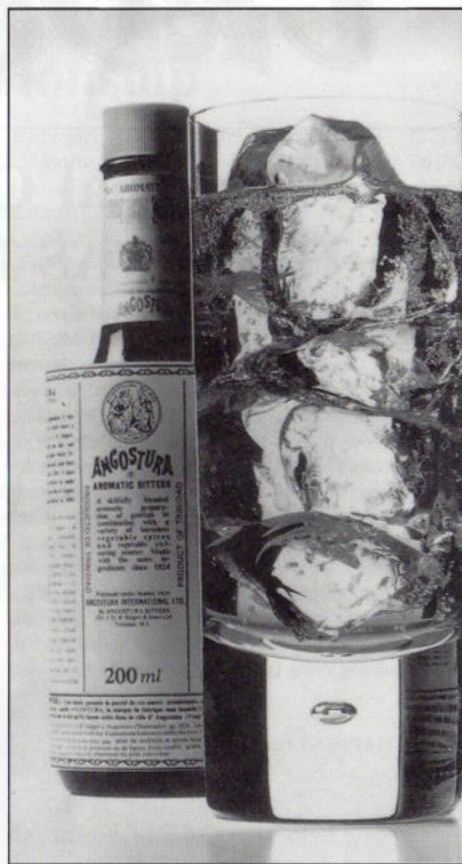
The exact content of Angostura's recipe still remains a closely guarded secret, but the company's reasons for entering croquet are rather less mysterious.

"Croquet seems to have been around for as long as anyone can remember," says JR Phillips' Anne Scully. "And, like Angostura, it continues to be 'rediscovered' by each new generation. Both are now enjoying an ever increasing popularity, particularly among the younger age group."

"I believe it is entirely appropriate for Angostura to be associated with a sport which has the tradition, style and individualism of croquet and I very much hope that through our sponsorship, we will help to bring this skillful and highly competitive sport to an even wider audience."

In conjunction with their sponsorship of The President's Cup, Angostura have created a wide range of new low alcohol drinks recipes.

Any members of the Association who would like a free copy should write to The PR Network, 92 Lots Road, London, SW10 0QD.



NATIONAL RANKINGS

(As at 6th August 1991)

Grade	Games	Grade	Games	Grade	Games	Grade	Games				
1 Fulford RI	173.9	61	46 Saurin Andrew J	113.5	23	91 Williams RaW	92.0	17	136 Selmes RH	80.5	29
2 Mulliner SN	166.9	48	47 Read TO	113.2	6	92 Anderson TW	91.8	14	137 Griethuysen C van	80.2	11
3 Openshaw DK	161.8	28	48 Solomon EW	113.1	25	93 Liddiard GS	91.4	39	138 Linton AM	79.9	5
4 Clarke CD	160.4	84	49 Saurin Adrian T	112.4	21	94 Browne TN	91.0	12	139 Race R	79.9	11
5 Irwin CJ	155.9	42	50 Coles WT	111.6	7	95 Pidcock A	90.4	10	140 Toms M	79.6	5
6 Haslam CJ	149.2	27	51 Stevens MJ	111.6	11	96 McMordig JA	89.0	6	141 Milner R	79.6	11
7 Aspinal GN	149.1	24	52 Miller ARK	111.3	89	97 Audsley E	88.9	6	142 Wild CH	79.2	17
8 Maugham DB	147.2	92	53 Storey BJ	110.7	33	98 Judge AP	88.5	19	143 Scott EE	77.1	13
9 Cornelius Miss DA	145.2	32	54 Day P	109.4	32	99 Harrison-Wood D	87.7	14	144 Warhurst D	76.9	11
10 Heap MEW	138.1	18	55 Bogle AJ	108.9	41	100 Haggerston MJB	87.5	16	145 Gurney DJF	76.8	6
11 Saurin MA	136.8	31	56 Dorke PJ	108.8	46	101 Thompson BE	87.5	7	146 Eardley P	76.6	7
12 Pritchard WdeB	134.8	28	57 Harris NR	108.7	15	102 McDiarmid Miss AJ	86.9	30	147 Lilly D	76.5	13
13 French MR	134.4	43	58 Smith PL	108.6	28	103 Gale NFC	86.9	7	148 Moorcraft DH	76.2	12
14 Avery MN	133.2	15	59 Aiton KMH	108.6	16	104 Watson JPG	86.8	10	149 Whittaker FL	76.1	7
15 Reeve DC	131.8	38	60 Mrozinski AJ	108.5	28	105 Smorfitt HW	85.8	26	150 Watts J	76.0	10
16 McCormick DJ	131.5	28	61 Palmer DG	107.5	15	106 Tompkinson MG	85.8	14	151 Jackman R	75.2	7
17 Goacher JJ	131.0	53	62 Ormerod WP	107.4	19	107 Thompson PW	85.5	6	152 Williams J	75.1	6
18 Walters JO	130.7	46	63 Neal BG	107.3	27	108 Hopewell CG	85.4	41	153 Coates DT	74.3	15
19 Dawson JP	130.3	26	64 Goddard J	107.0	13	109 Bennett A	85.4	16	154 Reeve JE	74.1	7
20 Hope AB	128.6	19	65 Hyne NG	106.6	26	110 Southern C	85.4	7	155 Willis JH	74.0	10
21 Wiggins DCD	127.0	32	66 Davis EJ	104.1	7	111 Jones C	85.0	18	156 O'Connor Miss AH	74.0	5
22 Bond ID	127.0	68	67 Appleton DR	103.7	37	112 Shaw DW	84.7	18	157 Madams B	73.9	9
23 Griffith T	126.4	9	68 Bailey RF	103.4	11	113 Ames JP	84.5	7	158 Weitz BGF	73.6	12
24 Foulser DR	124.7	39	69 Ransom RW	103.0	26	114 Fewtrell R	84.4	6	159 Cordingley NJ	73.6	6
25 Murray M	124.5	39	70 Hallam BG	101.9	26	115 Jenkins RS	84.4	18	160 S. Rea	72.8	6
26 Guest JE	124.4	50	71 Evans MJ	100.2	17	116 Macdonald IPM	84.2	14	161 Peterson DNS	72.4	18
27 Palmer LJ	124.0	43	72 Latham LV	99.6	12	117 Ransom Mrs F	84.1	32	162 Caporn DC	72.2	12
28 Burridge IJ	123.8	93	73 Maugham FI	98.4	27	118 Davis R	84.1	29	163 Hobbs RM	72.1	14
29 Cordingley P	123.3	56	74 Magee DJ	98.1	45	119 Sheraton-Davis J	83.2	27	164 Parker CA	71.6	12
30 Toye JS	122.4	6	75 Archer P	98.1	5	120 Kennerley P	82.4	12	165 Taylor GK	71.2	10
31 Comish S	121.6	34	76 Bray AC	98.0	23	121 Stephens RT	82.4	10	166 Irwin Mrs CE	71.1	7
32 Williams S	121.2	30	77 Curry Miss GM	97.8	25	122 Carter KJ	82.2	18	167 Harris Mrs B	71.0	16
33 Collighan RJ	121.0	13	78 Llewellyn-Williams MJ	97.8	52	123 Hague Mrs P	82.1	12	168 O'Connell MJ	71.0	17
34 Greenwood JD	118.9	46	79 Death PJ	96.7	14	124 Firth M	82.0	6	169 Kolbuszewski M	71.0	15
35 Lamb WE	118.9	27	80 Mann JR	96.7	11	125 Rogers C	81.9	11	170 Leggate ATR	70.7	17
36 Sutcliffe AF	118.1	42	81 Bottomley HJ	96.3	8	126 Williamson JD	81.8	6	171 Darby PA	70.6	15
37 Gunasekera D	117.4	28	82 Haslam JH	96.0	38	127 Reed AA	81.8	6	172 Eades RS	70.5	24
38 Tuke SM	116.5	45	83 Surgeon J	95.2	18	128 Leach P	81.7	10	173 Hutton K	69.9	6
39 Noble GW	116.5	49	84 Williams CN	95.2	56	129 Best R	81.5	7	174 Whittall Mrs KM	69.8	7
40 Symons AJ	116.3	25	85 Vincent LG	94.8	29	130 Straw JC	81.4	20	175 Gugan Mrs R	69.7	10
41 Gaunt DL	115.8	60	86 Chapman LJ	94.7	17	131 Collin GK	81.4	8	176 Butler LS	69.3	10
42 Gregory AK	115.2	29	87 Hecto JD	92.8	10	132 Dymock E	81.2	12	177 Steward Mrs C	68.9	15
43 Harrison TD	115.1	41	88 Brand RS	92.5	10	133 Yonge B	81.2	6	178 Bower T	68.5	10
44 Pritchard RDC	114.2	35	89 Hilditch JR	92.2	83	134 White D	81.1	20	179 Gooch NJC	67.9	7
45 Lander FJR	114.1	42	90 Brown RJ	92.1	16	135 Wheeler JA	81.0	19	180 Browne ND	67.7	6

Harrow Oak: 8-9 June

Jackman Beats Courts Handicap

From Mike Hammelev

Saturday - Agricultural Croquet. Roger Jackman, who was once on the land, remarked that the lawns should have had a good silage cut taken off before play. They quickened eventually due to the players feet and by Sunday lunch time two of the lawns could be officially described as slow! Whilst it is good to be able to joke about it, the lawns were really not in a fit state for a tournament in June. Apparently the Local Authority have put the grass cutting "out to contract". An improvement?

Sunday. Eventually with several players on four wins the pressure began to tell and at least one such who had briefly promised much, fell back to earth. Thus the final scene was set. Nigel Gray on 5 from 6 had to patiently await the outcome of the game between Garry Bennett and Roger Jackman, both on four wins. Garry, previously beaten by Nigel, could lose if he won but was consoled by the Silver Award earned in an earlier game.

Some good play by Garry and indifferent stuff from Roger led to the former being on Penult and Rover and the latter on Two and Two. Briefly Roger won the game. In between there was one ugly and one quite pretty

break, a good leave, a couple of fine hits, the pegging out of a forward ball and a couple of unlikely misses. In the gathering gloom and increasing chill an exciting game was played and for the fourth consecutive year the



Play just starting in the semi-finals of the Gieves & Hawkes 1991 Senior Championship at Hurlingham.

winner of this tournament came from the High Wycombe Club. Well done Roger.

Despite the grass this was a good Advanced Swiss weekend gently managed by Martin Kolbuszewski and embellished with a buffet of Tescosian delight.

Hunstanton: 14-16 June

"Over-50s" Oversubscribed and Overcast

From Andrew Potter

This event also included a qualifying round for the Gieves and Hawkes British Seniors Championship. Four entered the event, which was won by Bill Lamb.

When they had sorted this out, these four joined the lesser mortals who were already competing in a Swiss handicap. On the last morning Bill Lamb and Beryl Gosden, who had so far won everything, played what was in effect the final for the whole week-end.

Using her bisques Beryl had reached rover and peg while Bill was for 3 and 4. He then went round with the red and pegged out Beryl's blue. After that he went round very cautiously, just a hoop or two at a time - no risky 3-ball breaks - and leaving his balls wired from the black when he legally could. He eventually won +2.

Had there been any other result the extremely unflappable manager, Sarah Hampson, admitted she might have had a few problems in selecting an outright winner for the whole tournament. In the event, there were three runners-up with four wins apiece, Beryl, John

Wood, Don Cornelius and Norman Grimwood.

In fact everyone won at least one game, with the solitary exception of your correspondent. Beryl must have foreseen this when asking early on for a write-up, knowing that he would have more time, sitting out on the boundary, to reflect on what to say.

The bleakness of the weather was in marked contrast to the warmth of the hospitality shown by the Hunstanton members, Ron and Beryl Gosden for instance, to their guests. It was cold throughout, but on the Saturday it rained all day. People don't stop playing croquet on that account - they just grit their teeth and keep going: they wear hats with very broad brims to shield their glasses and they wear white waterproofs except your correspondent, who wore black (and was therefore pointedly asked by Denis Moorcraft if he was going to a funeral). In the clubhouse on that Saturday everyone was particularly cheerful, so glad were they not to be actually playing.

A most enjoyable tournament, in spite of the weather. It's not surprising that it's heavily over-subscribed.

Newport: 22-23 June

Guy Willard Wins Handicap Cut

The end of the first day, which had been dry but windy, saw the three A class players managing to give away lots of bisques without too much damage. Colin Irwin won 2 out of 3 but was annihilated by Philip Eardley who won +26 using only 3 of his 11 bisques. Debbie Cornelius won 2 out of 3 and Paul Day, off 1½,

managed to overcome the rows of bisques he was giving away, winning all three games.

The unfortunate feature of the day was when Bill Tapper, a local club member who had beaten Debbie in his first game, slipped over whilst replacing a ball in his second game, fell badly onto one of the planks dividing the lawns, and broke his wrist.

By lunchtime Sunday both Philip Eardley and Guy Willard had won 4 out of 4 games so they played-off in the afternoon, which saw the arrival of a steady drizzle. Both had chances but Guy eventually won by +3 and had another cut in his handicap to 5½. Philip came down under the new system to 8 but looks likely to go lower before long. Paul Day eventually won 4 out of 5, enough to take his handicap down another notch. The lawns had the odd blemish but were very flat and felt quite fast until the rain on Sunday afternoon. The food was up to its usual high standard and much easier to organise in the new clubhouse.

A most enjoyable weekend with the 16 players getting through 38 games on the three lawns.



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CHAMPIONSHIPS

Bowdon: 18-20 July

NATIONAL JUNIOR CHAMPIONSHIP

Determined Dan Delighted

From Andrew Bennet

The line-up: four promising French visitors with their coach, Jean-Baptiste Grochain, two from Bristol, two from Wolverhampton, Tim Izod (a local debutante) and the usual experts from the North-West. Brian Storey acted as early-morning hoop-setter as well as looking after two French visitors (Alan Linton accommodated the other three), Chris Hudson as manager for the first two days and Colin Irwin for the finals, Peter Walker as camel (I didn't ask how much Coke they downed) and maker of butties extraordinaire, Chris Irwin as English-speaking Championship Referee, and somehow the writer was appointed Tournament Referee and official interpreter.

The last-named duties involved, inter-alia, explaining in French the wiring lift law, why a hammer-shot was faulted (and coaching on hampered shots after the game), crushes, ball on or off the court, advanced-play lifts, and assisting with the order for lunch. Dan McCormick (who has done A-level French) had to explain the items on the menu because I don't know what they are in English.

I will not name the establishment which the youngsters favour for the takeaways, for fear of libel action. Having sampled their fare twice, I state only that the French had an unrepresentative experience of English cuisine, Degueulasse!

On the second day, with all the French now in the subsidiary handicap event, it transpired that although they had provisional handicaps, they had never played with bisques. They took to the idea rapidly and used them sensibly for the most part. Then Boris Dourthe found himself in receipt of a demibisque: I think it was his under-

standing rather than my explanation which encouraged him to make good use of it.

Yohann Ravez improved almost with every stroke (apart from the frequent hampers) and deserved his handicap reduction.

Et les autres? Robert Owen (Wolverhampton GS) has an immaculate style, and his colleague, Mark Elwell, was runner-up in the handicap event, won by Nicola Currie (Bristol), whose club-mate, Ben Green, always looked dangerous and is destined for greater things.

Those who have read this far might wonder what was going on in the main event. Chris Haslam was not in top form and fell victim to Dan McCormick, by far the most consistent triple-peeler. Adrian Saurin, last year's champion, lost to his brother Andrew in both halves, and the last vital 4-back clang, at the hoop most distant from the clubhouse, was accompanied by a word which must have been heard in adjoining counties, and I'm sure that Peter Dorke would have accused me of teaching him both the clang and the word.

Andrew Saurin has been the most under-rated junior player for the past few years, largely because he has not had the time to play as much as the others. In the final of the draw, he played with beautiful control, a joy to watch. Dan, however, hit almost everything in the process final, but just wait a bit for an account of the play-off.

Colin Irwin, at the Manager's table, announced early on that he intended to have the tournament finished at 5 o'clock, not least because he and others had to go to Hurlingham for the Opens. He kept every player busy in the handicap



Dan McCormick (left) and Andrew Saurin, Junior finalists.

egyptian, and the final of this finished, together with the final of the main event, within seconds of the stroke of five.

The play-off was a tense game, with neither player showing his previous exuberant form. There was some excellent hitting on both sides, Dan being the more aggressive and accurate. Andrew seemed to have a good chance when he did a superb split from fourth corner to croquet a ball to hoop 3, obtaining a rush to 2 on a ball about six yards south of the hoop. The rush was not good and he failed. Later, he made that hoop with a close jump-shot. He called a Referee to determine whether the mark made on the lawn constituted substantial damage. (How many top-class players would have done that in a Championship final?) Two Referees ruled that the damage, even on Bowdon lawns, was not substantial (about five blades of grass and a slight scuff), and he continued, only to play a take-off to his ball at hoop 5 and see it run into the back of the hoop. Dan is at his best when extreme concentration is needed. He devised devastating leaves and finished to the applause of a large group of spectators.

Dan deserves the trophy, having been runner-up narrowly last year by torchlight under less efficient management by yours truly.

I hope that some club will be prepared to host this event next year. It's hard work, as I mused when collecting the half-empty cans of Coke left by English players, and I cannot commend too highly the tea-time catering support from club players deprived of a chance of playing on the lawns.

Every major club has a highly-charged calendar, which makes it increasingly difficult to stage important events, and all credit is due to Bowdon for hosting the Junior Championship. If the French are prepared to come over from La

Rochelle to experience top-class competition, it is unfortunate that certain clubs much nearer did not feel moved to persuade their junior members to enter.

At the prize-giving, Jean-Baptiste expressed his admiration of the high standard of play and his intention of producing a similar standard in France. Allez-y, les gars!

RESULTS

NATIONAL JUNIOR CHAMPIONSHIP (Advanced Play)

DRAW

Round 1

Adrian Saurin bt B. Green +3; Miss N. Currie bt B. Dourthe +7; Andrew Saurin bt Y. Ravez +26; D. McCormick bt M. Elwell +26TP; R. Owen bt S. Rouhaud +20.

Round 2

Adrian Saurin bt T. Izod +26; Andrew Saurin bt Miss Currie +20; McCormick bt Owen +24TP; C. Haslam bt T. Poirier +25.

Semi-Finals

Andrew Saurin bt Adrian Saurin +6; McCormick bt Haslam +26TP.

Final

Andrew Saurin bt McCormick +18.

PROCESS

Round 1

Elwell bt Izod +25; Miss Currie bt Poirier +21; Adrian Saurin bt Rouhaud +23; Owen bt Green +12; Haslam bt Dourthe +19.

Round 2

Miss Currie bt Elwell +7; Andrew Saurin bt Adrian Saurin +7; Owen bt Ravez +13; McCormick bt Haslam +17.

Semi-Finals

Andrew Saurin bt Miss Currie +12; McCormick bt Owen +16.

Final

McCormick bt Andrew Saurin +16.

PLAY-OFF

McCormick bt Andrew Saurin +12.



The French Juniors advertise their sponsor at Bowdon: (L to R) Yohann Ravez, Boris Dourthe, Thomas Poirier, and Stefan Rouhaud.

CHAMPIONSHIPS

Glasgow: 15-16 June

HOME INTERNATIONALS

England Retain Trophy

From Colin Irwin

The event was at only two venues this year, arranged so that the teams could stay together and know how they were getting on. This should have meant one lawn in each match double banked but, since Ireland had only 4 players the need for this was reduced.

England won, as expected, but Wales gave them a good run and came second, their best-ever result. Ireland were third, despite being one player short, taking two games from England, two from Wales, and three from Scotland. If only we had had a fifth player - maybe next year.

On slow and easy lawns, triples were fairly common - in 66 games played there were 19 triples, 1 TPO and 1 quadruple - but Chris Clarke

deserves a special mention for completing six in a row, one straight, in his 6 games. The quad was by Martin Murray, and the TPO by me. It's the Scottish air, it goes to the head. I remember I was whistling "The Road to the Isles" in the rain as I was doing it. When can I see the psychologist?

Generally the games went with form, but Ian Bond did well to beat David Maugham and David Appleton did well to beat Michael Heap. Adrian Saurin showed considerable class to beat Martin French by the impressive score of -26TP, +17TP +25TP.

As usual in Glasgow, the organisation was excellent, the weather was variable, and a good time was had by all.

RESULTS

England 3, Scotland 2

R.I. Fulford bt M. Murray +25, +25TP; D.B. Maugham lost to I.D. Bond -26, +24TP, -17; C.D. Clarke bt A. Bogle +17TP, +26TP; M. French bt J. Surgenor +16, +16; M.E.W. Heap lost to D.R. Appleton +17TP, -4, -17.

England 4, Wales 0

Fulford bt W. Prichard +20TP, -3, +5; Clarke bt D. Gunasekera +16TP, +18TP; French bt R.D.C. Prichard +11, +26TP; Maugham bt I. Burridge -8, +16TP, +26TP; Heap drew with L.J. Palmer +6, -26, nf.

England 3, Ireland 2

Fulford lost to C.J. Irwin -4, -17TP; Maugham bt S. Williams +2, +20TP; Clarke bt Andrew Saurin +26STP, +26TP; French lost to Adrian Saurin +

26TP, -17TP, -25TP; Heap (England) wo.

Wales 3, Ireland 2

W. Prichard lost to Irwin +16, -26, -26; Burridge lost to Williams -5, -3; Gunasekera bt Andrew Saurin +26, -4, +3; Palmer bt Adrian Saurin +23, +4; R. Prichard (Wales) wo.

Wales 4, Scotland 1

W. Prichard bt Bond +3, -4, +3; Burridge lost to Murray -13, -23QP; Gunasekera bt Bogle +1, +18TP; R. Prichard bt Surgenor +17, -26, +2; Palmer bt Appleton -1, +19, +1.

Ireland 3, Scotland 2

Irwin bt Bond +14, +8TPO; Williams lost to Murray -23, +7, -8; Andrew Saurin bt Bogle +15, +9; Adrian Saurin bt Surgenor +6, +4; Appleton (Scotland) wo.

Oxford: 15-17 June

BRITISH STUDENT SINGLES CHAMPIONSHIPS

Grimbaldeston's Accurate Shooting Wins Title

From Ian Plummer

The Championships were held at Oxford University in mid June. Players had entered from Cambridge, Durham and Oxford. Unfortunately one of the Cambridge players had to withdraw with a broken arm shortly before the match. (He claims that had he been drinking when he fell off his bike, he would have been relaxed enough not to have broken it.) A last minute cancellation from the other Cambridge player (we only suspect that he was rowing) left vacancies which were filled from the ranks of the Oxford team.

The Championship was arranged as an American block, and players were able to enjoy the luxury of single banking due to the use of the superb lawn at Balliol College, as well as the two indifferent ones in the pleasant surroundings of the University parks. Play was level advanced throughout and caused few problems, as lifts were infrequently needed - catastrophic breakdowns after stunning hit-ins were the order of the day. The ability of the players ranged from 3 to 9 handicap - the Big Boys of croquet were otherwise engaged.

Oxford's last minute substitute Andrew Byford performed well, given his inexperience at advanced play. He started playing eight weeks ago with a 20* club handicap and is now 9, with further reductions expected this season. Ian Plummer in the guise of Manager proved that he couldn't count and had difficulty playing to a handicap of four when

replacing the Cambridge Drop Out. Games against him were not taken into account in the scoring. Edward Duckworth, Durham's representative, played notably with great accuracy and style until his balls got near the end of their journeys. He then managed to let the game slip away on a number of occasions. Steve Gardner ("the sweet one" - Alex O'Connor) recovering from his maths finals was far from his true form but was obviously keeping a couple of spectators happy.

Michael O'Shaughnessy spent much of his time retrieving balls from the rough which he had hit off the lawn at Mach 1. His subtlety in running hoops was similar, both balls and hoops suffering greatly from his powerful lunges. His mallet stood up well to this onslaught, as well as being used for Highland Games hammer throwing after less successful shots. Andrew Grimbaldeston, like Michael, was attempting hoops from 5 to 6 feet, but with regular success. Andrew had his eye in as far as hitting in was concerned, unlike Michael. It evokes a strange response when you walk up to Michael with one eye covered with your hand - but that's another story. Andrew played Michael in the final for the Singles trophy and it became clear that Andrew had the upper hand, as Michael walked further and further from the lawns to retrieve his mallet. As thunder rumbled in the background, Andrew went on to win the title of British Student Champion 1991

and received the Hamilton Miller Trophy.

Despite the constant drizzle throughout the weekend, everyone hopefully enjoyed themselves. We would like to thank the CA for their sponsorship and Alan Oldham for his support. We hope to send a student team to the States in 1992 to compete in the newly-instigated World Student Championships - we are actively

seeking sponsors at the moment. If people would like further information please contact Dr Ian Plummer, Balliol College, Oxford.

RESULTS

1. A. Grimbaldeston (Oxford) 4
2. M. O'Shaughnessy (Oxford) 3
3. S. Gardner (Oxford) 2
4. E. Duckworth (Durham) 1
5. A. Byford (Oxford) 0



At the British Student Championships (L to R): Andrew Byford, Michael O'Shaughnessy, Andrew Grimbaldeston, Ian Plummer (manager) and Steve Gardner.

● More from Ian Plummer's "Intermediate Coaching Notes"

Section 5 (Cont'd) OPENINGS

5.18 We now consider some of the alternatives which can take place during the first four turns. It depends on how you rate your opponent's abilities as to which shots you choose.

5.19 **SECOND TURN.** Shooting at the ball on the East boundary. Should you miss, it is likely that you will not be giving away much. You have the choice of shooting from the centre of the South boundary on A-baulk or from Corner 3. If the opponent is close to Corner 4, shooting from Corner 3 will not leave a double. If they are North of hoop 4, then either position will not leave a double.

5.20 If you hit during the second turn, there are a number of possibilities. The usual response is to stop the opponent's ball to the South-West of hoop 2 so that it is shadowed from the centre of the North boundary by hoop 2. You then take the position on the East boundary by hoop 4 as you would have done had you played the first turn.

5.21 There is more to be gained if you aim to place the opponent's ball midway between hoops 1 and 2 with a roll shot, trying to get hoop position on hoop 1 in the process. You have nothing to lose. If you fail to get a good hoop position, you retreat back to the East boundary as before.

5.22 A more amusing response is to stop shot the opponent to a tice distance from Corner 3 by hoop 3, then shoot your ball accurately off to Corner 1. The opponent has to get both balls away from baulk in the third turn.

5.23 An alternative manoeuvre, best carried out against weaker players, is to roll both balls to the peg and cross peg them, leaving a double target from baulk. The opponent gains a three ball break if they hit but they cannot afford to hit firmly otherwise they will feed a ball to the other baulk ready for you in fourth turn. If they shoot gently, then there will be an even larger target waiting for you come the fourth turn. Obviously an 'A' class player stands a good chance of going round given just three balls.

5.24 **Duffers Tice.** An alternative position for a tice, named after Duff Mathews, is about level with hoop 6 a foot or so to the East of it. The principle behind this

position is that the opponent cannot afford to shoot hard at the tice, otherwise they will feed a ball to the opposite baulk line. They therefore have to shoot gently at it, which will leave a double target come the fourth turn.

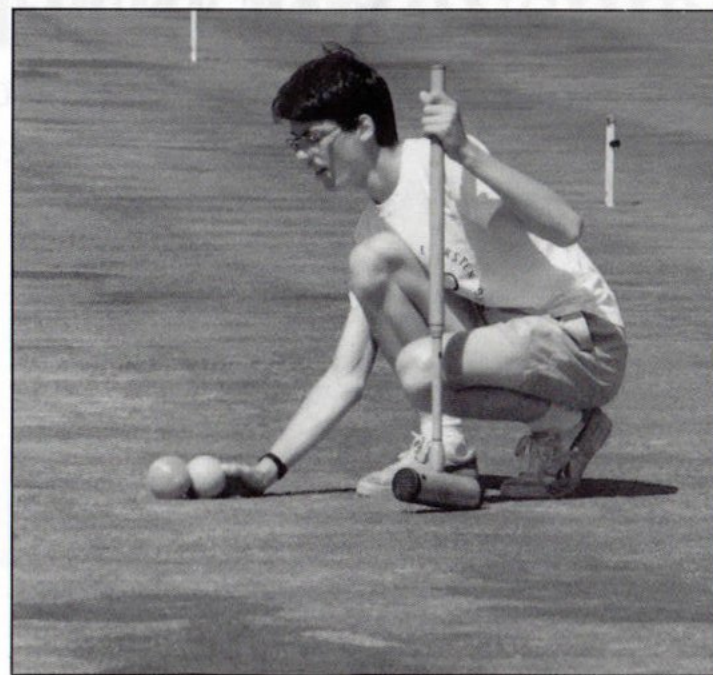
5.25 **THIRD TURN.** Shooting at the tice. The comments written about shooting at the tice in fourth turn apply again here. You should shoot through the tice from near Corner 1 so that your ball travels to the boundary near hoop 2 or to Corner 2. This means that you threaten the opponents if they join up and discourage them from shooting at the tice from Corner 1 in the fourth turn.

5.26 Shooting at East boundary balls if in second turn the opponent shot to East boundary. If the balls do not form a two ball target it is reasonable to shoot from Corner 3 since, come fifth turn, you will have some space to get the balls out. If you shoot straight at the balls from A-baulk, then you are likely to leave a very large target. If the balls already constitute a large target which, if you miss, the opponent likely won't, then you may as well shoot from A-baulk at the balls and let the opponent fight to get the balls away from the boundaries.

5.27 If you hit in third turn at this stage, you would get one ball off the boundary slightly North of the other to hoop 1. If the hoop approach is certain, the croqueted ball becomes your reception ball for the hoop. Otherwise you send it up to the boundary near hoop 2 and retreat to the first other ball and leave a rush straight to the ball by hoop 2. Note this rush can be on the opponent's ball as they are obliged to play with the remaining ball in hand in the fourth turn.

5.28 **OTHER OPENINGS.** There are no other openings as common as the standard opening. There is the standard opening layout but played with the lawn turned through 180 degrees; hence 1st ball level with hoop 2 on the West boundary, tice between hoops three and six on the East boundary etc... If the second player is confused by this and set a normal tice on the West boundary, there is a free shot from Corners 1 to 2 with two balls to hit.

5.29 If someone plays a silly first shot and you hit it, then you could do worse than play their ball to the middle of the lawn and retreat to the normal East boundary position.



James Coleman practising for the 1990 Junior Championship at Southport.

Section 6 LEAVES & BALL POSITION

6.1 It is a general aim at the end of a turn to have the opponents away from the edges of the lawn and each other. You join up remote or wired from them near the boundary. The rationale is that should they aim at you and miss, they come back on the lawn where you can easily pick them up. If you shoot at a ball in the middle of the lawn there is no great penalty as if you miss it you will make the boundary. You also discourage the opponent joining-up, as to do so in the middle of the lawn gives too much away.

6.2 At the end of a turn you should not leave either of your balls on the boundary, but say at least a further yard out from the yard line. This allows you to turn around and roquet an enemy ball which has missed, and you still have enough room to stop it well into the lawn. If you are on the boundary it limits the strength of croquet shot that you can play on the enemy and still get position on your partner ball.

6.3 If your opponent is on the boundary with a perfect rush to their hoop you have a virtually free shot at them. If they mess about with you they are likely to spoil their rush. Also they are unlikely to get your ball off the boundary.

6.4 If you have the innings and you see two enemy balls together this means that you will have a perfect rush to anywhere on the lawn. You only have to take-off near to either of them and a short take-off then gives you the rush on the other ball.

6.5 Obviously if the opponent's balls are nearly together you can arrange to take off to a position where you can rush one of the balls closer to the other. You then have a shorter take off and hence a better chance of obtaining a perfect rush. This is the answer when an opponent has adopted a wide join (see below).

6.6 Because of the above you should not generally join up if your opponent is joined up. You should adopt a wide join. The expectation of a wide join is that you place your balls close enough together so that you are likely to hit in. The distance separating your balls prevents your opponent from accurately taking off from one ball to get a perfect rush on the other. On a fast lawn you can afford to join closer since the take-off, will be more difficult – the ball rolling on. On a heavy lawn where control is easy, you should be thinking of 8-10ft.

6.7 When choosing a position for a wide join you should not place your ball near a corner. If you do so you cannot safely shoot at that ball with the other, since if you miss, your safe wide join will become two balls together.

(To be continued)

What a Bore! These Multi-Swingers

Dear Sir,
Why is it suddenly deemed necessary to swing one's mallet five or six times before hitting the ball? Not just for a difficult shot, but for every one.

Today I watched Dave Foulser play two games (TP); what a pleasure. He not only didn't swing his mallet five or six times before each shot, he never swung it at all before the hitting of the balls.

This habit should have been "nipped in the bud". Amazingly it seems to have been encouraged.

Another new gimmick is to point a finger at the ball – then hoop – then back to the ball before aiming and hitting.

WHAT NEXT?
Spectators can go when they will, but the poor out-player has to sit and wait, bored and impatient while the minutes tick by. As for the double-banking players waiting for five or six swings before the ball is moved out of the way. Yuck!!

Kitty Sessions, the best lady player of all times, TP almost every game, only aimed once when necessary. As would Edgar Jackson; the most elegant of players, he would stalk the ball and 'stroke' it through the hoop. If something distracted him, he would turn and stalk the ball again, but never swing, swing, swing Paul Hands never hesitated.
DON'T LET'S RUIN CROQUET.

Heather G. Handley,
Cheltenham.

Dorking, Colchester

Dear Sir,
The editor says authors of articles will have to be crisper (Croquet No 215). I suggest they should also consider, at least for weekend tournaments, adopting a standard format. This, as I shall show, would save space, eliminate their desperate attempts to be creative, and help to disguise the fact that the typical reporter (certainly this one) has very little idea of what took place in any games but his own, and in any case left to begin the 300-mile drive home before he knew who had won.

Rod Williams and Malcolm O'Connell made an even longer pilgrimage (from Glasgow) to be in Colchester for an open weekend on May 10th and 11th, though for some reason I kept thinking I was in Canterbury; perhaps it was the presence of a Miller, a Reeve, a Clarke, and

two Palmers. But I digress. Here is the template for weekend reports.

The manager was — and many fine players competed, though unfortunately — could not be there. This was a(n) — weekend, but even the highest-ranked players found the — balls a severe —. Throughout the two days



Jack Shotton (right) and Syd Jones showing Sunderland "Action Sport" ladies some croquet action at Belsay Hall!

— played well (he could make a lot of — if he turned professional), but he did not win the —, as a — with — — was sheer — from —.

Any particular report need only fill in the blanks. For example, "Hilditch Bell advanced Birkdale problem Saurin money tankard triple control brilliance Maugham" would reasonably adequately describe the previous tournament I attended (Southport, April 20th-21st) – doubtless described in a lengthier and therefore presumably less literate report by Peter Dorke elsewhere in this issue*. For the present tournament "Hobbs, Sutcliffe open Oval test. French bread, Swiss roll, Black Magic. Clarke" is almost true, and undeniably Chrisper.

*Dorking (Surrey, participial vb): writing an amusing tournament report.

David Appleton,
Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

Full-Bisque Games

Dear Sir,
I have read with great interest Leslie Riggall's letter in the current issue of "Croquet" (No 216) and agree with him that the Council should urgently end the "procrastination of a reform which is inevitable sooner or later". Any rational considera-

tion must lead the Council to his conclusions – but there is a great obstacle to be overcome, namely his references (in item 4) to the "Aunt Emma" game.

If a 10-bisquer were to play a scratch player, the 10-bisquer would receive 10 bisques and, as John Solomon said in his book "Croquet" 25 years ago, ".... this is fine". But if a 10-bisquer were to play another 10-bisquer,

neither receives any bisques; to quote Solomon again, "This makes nonsense of the whole system of handicapping".

The "Aunt Emmas" evidently enjoy their awful games; as one of them, tackled on the subject, said "But the longer a croquet game lasts, the more I enjoy it!" The "Aunt Emmas", as members of the same Club, pay the same subscription as a scratch player and must be listened to – but they don't play "proper" croquet (or anything like it!).

The adoption of a full-bisque game by the Council would not affect the cost (apart from the provision of extra bisques!) and the "Aunt Emmas" would not be affected because they would not bother to learn how to use bisques to make a break. (They could even continue to adopt the present "difference" rules). On the other hand, the "improvers" would be able to make much more rapid progress – in some cases, I guess, to "Class A" standards – and appreciate what "real" croquet is about.

Ralph Lee,
Budleigh Salterton.

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Roehampton: 26-27 May

Eileen Magee Comes Through

From John Eardley-Simpson

The Roehampton Club held its first High Bisquers' Tournament in weather usually expected at a Bank Holiday – some cloud, some drizzle, some wind, but in the main more sunshine than any of those. This, together with the secluded situation of the croquet lawns within the club's extensive grounds, made for very pleasant sitting out when one's form dried up, and for splendid turf surfaces when one was trying to learn how to use one's bisques.

Bisques abounded throughout the tournament because the games were played under the conditions of Full Bisque Handicap Play (to base 6). No one played at less than handicap 11, and there were one or two brave souls at 20. All games were of 22 points with a time limit of 2½ hours; most people had 5 games and many of the leaders 6. It was a very good experience for all in learning to use bisques, not just to overcome errors, but to plan ahead. As a result a number of good breaks were made, with Martin Burger (Vine Road) and Paul Diver (Roehampton) qualifying for Bronze Badge awards. And many of us came to understand the apparently well-established croquet maxim that as soon as you learn how to use your bisques they are taken from you!

Southwick: 11-13 June

High Bisquers at Southwick

This was Southwick's fourth High Bisque tournament, a very popular event which gives newcomers an introduction to tournament play in a friendly, though competitive, atmosphere. Even the more experienced find that they have plenty to learn. It was the brainchild of Pat Shine who has been Manager of all four tournaments, aided and abetted by Pat Asa-Thomas, who is Chief Referee. Handicaps range from 10 to 20 and ages from the twenties to the eighties.

This year's tournament was played in tempestuous though mainly dry weather and kept even Southwick at full stretch, all twelve full-sized lawns being occupied by 48 players.

There were 16 entrants and everyone's first game was in the main knockout competition. As the rounds progressed the pressures increased and the two finalists, Mark Blundell (14) (Dulwich) and Eileen Magee (16) (Surbiton), rejecting the Manager's suggestion that they played the best of 3 games, fought out a single game with an intensity worthy of the Open Championship. Winner Eileen said afterwards that she had really enjoyed her games because she felt that all the competitors were about equal in their aspirations and always found their disappointments sympathetically shared.

But there was no need for any wide or deep-seated disappointments, for a complex system of Swiss consolation games was in operation, losers playing losers and winners playing winners. This proved to be a system which helped to eliminate nerves and to reward everyone with croquet at the level of skill of each. The winner of the Swiss was Martin Burger (16), he of the Bronze Medal.

The event was managed diplomatically but firmly by Paul Macdonald. All those who attended the tournament learned a lot about the rules and etiquette of the game and not a little about their own attitude to it!

Hurlingham: 4-6 May

Parsons Green Players Prosper

The start of the Professional Cricket Season is the signal for bad weather – the same applied for the start of the Croquet Tournament Season at Hurlingham. Nonetheless, thirty stalwarts (including Ron Selmes in shorts) entered in the four blocks of the Advanced Play May week-end Tournament. This year Hurlingham has built a beautiful, warm Conservatory overlooking the lawns which was much appreciated by the wives. (As it is beside the Bar it was also appreciated by the husbands.)

Mrs Ormerod ventured out of the Conservatory to watch her husband play John Greenwood (although she did make a detour to the car to collect a rug). John pegged out one of Dr Ormerod's balls, left the other in yellow corner, and laid up on the boundary to 4-back to rush to the peg and win. Dr Ormerod hit in to the peg from the corner and won.

Denis Cross, Manager, and his assistant, Bob Stephens,

ably organised the play; on the second day Block IV were restricted to time-limits as they had got rather behind; this despite Simon Cawdell battling on in the dark till 9.00 and beating Walter Thornhill. It is an ill-wind that blows no good – Richard Hoskyns played better in the rain – he had to keep his head down to keep his glasses dry.

Due to very successful coaching session run by Bernard Neal in October, 75% of the Hurlingham members in the Tournament were Referees. These, added to all the other Referees of several years' standing playing in the Tournament meant Dennis Shaw, the Tournament Referee had a lot of new, young blood to send on the Long Hike down to Lawn 6 when necessary.

It was a particularly successful Tournament for players from Parsons Green Club who almost swept the board – winners in three of the four blocks, and runners-up in two.

Woking: 24-30 June

Woking's Week of Fun & Games

From Derek Caporn

Nine days of Croquet – 7 days of rain – 4 days of which seemed like monsoons! This sums it up.

Never had we had such weather, but though Wimbledon put up the umbrellas and shut up shop, as did the players at Lords and most other places, we played through it all.

We even had thunder and lightning which fortunately was not overhead but provided a spectacular 'firework display' on the Thursday during the 'premier' event, the one day handicap doubles.

There was strong competition to get into the 'Y' because the 'Y' finals were played, as usual, under special conditions.

In addition to a traffic cone replacing the peg, you had to ring a bell suspended in the 5th and Rover hoops which could only be rung with a jump shot.

The writer ran 5th hoop twice without ringing it, so the hoop didn't count.

Each pair also had an 'interruption' bisque which was used when there was a 4-ball break for the opposition.

The Doubles Hat parade saw many original and floriferous creations!

The build-up to the premier event was the Open Weekend followed by a 3 day open both of which had waiting lists.

Afterwards came the 3-day handicap.

We had an excellent BBQ presided over by the Chef, Michael Young, on the first Saturday evening, and on the last Saturday evening "The Triple Banquet" was organised and cooked by Maureen Bell and her volunteers. They also catered during the whole 9 days. We thank them very much.

The prizes were presented by Marion Nalder.

Roehampton: 3-8 June

Large Entry Sees Magees' Triumph

From Jeremy Glyn

Sad to report that on this, my third annual visit to Roehampton week, the management fell short of my expectations. Paul Macdonald, for the first time, felt bound to apologise for failing to organise a week of radiant sunshine, even if he did confuse the unprepared by reducing the forecast rain to the occasional shower. To remedy the situation the golf pro's excellent shop did a brisk trade in everything from sun visors and sun-tan cream to near-thermal track-suits, which ensured the comfort and suitable protection of those in need.

More people than ever had entered and by making the main event a big "X" rather than blocks, most could be accepted even though, for the less successful players, fewer games were available. The "A" class draw and process were both won by Nigel Aspinall, (by 26TP and 26 respectively) and the play off for second place between John Greenwood and Dennis Shaw was won by the former on the last morning. This match provided the only spectator sport before lunch for those who arrived after 11 o'clock, as the earlier singles finals had been rattled off in double quick time.

In the level advanced the leaders of Block A, Roger Best and Edward Dymock (here to defend his remarkable triple crown) met again in the final, having seen off Block B's leaders, Jeremy Glyn and Geoffrey Cuttle, in the criss-cross playoffs. Roger had been in devastating form all week, winning every game in his block and won the final by +22. Also on Saturday morning David Magee won the big "X" handicap event, beating Dennis Shaw in the final, while

Chris Osmond had speedily overcome Geoffrey Cuttle in the final of the "Y".

One of the stars of the week was Eileen Magee, who confirmed her consistency and strong nerves (which she had displayed to win the Peels at Surbiton) with a series of results that led to her handicap coming down by 3. Although losing in the main "X" event's quarter final to her husband David in a close game, she won the other handicap event (with 5 wins in her block, beating Ginny Greig who was runner up with 4) and featured with David in one of the two closely fought doubles finals on Saturday afternoon.

In the "Y" Wyn Jones and Jeremy Glyn, who had only just held off the challenge of Maureen and Martin Haggerston to win +1T in the semi-final, hung on to win by the same margin in the final against Eileen and Dennis Shaw. Dennis was thus runner up for the third time that day – small reward for his hard work as tournament referee.

The "X" doubles final between the Magees and Anne Stephens partnered by Nigel Aspinall saw the former establish a substantial lead as time approached. Nigel hit in, decided not to go for his traditional triple and survived the unfamiliar call of "Time" to get to the peg. The final shot went wide to give Anne and Nigel victory by +4T.

Others during the week fared less well with the peg. Pat Macdonald nearly came to grief after accidentally pegging herself out against Geoffrey Cuttle, and Edward Dymock, in an early doubles against the Magees, spent 40 minutes, even after making rover with his part-

ner still on 1, determined to "peg t'bugger out".


Elsewhere, at rover, Neil Jackson was seen in a cloud of smoke contemplating all four balls within a small radius of the hoop, 2 bisques to take, and a rover peel required. After much pensive puffing, and both bisques, he had missed the peel but managed to win by +26 anyway. He was less successful in his "X" semi-final against David Magee, when having pegged out his forward ball hard, he missed with his second ball from about 6 feet. David hit in from the boundary and went on to win that game by 1 and later the cup itself.

Much muttering among the middle and higher bis-

quers about tight hoops (set daily by Dennis Shaw to prevent further vandalism and theft) seemed justified when Nigel Aspinall, fresh from a TP on lawn 2 (which sounds like a feather in his cap?) clanged several hoops moments later on lawn 1, before surging to victory, but the shot of the tournament was surely Geoffrey Cuttle's peeling of his partner ball, tight hoops or no, through hoop 2 from near corner 4!

Space here and numbers there prevent the mention of all the visitors and members performing, but on their behalf a big thank you to Paul for his patient management throughout a thoroughly enjoyable week.

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● Debbie Cornelius and Annabel McDiarmid travel further afield.....

On our way South to the Grand Canyon, we took a short cut along one of Nevada's lesser travelled roads (the busy ones have about 1 car every five minutes). With 30 miles to go before reaching the main road we discovered the petrol gauge was reading zero. "Oh yes, we did need to fill up, didn't we?" We made the main road. Phew! Only 69 miles to the nearest town, but at least if we broke down now there might be a few helpful people around. Imagine our surprise when Chevy the Wonder Car made it "all the way" on fumes alone.

Words don't seem to be of any use when describing the Grand Canyon. Big and red is a good, but inadequate start, nothing can really explain how "totally awesome" it is. If you are thinking of going, book accommodation there at least one month in advance.

On our way to Phoenix we drove through Sedona, known as John Wayne country, as this is where a lot of the old westerns were filmed. It was a lovely area to try a side road and see where it went, which we did on a couple of occasions. WOW!

We arrived in Phoenix, where our hosts for a few days were Hood and Margaret Chatham (a couple we had met in the Oregon tournament), and were greeted with a tall glass of iced tea. After a lovely cold shower we were ready for a game of croquet on their lawn at 7pm; a good time to play as the temperature by then was down to about 94 degrees. Their daily timetable went something like this: 7-9am croquet, 9am quick shop etc, stay indoors most of day and have a kip, 7pm it was about time to start playing croquet again, and if you had a floodlit lawn that would be till about 12 or 1am. Whilst in Phoenix the daily temperature was about 108-109 degrees. It had cooled down!

We visited a very good Indian museum which showed us all different crafts, Indian art pictures, and also a very good video on how the older Indians remember their lifestyle compared to the present day. This gave the general feeling that so many Indians don't really know who they are any more, to find out they have to go to a museum.

A little croquet party was arranged for 5.30. 6pm saw the beginnings of a sand storm, shortly followed by a thunderstorm during which we were

covered in sand. Then the heavy rain started and the lightning. We played on, why not, even though we were drenched through we were still hot. We saw some awesome lightning and in fact ended the evening by sitting in the middle of the lawn watching it all for about 2 hours, going inside finally at about midnight.



Debbie Cornelius playing at Sonoma Winery whilst on her travels.

San Diego: the car park at the zoo (too expensive); the car park at the Aquarium (too expensive); the car park at the no, its all right, we left San Diego before we could visit any more.

Los Angeles was next on the agenda, where we put our hands and feet in those made by the stars: were offered free tickets

Tucker and his wife Monica, at the lovely Burnham Wood Croquet Club. The lawn here, unlike most American clubs which use string for border lines, had a real one inch thick line. Unlike our chalk lines, however, this boundary line is set into the ground and made of white marble. The lawn itself is flat and green and we very much enjoyed playing there.

Then on to Meadowood Resort for the 1990 Classic croquet tournament. The lawns as usual were beautiful, as was the scenery; and the entertainment and croquet, provided at both the Meadowood Resort and Ellery McClatchie's lawn were of an excellent standard. The champagne and wine (locally made) flowed freely, and Annabel and Debbie were seen tossing to see who was driving.

On the last day of the tournament sixteen 9 wicket croquet lawns were set up on the No 1 fairway (on the golf course next to the croquet lawns), for the charity event attached to the tournament, the temperature of the day was about 100 F, and clearing the sixteen sets of mallets, balls, hoops, pegs and instructions was quite a job.

Most unlikely event of the week was produced by Mark Avery. For those of you who know his eating habits, you will be surprised to hear that he likes roast garlic, Mozzarella cheese and prosciutto ham; in fact towards the end of the meal he was eating almost anything we said was good for him!!

We popped into San Francisco for a couple of days going up and down the hills just like in the films (although not quite so fast as you have to give way all over the place). We also visited Baba Bob the Croquet Swami, who took us to a very rough, large patch of grass with a public footpath in the middle. He set up a 9 wicket croquet set (2 pegs and six balls), and taught us Guerilla Croquet. 3 balls a side, and you are not allowed to roquet your own balls. With the boundaries being flower beds, buildings, bushes, a road, a pond and pedestrians walking through the middle, it helps to be aware of what is going on around you (especially when kids start walking off with the balls). At least we didn't get moved on by the police: Bob's usual experience.

American advertising is an experience, you aren't really anybody if you aren't wearing a "raunchy leather jacket", and for some products, "if your friends don't ask if you've had a face lift you get your money back"!! If we'd had the money you wouldn't have recognised us when we got back.

Moving on to Santa Barbara where we had lunch with Forrest

The travels conclude next issue with a trip to Canada.

The Intrepid Explorers AMERICA (continued)

Our next destination was Mexico, so we said our fond farewells to our hosts, who made us fill every available bottle with water for the trip through the desert.

It was hot, no, it was very hot! The water soon tasted of the plastic containers it was in. We were extremely grateful for the car's air conditioning (or as the Aussies say Eggandishning).

We made it to Calexico, and walked across the border into Mexicali, Mexico. The temperature was somewhere in the region of 115-120 degrees at a guess, and there didn't seem to be any shade to walk in. We stayed there long enough to buy something saying "Made in Mexico", then crawled back to the car to drive to San Diego.

All the time we were there though, we had this strange feeling we were being watched. Some cars even stopped to look at us, and nearly everybody we passed were staring. It was quite unnerving. We were the only blondes around.

We toured the high spots in

to see "a really great chat show all the way from England - Terry Wogan" (I really don't know why but we turned this "amazing opportunity" down): sampled the delights (a nice cool beer) at the Hard Rock Cafe (been there, done that, bought the t-shirt): had a long day at Disneyland.

In fact we visited Disneyland on Debbie's birthday. I personally can't think of a better day out. We arrived at 10.30am and left at 12.45am. Yessiree, a long day! We could certainly have done with at least one more day there, but preferably not on a school holiday! It was fantastic, the 'bestest ever'.

American advertising is an experience, you aren't really anybody if you aren't wearing a "raunchy leather jacket", and for some products, "if your friends don't ask if you've had a face lift you get your money back"!! If we'd had the money you wouldn't have recognised us when we got back.

Moving on to Santa Barbara where we had lunch with Forrest

Southport: 6-7 July Not Under Water This Year!

From Andrew Bennet



Alain Giraud, Southport winner.

This long-bisquers weekend provides tournament experience for beginners as well as for those who have been playing for a while, and the competitors were just the sort of mixture of locals, visitors, ages and handicaps that we had hoped for.

Thunder threatened at the start but disappeared towards Yorkshire, to the relief of the seven visitors who had travelled from that direction.

The fast lawns and well-set hoops were testing. Joyce Taylor, the most experienced player, impressed us with her straight hitting and accurate placing.

It was the first tournament for eight of the twenty players, and the referees were busy. Mallet raised (and it always seemed to be at the furthest hoop from where we were): "Yes, what is the intended shot?" "Green is going to try to hit black."

The Williamson "Roll Patrol" was very active, as we heard some dreadful scroopy noises and gave some quiet lunchtime coaching to the worst offenders. This was coupled with advice on hampered shots after I

watched the worst bonk-bonk-bonk-scroop hammer shot I have ever witnessed, done by the same person who played an extraordinary break running hoops in random order.

Sorry, readers, after all I wrote earlier, I know "scroop" isn't in the book but the device of onomatopoeia justifies its use here. "Bonk" isn't in my dictionary either.

While the established five lawns were continuously in use, club members were able to use our four new lawns on the site of the old tennis courts.

Socially it must have been a good event because they all sat around chatting when I wanted to put games on.

Perhaps I shouldn't have put "enjoy yourselves" as part of the manager's notice.

The Yorkshire contingent all looked strong, and it was Alain Giraud who finished undefeated to win the trophy. There are some good names on it, starting with Chris Clarke. Aujourd'hui the Long-Bisquers et demain, Alain!

Ipswich: 22-23 June

The "Trouser Leg" Shot Demonstrated

From John Walters

Ipswich croquet club certainly has one of the most beautiful settings for a tournament. In the centre of an Arboretum off the town's largest park, it is a vision in green at all times and crowned with a multitude of colour through summer. Trees stretch up all around: on one side of the lawns they form a curtain atop a cliff. Another side sweeps down to a lake which can be seen from the lawns while lazily watching an opponent's progress. The lake is inhabited by several families of friendly ducks; residents of lawn and lake alike pay mutual visits to the other's territory!

The club is most famous for its social atmosphere, the envy of many larger institutions. Regular activities such as the lunch barbecue, among the delicious delights provided by Messrs Pearce & Waters, were again on show. Sadly so was the rain, which held back until day 2 on this occasion but has dogged the tournament for some years.

From this laid back arena have come a succession of determined and successful players, quite perversely. To this arena came several of a like mind in June, in addition to a number content with their own enjoyment. The list of seeds was quite impressive: Maugham, French, Walters and Avery taking

the top spots, (then Burrige and Comish). With 4 people to qualify from the blocks, these seemed likely candidates - despite Avery's lacklustre performance of recent times. In fact it was Avery who surrendered his place - to another local boy: Lewis Palmer.

"Shots" of the tournament were various. Having misapproached hoop 6 when seeking a 1-back leave, Ian Burrige later rush peeled through it on a scatter shot from hoop 1 - having misapproached that! Celia Steward perfected a trick shot which involved sending a ball up John Williams' trouser leg, where it remained lodged (don't try this at home boys and girls).

The semi's were played in dreary weather, with the play being similarly uninspired, but French and Palmer progressed to a local derby final. Unfortunately for him, Martin French seems to have two distinct modes which are used in roughly equal quantities during most croquet events. There's the determined "go getum" mode, and the resigned "go home now" mode - both are signalled fairly clearly to observant spectators! Despite a switch into the second of these gears, Martin still put some fight into the final. In both games he broke down at 4-back and Penultimate on triple peels - each

instance giving his opponent the game. Throughout the tournament Lewis had shown a flair for continually rescuing himself from difficulties into which he had just leapt. An approach which his fellow finalist was renowned for in earlier days, but has now part-bartered for a degree more control. Although his game is very temperament dependent, there is no reason why Lewis should not continue to be successful under similar lawn conditions to those at this weekend. He joins a

number of players in that grouping, some of whom have gained substantial prominence.

Elsewhere in the tournament, Maugham can consider himself to be unlucky in finding opponents on top form, finally losing to Walters in the 3rd/4th place play-off. Though the biggest shock of the event would have been achieved by Celia Steward - using a reliable formula: hit in and play breaks. Despite a valiant effort in front of the whole tournament she fell just short of the winning post.

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TOURNAMENT REPORTS

Harrow Oak:

1-2 June

A "Poor Do" at Harrow

From Mark Saurin

Having decided to "Walter off" the men's championship this year - oops! am I allowed to say this? Well, having consulted John, he believes it is all in good fun. So, yes, I decided to visit Harrow for only the second time. I found the seasoned Harrow competitors were still around.

Nothing much had changed though. There was a pitch invasion from the local nippers and even crowd violence. Coupled with that, David Wiggins was asked as he arrived on the first day, "Are you rich?" to which he replied, "No." Then came the surprised exclamation, "But you play croquet!"

The lawns had about an inch more grass on them since my last visit and several players found they had not got the strength to hit the ball from corner to corner, which resulted in D-class tactics being employed.

So, on to croquet.

Nothing rather surprising happened except David Wiggins won, beating your reporter in the final, 3-1. There were, though, lots of interesting endings to games. For example, the game between Eric Solomon and Nick Harris proved to be a classic in spectator value. Eric was for two-back and another, Nick was for Rover and peg.

On one of his turns, Nick pegged out his peg ball, which neither player spotted, even though both are referees, and the game continued.

Eric eventually pegged out Nick's peg ball, and a sweaty three ball ending followed, in which Nick managed to miss a phenomenal amount of shots. Eric even managed to lay up in third corner when giving a lift, which went unrecognised by his opponent. Eric eventually won, +2, providing the crowd with great entertainment.

As is traditional for Harrow tournaments, Richard Hilditch ran the whole thing, efficiently and humorously, and must be congratulated on an excellent weekend.

Bristol: 11-12 May

Improved Lawns at Bristol

From Andrew Symons

The 16 players in this weekend tournament really appreciated the work carried out by members on the lawns during the closed season. These improvements, together with the recently acquired pavilion make a return visit essential.

The first upset in the tournament happened in the first round when Adrian Judge knocked out the local favourite David Goacher. Despite it being early season, form was found quickly by most players and the competition progressed smoothly. There were no setbacks for Alan Bogle who proceeded through the top half of the draw whilst Laurence Latham dismissed Andrew Symons to meet Bogle in the final.



Left to right: Ray Ransom, Donald Gugan, Sue Bray, Rosemary Gugan and Hamish Hall working on the lawns at Bristol during the close season.

The best-of-three final saw Alan snatch the first after Laurence looked set to win. Alan was particularly pleased with this game as, along with previous wins, it was enough to earn him a scratch handicap. Laurence came back to win the second +4, but the third was quickly won by Alan. Both players thus qualified for their silver medals.

The progressive Swiss was won by Brian Hallam with 5 wins, who defeated Peter Dorke in a play off. Congratulations to Alan, Laurence and Brian on their achievements and to Ray Ransom our manager who, as well as running an enjoyable tournament, also recently completed a straight three ball triple peel in a club doubles match.

Surbiton: 9-12 May

PEEL MEMORIAL Full Entry for Premier Handicap Event

From Derek Caporn

The revival of the Croquet Association's premier handicap tournament is complete. It was oversubscribed. However, out of 16 pairs in the doubles, only 10 were mixed pairs. As the event is advertised as "Mixed doubles", next year, subject to Council's approval, we will only accept entries from mixed pairs, so the men will have to woo the ladies! This will also increase the entries in the ladies singles at the expense of the men!

All three events were strongly contested, with 25 entries in the Men's singles and 8 in the Ladies'. Richard White won the Men's, played as a Swiss, with 6 wins out of 8 games. In the Ladies' block, Mrs Magee won 5 out of 7, just pipping Mrs Osmond and Annabel McDiarmid on points. The Doubles, for the Murray Memorial Cup, was won by Edward Dymock and David White.

The catering at Surbiton was, as always, excellent and our warm thanks go to Hazel Kittermaster, Aileen Phillips and their supporters. We held a fish and chip supper on the Saturday evening, two went without as the designated Manager Derek Caporn couldn't add up! Perhaps it was therefore, just as well, that Julian Straw managed the tournament!

Wrest Park: 17-19 May

Wrest Parker Wins Block Shock

From Howard Bottomley

1991 celebrates the thirtieth year of Wrest Park's affiliation with the CA. Fallen apple blossom and wet grass welcomed the players to a fully booked American tournament.

Eric Audsley managed in his own inimitable way, the new water carrier perhaps didn't have the same appeal as the old yellow car, but no doubt we'll get used to it. Another innovation was a wall mounted clock, as if Eric wasn't enough of a reminder.

The heavy rain had compelled

the use of boundary string which gave Alex O'Connor and Adrian Judge the opportunity to show us their balancing skills. Play began in the drizzle, with Pauline Sander first off the lawn following an effortless win against John Wheeler. John was able to reflect on former wins, as he re-acquainted himself with Miss J. Reynolds Hole's ornate trophy on its way back to Nottingham to reward Nottingham B's.

John Bevington asked his jump shot to be refereed, was

faulted, and only later realised he had tried to jump through the wrong hoop.

George Collin was asked to judge a wiring lift on an adjacent lawn, only to return to his own game to receive a lift himself, but rather than take the wired ball, he took an advanced lift instead.

The sun came out on Saturday afternoon and Blocks began to take shape with 'A' contested by Roger Best & Hugh Williams, Tony Parry ahead in 'B', 'C'

continued on page 17 ▶

TOURNAMENT REPORTS

Ryde: 6-9 June

Four Enjoyable Days on the Island for the Overners

From Deborah Latham

The perennial "family" atmosphere generated at the Ryde Club is always a pleasure to return to, and this year was no exception. In this month which some people (who doubtless think they know best) are pleased to designate as being "Summer", the weather attempted to run through the whole gambit, failing only of snow and thunderstorm. Attire therefore varied between full waterproof paraphernalia and shorts (and personally I blame the terrible downpour on Saturday on Phil Kennerley, who ought never to have tempted fate by wearing shorts in combination with his tweed hat).

Much as the Isle of Wight needed the rain, it did have the effect of making the courts a little heavier to play on than was desirable - even Laurence Latham, with his heavy mallet, was unable to get a single ball shot to carry across on occasion! However, there seemed to be a tacit communal decision that we

weren't going to let such peccadilloes ruin our enjoyment and no more did we!

The "C" class contest for the Hutton Cup was fairly wide open until the last day, when Ted Salisbury emerged from the chasing pack of John and Christine Bourn and Faith Fewtrell to amass the greatest number of wins, with Doris Cox and Mary Robinson fighting valiant rear-

Wight is now Champion of the Isle of Wight, which seems a very fitting state of affairs.

All the tournament competitors save for Bill and Doris were in the Handicap event, but, just as last year, the field narrowed down to Bob Fewtrell and myself in the final. ("Deja vu, Bob!" I quipped as I watched him peg out in his semi-final.) This year we had a reversal of



L to R: Phil Cordingley, Annabel McDiarmid, and Richard Hilditch at Christchurch NZ in 1990 to support our MacRobertson Shield team. It seemed to work!

◀ continued from page 16

looking like a Wrest Park win with Paul Sharrock and Adrian Craxton leading the field, and Robin Brown rushing away with 'D'.

John Hall asked Eric Audsley for a ruling in their game when John croqueted his ball close to the peg and was hampered for his next roquet. The problem was that the peg had splintered on the playing side and could have affected the stroke at impact. The peg was deftly rotated. However this was not the end, as when Eric finally came to peg out, there was that splinter again. Eric also suffered in a later game when 'lying' up a peg out, when Paul Sharrock rushed into his midriff.

Quickest games go to Syd Jones with his defeat of Tom Anderson in an hour and a quarter! and David Carpenter who beat Adrian Judge in 35 minutes, perhaps both hurried on by the roar of the Lancaster bomber.

The new handicap system affected block winners Hugh Williams and Robin Brown, with John Bevington and Paul Sharrock also victorious, Paul winning the last game of the weekend against Adrian Craxton.

Howard and Eric's Mums and Dad provided the sustenance.

guard actions. (For future reference: A member of the Bourn family was heard to observe that John is a very good shot and Christine is pretty handy round the actual hoops, so between them John and Christine are a very good player....!)

The "B" class was not in doubt for as long, however. It soon became pretty clear that despite everyone's best efforts, Bill Platt was steadily forging ahead to accrue the maximum success rate and take the Chapman Cup home, though Bob Fewtrell gave pretty hot pursuit.

There being four entrants only for the Open, the event was once again played as two blocks, with manager Roy Newnham's plan being that there would be a play-off between the block winners. However, this approach was somewhat scuppered by Phil Kennerley, in his first Open and on paper the "outsider". Since he was not playing on paper, but on grass, he proceeded to win every game in both blocks - this, of course, making a play-off not only unnecessary but also saving him from imposed schizophrenia. It was what one might call a "popular" win by virtue of the fact that a resident of the Isle of

roles; Bob won convincingly and I was runner-up, so he took possession of the Dibley Goblet and I got the Benest Cup. If only we'd known beforehand, we could have just swapped the cups and saved everybody else the suspense! (NB: If anyone is confused by the fact that according to the Fixture List Phil was the holder of the Benest, they have every right to be, because he wasn't!)

The population of the Swiss "Y" proved to be a shifting one due to various circumstances, but consistency told in the end and Faith garnered the most points, so the Fewtrells won both parts of the Handicap event between them - the nearest we got to family doubles.

As the Birch Cups for the Doubles were not being contested this year, Phil Kennerley and Christine Bourn were unable to engage in the repartee which is customary to their doubles playing partnership, which was a great shame for casual eavesdroppers. They fortunately circumvented this situation, however, by commenting on each other's games. If you want to engage in a really entertaining session of croquet,

do endeavour to be double-banked on a court with Christine and to be the out player at the same time as she, while Phil spectates. An experience not to be missed, I assure you!

Arthur Rowlands deserved an Oscar for being a supporting player in every sense of the term, necessitating a fair degree of ubiquity on his part. First he volunteered to be Dorothy Miller, visiting from Southwick, until such time as she was able to come and take over the job herself. Then he turned to being one of the "people the winner would like to thank" for his sterling work behind the bar and in the kitchen, for which I awarded him the title of "Catering Coordinator" and which task he performed very creditably indeed with the help of his able assistants. Then he was cast in the role of Margaret Newman in the "Y" when injury temporarily overcame her - good to see her back on the courts again after a break of two years, though. Equally it was just as pleasant to hear Arthur's good natured chortles reverberating across the courts again - this man who is a "cast of thousands" all by himself!

The vote for Shot of the Tournament should probably go to Laurence in his "X" event game against Bob. He was, he subsequently explained, habitually failing mere three yard roquets, but, just to show what he could do if he had chosen to, he ran the second hoop from three yards beyond the first and thus roqueted Bob's ball near the north boundary. Laurence tended to deprecate this achievement, but the gallery was much impressed!

The one "sad" thing is that there were only five non-Islanders (I understand the technical term for such foreigners is "overners") competing this year - Dorothy Miller, we Lathams, and Mick and Val Tompkinson (though the latter, as Roy pointed out, are very nearly residents from the amount of time they spend there!).

What I often wonder is, if other people realized what a lovely, friendly and thoroughly enjoyable occasion the Ryde June tournament is, would they be more motivated to come?

I strongly suspect the answer is Yes, did they but know it....!

CHAMPIONSHIPS

GIEVES & HAWKES BRITISH SENIOR CHAMPIONSHIP

Bill Lamb Wins Hurlingham Final

From Chris Hudson

Gieves & Hawkes sponsored our first-ever Seniors (Over-50) Championship this year and proved that there is a considerable demand for an event of this type.

Qualifying rounds were played at Hunstanton, Cheltenham, and Surbiton to establish the eight players to go forward to the quarter finals at Surbiton on 19th July. The last four played in the final at Hurlingham on the following day.

It was the inaugural event and, as such, provided us with a lot of experience for organising an event of this type in future. Clearly some form of seeding needs to be introduced, as for any championship, and the extra day inserted between the qualifiers and the final (with the prospect of only one match and a great deal of travelling for some) did not work well.

The good news is that Gieves & Hawkes are keen to repeat the event and would like to tie it in with an International Seniors match against the United States. Arrangements are currently being worked out and if everything falls into place, the

events will appear in next year's Fixture Book.

The first qualifier was played at Hunstanton as a block of four, and was won by Bill Lamb. Next came the qualifier at Cheltenham, in which 12 players took part in a 6-round Swiss. This was won by William Ormerod with 5 wins out of 6. This was followed by a third qualifier at Surbiton, which attracted 7 entrants and was won by Eric Solomon.

The quarter-finals at Surbiton saw Eric Solomon win fairly comfortably against Dennis Moorcraft +17TP, +21, but Bernard Neal unfortunately had to withdraw from his match against Bill Lamb due to illness.

The other two best-of-three matches were pretty tight. Ian Maugham beat William Ormerod, who played in the 1956 MacRobertson Shield Series, +12, +1(T), and in the other quarter-final, Duncan Hector eventually beat Don Gaunt +3, -18, +17.

In the semi-finals, double-banked on Hurlingham's Lawn 4, Eric Solomon, 1979 President's Cup winner played well



Bill Lamb receives his trophy from Robert Gieve.

against Ian Maugham and won fairly comfortably +11. In the other match, Bill Lamb beat Duncan Hector +4.

The final, played after an excellent lunch provided by the sponsor for the players and some 40 guests, proved to be something of a walk-over for Bill Lamb. Playing well, he gave

Eric Solomon little chance of a break and won by 26.

Nigel Aspinall acted as Referee throughout the final day, and thanks are due to those clubs who offered their lawns for the qualifying rounds. As a whole, the event was a great success, and looks likely to expand considerably in future.

Surbiton: 7-9 June

23rd CHAMPIONSHIP OF SURREY
New format, ancient title, mystery cup, clear winner

From Robert Prichard

The 22nd Championship of Surrey was won by Lt Col du Pre in 1939 at the old Surbiton Club, half a mile away from the present club. The Surbiton Open weekend of recent years has been upgraded to best-of-three throughout the main event and the CA agreed to the revival of the old title.

The CA also provided a cup donated by the old Surrey County Union on its demise in 1947. It was thought to be the cup, donated by the SCU, which was used as the old Surrey Cup before it was replaced by the Spencer-Ell Cup. Doubt was cast by two relics from the sixties, Derek Caporn and myself, who remembered the Surrey Cup as being taller and slimmer, more like the stork's vase than the fox's platter.

The cup certainly fits the plinth that holds the band containing the names of both Surrey Cup and Spencer-Ell winners, but that band is too tall for the plinth and

may have been removed from its original plinth, so the "fit" proves nothing. Nor is it likely to be the original cup for the Championship of Surrey. Its hallmark date is 1922, so it was probably for the SCU Senior Championship, which travelled around the six clubs in the SCU and was held (at Guildford) for the 17th and last time also in the fateful year 1939, being won by Maurice Reckitt. Tiresome accuracy notwithstanding, it makes a suitable trophy for the revived Championship.

The extra day required reduced the entry to a round sixteen, exactly the same as in 1939. Half were Surbiton members, five others came from Surrey or Middlesex, with only three distant visitors to our steadily improving lawns. There is room for another eight in a tournament that would be a useful initiation to best-of-three for improving players.

A notable feature was the lack of youth: Tim Harrison at 29 was

the youngest. He was with his fiancée Liz, who admits to enjoying watching croquet. She saw him take the only game off Mulliner during the weekend. The cold weather sped us up and 3-5½-7½ hour limits saw only one game going to time. Manager Richard Hilditch had no difficulty in getting the final under way before he and two other players had to leave the televised Test match triumph against the West Indies for some live American football on Sunday afternoon.

Steve Mulliner naturally also had other things to do but found time for four triples in the eight wins needed to win the title. The final against Jerry Guest was his closest match: +7TP, +9. David Goacher's semi-final loss to Jerry included losing -1 and doing his second triple-with-combination-peg-out in a fortnight. Earlier he had been the "victim" of two TPOs by George Noble. The Swiss was managed with admir-

able flexibility and was won by a rather out-of-form Phil Cordingley with 6 out of 9, beating the speedy Jeff Dawson's 7 out of 11 by 3%.

RESULTS

Round 1
Mulliner bt Harrison -4, +13TP, +17; Cordingley bt Sheraton-Davis +11, +3; Vincent bt Ruddock +14(T), +25; Dawson bt Bond +5, -16, +13; Guest bt Caporn +25, +19; Stevens (MJ) bt Hilditch +25, +9; Prichard (RDC) bt Mrozinski +26, -17, +3; Goacher bt Noble +5TPO(N), -13TPO(N), +25.

Round 2
Mulliner bt Cordingley +25, +26; Dawson bt Vincent +26, +25; Guest bt Stevens +26TP, +16; Goacher bt Prichard +16, +2.

Semi-Finals
Mulliner bt Dawson +22TP, +5TP; Guest bt Goacher +1, -21TP, +24.

Final
Mulliner bt Guest +7TP, +9.

CHAMPIONSHIPS

Bowdon: 10th July

THE ROYAL BANK NATIONAL SCHOOLS
CHAMPIONSHIP
QEGS Triumphant Again

From Chris Hudson

Four schools were invited to compete in the "Level" championship this year but unfortunately holiday and other commitments prevented first Ardingly and then Bishops Veseys from fielding a team. However, the event went ahead with a squad of "Golden Oldies" (Peter

Dorke, Chris Hudson, Andrew Bennet, and David Iddon) making up a composite fourth team. From the start, it was obvious that Queen Elizabeth's, Blackburn, had by far the strongest team, containing as it did Dan McCormick and the two Saurins, Andrew and Adrian.

Next year, however, the event will be much more open, as both Dan and Andrew will have left.

The other teams were from Ludlow College and Wolverhampton GS, for whom their top player, Robert Owen, did well to come within 6 points of beating Dan McCormick. But it was the sheer experience and strength in depth that gave QEGS 6 wins out of 6 to take the trophy, leaving Wolverhampton with two wins and Ludlow with one.

Andrew Bennet managed the event, Peter Walker transported the take-away lunches and provided the teas, and the Bowdon Club's lawns as usual were of very high standard. Christine Unsworth of the Royal Bank of Scotland visited the event in the afternoon, and presented the Royal Bank's Trophy and medals to the winners and runners-up.

The Royal Bank of Scotland has now sponsored Schools Croquet for 5 years, and this has done much to help us bring a lot of young players into the game. As Development Officer I am most grateful for their support.



The winning QEGS team with Christine Unsworth (L to R): Andrew Saurin, Dan McCormick, and Adrian Saurin.

Colchester: 1-8 July

THE EASTERN CHAMPIONSHIPS
Fulford takes Eastern Title

From Pat Hetherington

The Easterns this year were played as three separate events, the first three days being for an Over-50 Swiss, the next two for class events, and the final three for the Championship of East Anglia. The only constant factor throughout the eight days was the manager.

Sadly the weather over the first three days was awful - a mixture of frequent showers and occasional heavy rain. The intrepid band of Over-50s soldiered on and Nigel Gray (who on his first visit to Colchester had lost every game) took the Franklin Cup, while three players, Marjorie Boyd, Len Connor and Beryl Gosden, tied for second place, Marjorie taking the Lexden Goblet on countback.

Thursday and Friday were the summer's warmest days of the year so far. A-class players played the best of three for the Colchester Cup. Chris Clarke succeeded in

beating all the others and reeled off three triple peels in his overall victory. Two other peels were performed by Robert Fulford, one of which was straight.

Late withdrawals and injuries reduced the B class to two players and Pamela Fellows and Chris Sheen played a best-of-three match for the Locke bowl. With one game each, the final was delayed until Sunday, when Pamela finally emerged victorious by +3.

A block of seven contested the Cordy Salver, and though all 21 games were not completed, there was no mistaking the winner, Alec Bell of Bury St Edmunds, who won 5 out of 6 games.

Saturday saw the arrival of a strong band of top ranking players to contest the Championship of East Anglia. With easy lawns the stream of triples continued, no less than thirteen being completed. By Sun-

day teatime the top seeds Stephen Mulliner and Robert Fulford had duly reached the final and the remaining players were engaged in an Egyptian to decide the destination of the plate.

The final of the championship, scheduled as a best of five games, took only three games, Fulford winning in straight games with the somewhat unusual scores of +15, +23 and +7. Winner of the plate was Martin French; Ian Burridge took the shield for the best junior.

RESULTS

Championship of East Anglia

Round 1
S.N. Mulliner bt M. Avery +26TP, +25; L. Palmer bt Mrs P. Fellows +8, +21; D. Maugham bt S. Comish +25 +19; I. Burridge bt T.D. Harrison +14, -24, +25; R.I. Fulford bt J.O. Walters +2, +10TP, Miss D.A. Cornelius bt D. McCormick +14, +11; C.D. Clarke bt

Dyffryn Gardens:
28-30 JuneBurridge Wins
Welsh
Championship

The inaugural Welsh Championship was played at Dyffryn Gardens at the end of June. Two blocks of 5 were played to decide who should enter the semi-finals of the championship knockout, with each match of the block consisting of two games.

Winner of the first block was William Prichard, with 7 wins out of 8 games, his only loss being against brother Robert. Peter Dorke came second in this block, with 6 wins out of 8.

Ian Burridge won the second block, dropping only one game to John Evans. Dayal Gunasekera came second, with 5 wins.

The semi-finals were won by Ian Burridge, who beat Peter Dorke +26, -17, +26, and by William Prichard +24, +15 in two straight games against Dayal. Burridge lost the first game in the final but then took the next two to beat William Prichard -13, +14, +26.

Ian has been selected by the Welsh Croquet Association to represent Wales in the forthcoming World Championship in September.

K.M.H. Aiton +9, +17TP; M. French bt J.E. Guest -20, +7, +18TP.

Round 2

Mulliner bt Palmer +17TP, -24TP, +2; Maugham bt Burridge +25TP, +11TP; Fulford bt Miss Cornelius +11, +24; French bt Clarke +17, +8.

Semi-Finals

Mulliner bt Maugham +26, +12TP; Fulford bt French +26, +24.

Final

Fulford bt Mulliner +15, +23, +7.

Over-50s Swiss

6 wins: N. Gray.
5 wins: Mrs M. Boyd, L. Connor, Mrs B. Gosden.

4 wins: R. Gosden, Mrs P.M. Hetherington.
3 wins: Mrs P. Osborne, Mrs M. Clary, D. Reeves, Mrs K. Butler, Mrs J. Ackerman.
2 wins: G.F. Hallett, Mrs B. Carter.

Colchester Cup

5 wins: A. Bell.
4 wins: Mrs M. Boyd.
3 wins: N. Gray.
2 wins: Mrs J. Ackerman.
1 win: C. Sheen, Mrs P. Fellows, D. Reeves.

TOURNAMENT REPORTS

Compton: 24-28 June

Margaret Payton Gets Her Bronze

From Vincent Camroux

The talking point at the start of this year's tournament was the dreadful weather which afflicted the first two days' play and left all the competitors feeling soggy. Dennis Shaw seemed particularly anxious not to get wet since he finished two games on the first day in double quick time. However the weather improved on the Wednesday by which time John Farley was emerging as the likely winner of the handicap "8 and over" event. Meanwhile John Hobbs was carrying all before him in the other singles, halting Dennis Shaw in his tracks by winning +19 with 2½ bisques left, and beating the writer by an even greater margin with 3 bisques unused.

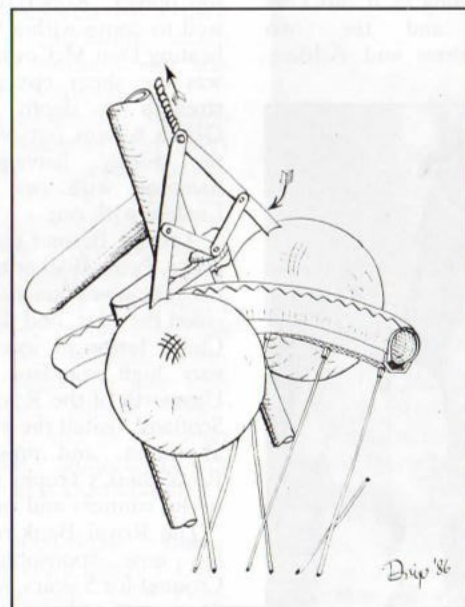
After such a performance against the two tournament handicappers it is hardly surprising that they exercised their option of amending his handicap by three handicap points and brought him down from 7 to 5½. John has just moved from the Newport club in Essex to Tunbridge Wells. There he has joined Peter Howell, also playing in this event but, unusually for him, with little success this time. John Hobbs eventually won all his games – the person pressing him most closely being Dorothy Miller who was a worthy runner-up.

John Farley had inflicted the only loss John Robinette from Bury St Edmunds had suffered. Then in the last round he met Pauline Lewis, making her annual pilgrimage from Southport to the South Coast with club mate Alice Dawson, whilst John Robinette tackled Adrian Wadley. Pauline proceeded to beat John Farley resoundingly – not so surprising perhaps to those who had seen her make 11 hoops without a bisque in her game against Betty Camroux: a game which Betty only lost narrowly, despite such a turn against her. Pauline would in fact have earned a silver merit award if she had peeled her partner ball through one hoop and the only reason she did not get a bronze award this time was that she already had one!

Meanwhile the other John beat Adrian, so both Johns tied with 5 wins. Dennis had earlier announced that in the event of a tie

there would be a one-ball play off and this John Robinette won, thanks to some astounding roll-ups to hoops 2 and 3 which left John Farley too much to do to catch up. Farley had some compensation by being presented with the Compton Plate which he didn't know even existed!

Margaret Payton was another player catching the eye and she earned a bronze



The Two Ball Break (by Ian Plummer).

merit award following her game against Paul Middleditch by emulating Pauline's feat of 11 hoops without a bisque. Margaret Ward playing in her first tournament had the consolation of her first tournament win against John Green in the last round.

After the serious business of the week was over the doubles took place on Thursday and Friday under mainly sunny skies. Most of those in the singles also played in the doubles although one or two new names appeared. Bevis Sanford from Hurlingham partnered Dennis Shaw and they found themselves giving a vast number of bisques

in practically every game. Gordon Drake partnered Mrs Lindfield from Tunbridge Wells, also playing in her first tournament, but sadly they could not quite pull off a win, losing by 1, 2, 3, and 3. Two of the singles stars, John Farley and John Hobbs, were paired together, and they proceeded to win the event which unusually was played as a four-round Swiss.

Croquet players are often generous to their opponents by missing roquets, sticking in hoops on the opponent's ball etc. (all of which happened during the week) but is rare for a partnership to give 5 bisques when they should have only given half that number. It would be nice to report that this generosity was rewarded but sadly the givers narrowly lost by 2 on time. One can't help wondering about the receivers!

As it happened, most of the doubles matches were closely contested and only decided on time by very narrow margins. Amongst other odd events worthy of mention was the mysterious case of the missing pink ball on court 4 which was discovered in play on court 3. The manager, having hit the pink ball hard (as usual), saw it jump in the air promptly went up to the third corner on court 4 (which lies at the top of a bank above court 3), picked up the ball on the corner spot and carried on playing. The real court 3 pink ball of a decidedly different hue was nestling coily in the long grass at the foot of the bank where it was eventually discovered by a rather bemused player from court 4!

It is, I imagine, rare for a player to suffer financial loss during a game (afterwards perhaps when one buys one's opponent a drink) but this happened when a player, having marked a ball in the other game with a tuppence, returned later to find it had become a penny.

Finally thanks are due as in so many tournaments to the willing helpers behind the scenes who provide coffee, meals and even general support by way of spectator appreciation without which playing in tournaments would not be the pleasure it is – but please do something about lawn 5!

always there early in the morning to set the hoops in his capacity as Referee of the Tournament.

We extend our deepest sympathy to his widow Barbara. J.H.B.

P. GARRARD

On Saturday 29th June members of Tracy Park Croquet Club attended afternoon tea given by Fleur Binning in commemoration of Pete Garrard O.B.E., who died on 14th May.

Pete was an Australian, a Civil Engineer of international reputation, and a member of the Sports Council. He came to Tracy Park from Bath Croquet Club where he had played for several years.

We at Tracy Park were privileged to have him for those few short years. He taught and encouraged many members and will be greatly missed. J.W.E.

HINTS FOR STARTERS

Is this why the Jump Shot is not allowed?

GOLF CROQUET

The Laws of Golf Croquet list "Errors" under Section 5, as follows:

(a) Failing to contest the hoop in order.

(1) The striker must always play to contest the hoop in order and must never play solely to gain an advantage for the next hoop in order. If he does so and the error is not condoned, the stroke is invalid, the balls are replaced in the positions they occupied before that stroke and the turn ends.

(2) The error is condoned if it is not discovered before the next stroke is played. In that event the stroke in error is deemed to be valid.

(b) Playing out of sequence.

(1) If a player plays out of sequence and the error is not condoned, the first stroke in error and all subsequent strokes are invalid, the balls are replaced in their lawful positions before the first stroke in error and the player entitled to play then plays.

(2) The error is condoned if it is not discovered before the end of the game.

(c) Playing a wrong ball.

(1) If the striker plays a wrong ball and the error is not condoned, the first stroke in error and all subsequent strokes are invalid, the balls are replaced in their lawful positions before the first stroke in error and the striker then plays with the correct ball.

(2) The error is condoned if it is not discovered before the end of the game.

(d) Jump Stroke.

(1) The striker must not play a deliberate jump stroke. If he does so and the error is not condoned, any point scored for his side thereby is invalid and all balls affected by the stroke may be replaced in their lawful positions at the option of the adversary.

(2) The error is condoned if it is not discovered before the next stroke is played. In that event, the stroke in error is deemed to be valid.

Some correspondence in a 1906 Croquet Gazette may give a clue as to why jump shots are banned in this way.

Dear Sir,

I am no believer in anonymity. Your correspondent of last week would have done better had he signed his name to the account he gives of ladies practising jump shots on the lawns of Roehampton. He would have done better still had he given us the names of the ladies who indulged in this form of amusement.

I used to advocate, and still advocate, that Ladies should pay the same annual subscription to the Association as men do; among the many other reasons because their

games, on an average, take longer than men's do, and so in a tournament they occupy the grounds for a longer period and get more for their money than our sex does.

If it be found on further enquiry that these practices are common, I shall take an early opportunity of proposing that ladies pay a higher subscription than men, so that the excess payment may be devoted to repairing the lawns at Roehampton and making good the havoc which

their efforts at "jumping" have created.

Yours faithfully,
Arthur Capell,
Chorleywood.

PS: Perhaps the ladies referred to will write a letter in your next issue.

To which the Editor appended: Accompanied, we would suggest, by appropriate quotations from George Meredith's poem, "Jump-to-Glory Jane".

This was followed the next week by:



"How on earth did I miss that?" David Fairbrother in play at the Bretby Country Club, home of South Derbyshire C.C.

Using Bisques & Getting Better

ASSOCIATION CROQUET

General principles for taking bisques may be stated as follows:

1. If you have a large number of bisques (say 6 or more), take them at the beginning of the game – don't hang on to them. Use 2 (or even 3) to set up your 4-ball break, and then use additional bisques as required to keep your break going.

2. If you have a half-bisque, use this to start setting up your break, and then follow it with a full bisque, so that you can run a hoop having set your break up.

3. During your break, do not attempt a shot you believe is unlikely to come off. If faced with this situation, think how you can best use another bisque to tidy up all the balls and then continue with your break.

4. As a general principle, do not take a bisque unless you can see that it will enable you to make at least your current hoop and the next one.

General strategy against an "A" class player:

1. If you are a long bisquer, or a

receiver of bisques, and you win the toss, you MUST put your opponent in.

2. Set up a 4-ball break as quickly as possible with your bisques (ie on the 4th turn of the game if your opponent misses his hit-in when playing the 3rd turn), and take your ball round to the peg, using bisques as necessary.

3. Leave a long hit-in for your opponent after taking your first ball round, and then, if he misses, use your remaining bisques to get your second ball round to the peg.

4. If you lose the toss, and your opponent puts you in, then follow the above procedure as soon as he breaks down.

General strategy against a "B" class player:

1. Wait until a favourable situation arises to make effective use of your bisques, and then use your bisques to keep your break going.

General strategy against a "C" class player:

1. Here you will have even fewer bisques (or you may even have bisques against you). Keep them for use in dire emergency, or to help you on the last few hoops and your peg-out.

Dear Sir,
Mr Capell surpasses himself in his latest attack upon the ladies of our Association. Are we to infer that the lords of creation never "jump". How about the unemployed at tournaments? Alas! it is the cracks who set the example – who rampage round any vacant lawn at golf croquet and pride themselves on "jumping" when stymied for a "hole", – this "practice", moreover, taking place just in front of a hoop? By all means let the abuse of the lawns be forbidden, but it surely an ill-conditioned snarl which confines the blame to the fair sex and hints at them paying extra for repairing the lawns.

Yours faithfully,
Henry C. Needham.

The "Crofter" Crossword

Twice as many solutions have already been received to "Crofter" No 2 as there were to No 1 – a sign of the popularity of the crossword. The draw takes place on 21st August, and the winner will be announced in "Croquet" No 218.

The correct solution to "Crofter" No 2 is shown here.



Solutions to the crossword in this issue should be sent to:

The Editor,
The Oaklands,
Englesea Brook,
Near Crewe,
Cheshire,
CW2 5QW,

marking the envelope "Crofter No 3".

No other material, apart from the solution and the sender's name and address, should be included in the envelope.

All solutions received will remain unopened until 21st October, 1991, when a draw will take place.

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

T.F. OWEN

Visitors to Southwick will be sorry to learn of the recent death of Tristram Owen at the age of 82. He joined the CA in 1973 and for the next ten years his name was never out of the prize lists; he appeared twice in the Spencer-Ell and in 1979 came equal fourth in the Chairman's Salver.

In 1975 he became a Referee, and in 1979 an Examining Referee. He was a member of the CA Council for several years. He represented Sussex many times in the Inter-County Championship, both in London and when that event was moved to Southwick. It was at Southwick that he played most, having been one of the surprisingly few players to retire to Sussex in order to be near the Sussex County Club. On his arrival he quickly threw himself into the work of the Club, running coaching courses,

OBITUARIES

managing tournaments, mowing lawns and in due course serving as Chairman.

The reporter of one of the first tournaments where he appeared wrote that his play revealed his legal training, 'every shot being put to the test of pro and con and executed with studied logic and accuracy'. His game was certainly a model of care and accuracy; this, combined with good shooting ability and a certain stubbornness, made him very difficult to beat. He was a master of the take-off, which it might be said he over-used, often preferring to take off to a hoop than to do the more desirable split shot.

At Southwick he will be remembered for his work on the lawns and grounds, possessing an uncanny facility for coaxing the most recalcitrant mower into life. Often before a tournament he would spend all afternoon mowing, and he was

THE HISTORY OF THE LAWN MOWER

The honour of the first invention of the cylinder lawn mower rests with one man. In 1830 Mr Edwin Budding of Stroud, at that time an engineer in the cloth factory of Mr Lister of that town, conceived the idea of cutting the grass of a lawn in the same way that nap was sheared off the cloth in Mr Lister's factory.

His lawn mower had a cylinder in which spiral knives were fixed and a horizontal bottom blade against which they worked. The cylinder was made to rotate by gearing from a large roller at the back of the machine and there was a front roller which could be raised or lowered to adjust the height of cut.

These are still the main features of the lawn mower, though some machines are driven by a chain instead of gearing; this was anticipated by Budding whose 1830 patent included the words: "The revolving parts may be driven by endless lines or bands instead of teeth".

In his original specification Budding claims that: "Country gentlemen will find in using my machine an amusing, useful and healthful exercise", whilst Messrs Ransomes, in their old catalogues showing this machine, claim that "Persons unpractised in the art of mowing may cut the grass on the lawns, pleasure grounds and bowling greens with ease, while the beauty of its operation is that it leaves no seam nor any of the cut grass upon the lawn, another advantage being that the grass may be cut when dry".

This latter statement is interesting in that mowing with a scythe had to be done when the grass was wet, often necessitating work in the very early morning, when the dew was on the ground.

Today the problem is the converse, for it is difficult to make a cylinder lawn mower cut satisfactorily when the grass is very wet.

It is on record that a Budding mower was in use in the gardens of the Zoological Society in Regents Park, in 1831, but the first people to take up the manufacture of these machines on a commercial scale appear to have been Messrs J R & A Ransome, of Ipswich.

This firm, the predecessors of Ransomes, Sims & Jefferies Ltd, obtained a licence for the manufacture and sale of the Budding mower in 1832, and continued with this machine up to 1859, during which period about 1,500 machines were made and several improvements of their own were incorporated.

Two specimens of these early machines can be seen today at their works at Ipswich, and there is a further model in the South

Kensington Science Museum.

In 1835 the Budding Mower was taken up by Messrs Thomas Green of Leeds, and three or four years later by Mr Alexander Shanks of Arbroath, Scotland. In 1842, Mr Shanks took out a patent for the first horse machine, in which he introduced several important improvements on the Budding pattern.

In 1859, Messrs Thomas Green



Charles H. Pugh demonstrating an early Atco mower.

& Son patented their Silens Messor machine, the leading feature of which was the chain drive, which made the machine comparatively quiet and this machine has become deservedly popular.

On account of the increasing interest in games, the demand for lawn mowers began to increase and, in 1867, Messrs Ransomes brought out the "Automaton" Mower; this was of lighter construction and had a shorter wheelbase than the existing machines and, as far as dimensions are concerned, was similar to the roller type mowers made today.

At this period, and up to the present, Messrs Green and Messrs Shanks were also developing their lawn mower trade and offering machines of various types showing great improvements over the original Budding mower. Pony and Horse mowers were, at this time, becoming more widely used.

In 1869 came the first departure from the standard design, when Messrs Follows & Bate of Manchester patented the side wheel lawn mower.

Instead of driving the cutting cylinder from a roller at the back of the machine, it was driven by two side wheels having internal teeth, which engaged with pinions of the cylinder spindle. This made the machine much lighter and cheapened the cost of production. The disadvantage, of course, was

that the machine could not work up close to the edge of the lawn. The side wheel mower today is immensely popular, in view of its low cost and its ability to tackle longish grass.

This machine was called the "Climax" and was offered in 6", 7", 8", 10" and 12" cutting widths. Later the company introduced the "Anglo-American", a heavier and more expensive machine

which nevertheless was a "prize winner at public trials".

A lighter though similar mower to the "Anglo-American" called the "Manchester" followed. And, like its predecessor, it also worked without ratchets and springs and proved very successful.

In 1887, when Follows & Bate moved to Gorton in Manchester, the "Victoria" and "Silent Gordon" side wheel mowers were made but proved unsuccessful, especially the latter, of which very few were manufactured.

The "Manchester" continued to be a successful model, though under fierce competition from American imports it was necessary to lighten and cheapen the mower.

The result was that a simple one-piece flat ratchet was introduced to the exclusion of the ratchet and springs version. Hence the birth of two more Follows & Bate machines called "Speedwell" and "Runaway", both having this new feature. The "Speedwell" later took on the name "Climax" for a customer in Bristol, with some unfortunate trading consequences for the Follows & Bate company at that time.

A further innovation was the Pennsylvania Mower, patented in 1878, which was also a side wheel machine, but the drive consisted of a train of gearing instead

of the internal gear ring and pinion.

In 1874 Ransomes opened a factory in Waterworks Street, Ipswich, devoted solely to the manufacture of lawn mowers, and this remained in use until 1937, when the present Lawn Mower Works came into production.

Soon after this the "Globe" mower was produced by Ransomes, which was later re-named the "World".

This was followed by the "Little Gem" and the "Paris", the latter being specially made for Messrs Decker & Mot of Paris. The "Reversible" appeared in 1877 and about the same time the "New Paris" for the home trade. The "New Automaton" was bought out in 1885 and was followed by the "Chain Automaton".

In 1872 the first "Anglo-Paris" machines appeared and in 1894 the "Patent Chain Automaton" and the "Patent Gear Automaton".

These latter machines had divided knives in the cutting cylinder to throw the grass into the centre of the grassbox, and were fitted with ribbed rollers. In 1895, the first "Lion" mowers were sent out. It is interesting to note that the "Lion" and the "Patent Chain" and "Patent Gear Automaton" remained current until about 1930 - many are still in use.

During this period attention was being given to the provision of some motive power for lawn mowers and, in 1882, Mr R. Kirkham took the first step when he brought out a combination of a lawn mower and a tricycle, the driver sitting on the seat and pedalling the machine up and down.

This invention, however, had no particular success.

In 1893, Mr Sumner patented a steam driven lawn mower which was made for some years by the Leyland company.

A good number were made and were very successful, one working for many years at Wolverstone Park, near Ipswich.

The drawback of this type of mower was the weight (1½ tons) and the trouble on inclines and in turning round flower beds; it also required much attention from the operator.

In this, the first power driven mower, the operator walked behind it.

Alexander Shanks of Arbroath also produced a ride-on steam driven lawn mower/roller for the Season 1900 and an extract from their sales leaflet reads:

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"ALEXANDER SHANKS & SON, LIMITED, have long believed that the introduction of an efficient Lawn Mower worked by steam power would be of the greatest service for CRICKET GROUNDS, LARGE LAWNS, PUBLIC PARKS, &c.; and they have now pleasure in offering a Machine of that description, which will be found satisfactory in all respects. Besides being more economical in working, the STEAM MOWER has other distinct advantages over the ordinary Horse Machine, for it produces greater effect in rolling, and there is total absence of marks from the horses feet. These are points of importance which all groundsmen and gardeners will appreciate, and which will make the STEAM MOWER specially welcome in the wet season.

The present Machine is the result of a long series of experiments, extending over a period of two years. During that time it has been tested and criticised by gentlemen of great practical experience in the laying out and keeping of gardens and other grounds, amongst whom may be mentioned: the late Mr DUNN, of Dalkeith Palace gardens; Mr JORDAN, Superintendent of Regent's Park; and Mr APTED, Groundsman of the Surrey County Cricket Club at Kennington Oval. The suggestions of these and other experts have been embodied in the construction of the Machine, which has also been subjected to repeated trials; and ALEXANDER SHANKS & SON, Limited, are now able to offer a STEAM MOWER which they can recommend as thoroughly satisfactory."

The advent of the petrol engine offered the means of producing a lighter, easily operated and reliable power mower. The idea was first developed in 1900 by the late Mr James Edward Ransome, who took out a patent in 1902, when the first petrol driven lawn mowers were placed on the market by his company, Ransomes, Sims & Jefferies Ltd.

The first machine was sold to Mr Prescott Westcar, of Strode Park, Herne Bay, and the second to Cadbury Bros, Ltd. of Bournville, for their sports ground. Both of these worked successfully for many years. The machines were 42" wide and had magneto ignition, although at that time battery and coil ignition was in general use, the magneto gaining full popularity later on.

Since their first introduction, smaller and lighter machines have been produced and today there are several power mowers on the market as small as 12" cut. But these did not come into use until the late 20's and early 30's.

In 1914 the Worthington Mower Company took out a patent for gang mowers, consisting of a number of large side wheel units (usually 30" cut), ganged together with frames to give total cutting widths of up to 20 feet and more, the mowers being driven by a tractor. Ransomes, Sims & Jefferies commenced the manufacture of these machines, under licence in 1921, and today they form a very important method of grass cutting.

In 1919 the first electrically driven motors for professional use



Michael Murray, Atco's Managing Director, presents trophies to Chris Clarke (left) and Robert Fulford at the conclusion of this year's Atco British Open Croquet Championships. Chris and Robert won the Open Doubles Championship, and then competed against each other in the Singles final, which Fulford won by 3 games to 1.

were made by Scott-Bonnar Ltd, of Adelaide in Australia, and Ransomes produced electric mowers a year or two later. Large electric mowers were widely used then and in some parts of the world even today, particularly on Bowling Greens, for which they are eminently suitable.

In the 1921 season Charles H Pugh Ltd of Tilton Road, Birmingham, pioneered the small petrol mower called ATCO for the domestic lawn. They were not always lawn mower manufacturers. Charles H Pugh Ltd was officially founded as long ago as 1865 when it was a wholesale Jewellery-cum-iron-mongery business at Rotherham in Yorkshire; as unlikely a combination of business activities as you could hope to find. Suffice to say that in the ensuing years the iron-mongery side of the business gained impetus and led finally to the exclusion of the jewellery business.

However, it was in 1919 that Charles H Pugh Limited first became interested in lawn mower manufacture and then by sheer chance. For it was in that year that the then Managing Director of the Company, Mr George Bull, commissioned the Works to in-

stall a petrol engine in the donkey-drawn mowing machine used in his garden in Solihull, Warwickshire, the previous form of motive power having come to the end of its mortal tether! From such a beginning emerged the germ of an idea which was soon to prove an historic milestone in the future of the company and the lives of its employees.

So it was, in 1921, that the first 900 22" open-frame Atco fully powered mowers were launched on the market. It is interesting to recall that ATCO No 1 was de-

work of service branches which had been instituted as far back as 1922.

The origin of the Atco name is worth recording. It was a combination of the first and last two letters of the Atlas Chain Co, one of the many firms acquired by the company over the years.

In recent years, much work has been done in the development of mowers for special purposes, including the "Overgreen Mower", for cutting golf greens. This consists of a two-wheel tractor running on very low pressure pneumatic tyres, and pulling three 16" cutting units of the hand mower type, specially designed for fine close cutting. The "Overgreen" mower was originally a Worthington patent and was taken up by Ransomes in 1934, since when it has enjoyed increasing popularity.

Other grass cutting problems have been dealt with as they arose, including special heavy duty gang mowers for airfield cutting and special machines for cutting road-side verges. The period between the wars saw the advent of many new firms to the field of lawn mower manufacture and many new types were developed.

In addition to those mentioned above, mention should be made here of the cutter bar machines, based on the field mower type of cutters, but with their own engines, and also the Rotoscythe, where the cutting is done by blades rotating in a horizontal plane.

In 1920 a firm called Qualcast, sited in Derby, started diversifying and amongst the new products they introduced a range of hand propelled cylinder roller type and side wheel mowers. Due to their growing skills in mass production techniques they soon became a major supplier to the UK and other world markets.

In 1970 Qualcast produced their most widely used electric power mower, called Concorde. It was a 12" cylinder model which for over 11 years withstood all competition in the UK domestic market - and by 1981 some 1,750,000 were sold.

In 1938 they acquired Follows & Bate and to widen their platform further they bought out the Kaufmann group of companies in 1957, which included Suffolk Iron Foundry (1920) Ltd, at Stowmarket, famous for their Colt and Punch power ranges. In 1965 they added the Atco range of mowers to their group's activities, making Qualcast the largest lawn mower group in Europe, and possibly the world as well.

Today, a very wide range of mowers is available, including types suitable for almost every conceivable job of grass cutting.

Material for this article has been supplied by Atco Ltd, sponsors of the British Open Croquet Championships.