

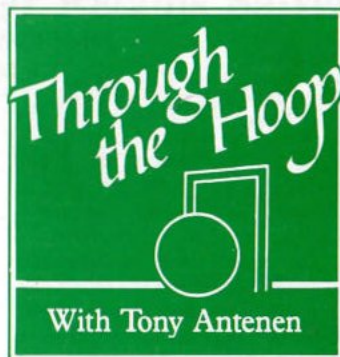
## COMMENT

### ● Acknowledgements and Seasonal Greetings from the Secretary – and Suggestions for New Year's Resolutions.....

With Tony Antenen

By the time this edition of "Croquet" drops through your door Christmas will have come and gone. I hope it was happy, peaceful and meaningful in an age of ever increasing commercialism of one of the two most important dates in the Christian calendar.

Looking back over my first year as your Secretary I am prompted to express thanks to numerous members and friends in the croquet fraternity. Those club officials who have been prompt with the payment of their registration fees and tournament levies; individual members who either arranged early or prompt payment of their subscriptions or who responded without further delay to my reminder; to some twenty clubs who made me welcome and gave me the opportunity to meet their members and strengthen my connections at the grass roots of the game including those who offered overnight accommodation which enabled me to "spread the net" and visit several clubs in a particular area. A special mention (at the risk of causing him acute embarrassment) to Duncan Hector of Inter County Office Furniture at Letchworth for the generous gift of a brace of "Triumph Superior" filing cabinets which not



only fulfil a pressing need but enhance the look of the CA Office.

Finally, to all those whose friendship, encouragement and help has constituted a major factor on my first, stumbling year, my warmest thanks to a seemingly endless list of names.

I close with the following suggestions for New Year's resolutions. Prompt payment of membership subscriptions, club registration fees, tournament entry fees, levies, etc, which will endear you to your Secretary and assuredly guarantee you a place in those Elysian croquet courts that await us all!

May 1992 be all that you could wish against a background of endless sunny days and the ball speeding fast and true always.

### A Four Lawn Future For the Sidmouth Club

From Philip Derryhouse

Records show that the last Open Association Croquet Tournament in Sidmouth was held in 1956.

Since that date local interest in the game appeared to dwindle to the extent that in the early 1960's the Sidmouth Cricket, Tennis, Croquet and Hockey Club boasted one full size lawn where Association Croquet had been played since the latter part of the 19th century.

By 1970 interest in the game started to grow rapidly, so three unused tennis courts were converted into two full size croquet lawns.

This enabled the local club management to embark on ambitious recruiting campaigns which resulted in the club being awarded the Apps/Heley Award in 1973.

With the facility of three lawns, all professionally maintained to a high playing standard, the club continued to grow and by the early 1980's there was a healthy waiting list for membership.

To cater for a growing interest in Association Croquet, two rather poor quality tennis courts were pressed into use for training purposes, as two half size lawns.

It soon became obvious that if this uneven area of turf was professionally levelled and relaid the club would be able to promote full scale four lawn play, offering extended tournaments from time to time.

The overall project was fully costed by a local firm, experienced in this specialised class of work, who

undertook to carry out all the work for the sum of £4,700. Before work commenced, a detailed report was submitted to the C.A. enquiring if they were in a position to contribute any financial assistance.

The Management Committee of the Club were delighted to learn that they could expect a grant of £500 plus an interest free loan of £500, re-payable in three years, from the newly established Four Lawn Fund.

In the light of this practical support, and an undertaking by the Croquet Sub Committee to increase membership by 20%, authorisation was given in the Autumn of 1990 for the work to commence.

A detailed account of progress of the work through the winter and early spring of 1991 would make a whole story in itself; let me suffice to say therefore, that ultimate success was achieved to the extent of the fourth lawn coming into play during the month of July.

When the season opens in 1992 members will enjoy unlimited play on four first class lawns.

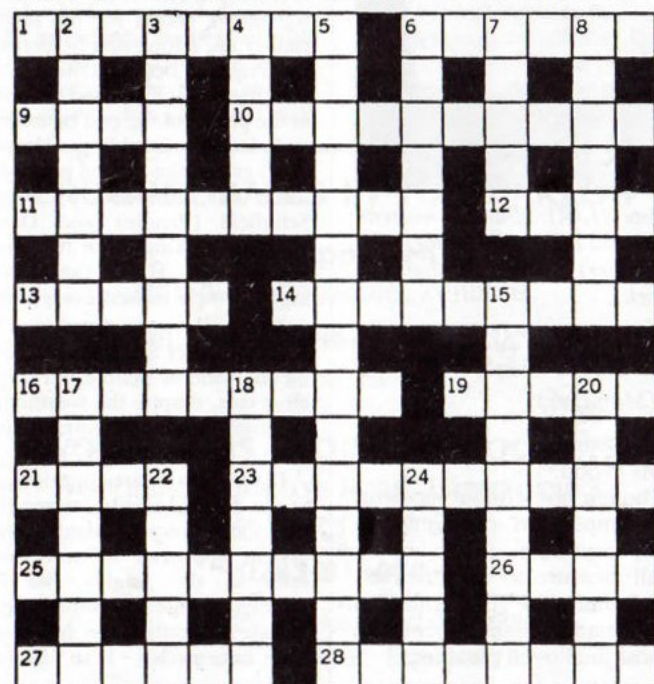
A five day handicap tournament is advertised for June 1st-5th 1992, coupled with a varied programme of interesting club events throughout the season.

More new members will be trained and by the end of the 1992 season, membership will have reached its full complement, with the back up of a waiting list for 1993.

### CROSSWORD by "Crofter" No 5

(Chambers 1988 is highly recommended)

See Page 22 for information about the Crofter Crossword.



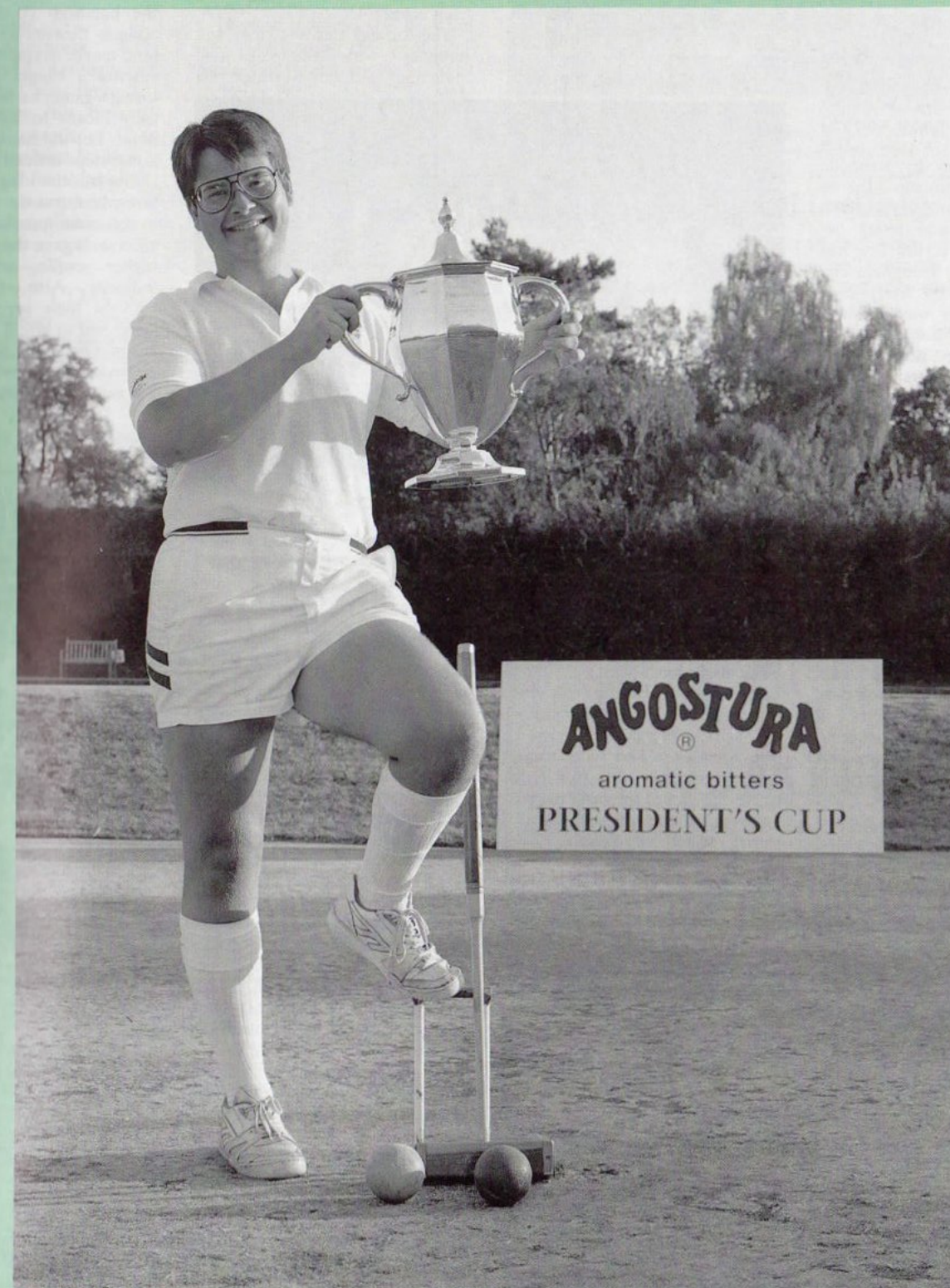
## ACROSS

- Inflowing river makes a very loud tune after rippling round lake. (8)
- Often associated with high and power to the unknown. (6)
- The first narrow beam to carry things – three perhaps? (4)
- Outdoor area for games and vegetables next to the hospital room? (10)
- When I stalk the ball thus they all sit on edge! (10)
- (and 21 across). Photostats not at all developed technique for checking progress. (4,4)
- Type of roll seen at the Adriatic seaside? (5)
- Idlers led reform for Tull's legacy. (4-5)
- A cool smoker has wiretap with both ends of phone re-connected. (5-4)
- Point developed to secure one's advance upward. (5)
- See 12 across.
- A coppice with one dubbed is cleaned up to provide such a view. (10)
- Dirty linen wasn't displayed in this area of fair play? (6-4)
- Topless types – could be found after tea-time! (4)
- These may need mending to restore confidence – of receivers? (6)
- Greeting given by Scottish midwife when joining English party? (3,3,2)

## DOWN

- Foreign office operation about to dampen a lock of hair. (7)
- Act easily but in a wily manner – just what your opponent does! (4,1,4)
- The racing crew a small island heard. (5)
- A way of getting to a hoop needs half a carcass of a very quiet fish! (3,4,8)
- My French old penny catches the eye of someone said to be rich. (7)
- Part of lady's wardrobe needing own sliding fitment. (5)
- All marines in hard labour show disquiet. (7)
- The study necessary before getting a nose job? (9)
- A kiss (Greek fashion) to the first woman to win. (7)
- Pope's adherents should be religious in past with the heart of Moses. (7)
- It's not included – so order it Edward! (7)
- The keynote for giving vigour? (5)
- Without latin Welsh strength depends upon it. (5)

# CROQUET



Cheltenham: 5-6 October

# THE CA FINALS WEEKEND

## Who Would Be A Manager?

From Don Gaunt

An innovation this year was to hold a "CA Weekend" at which several of the National finals were played, thus avoiding the difficulty of finding venues for the national club team tournaments at the last minute.

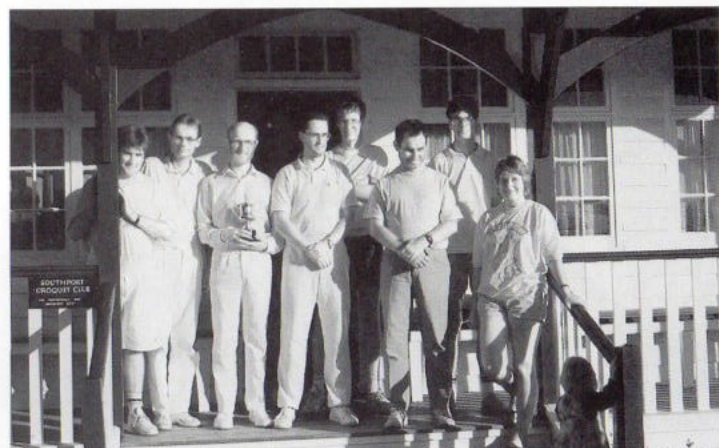
Cheltenham was chosen as the venue and as manager, I was there, bright and early - well early anyway! No tournament worth its salt starts without a panic. This was duly supplied by someone telling me that there was a fire on the main road into Cheltenham and everything was being delayed. Fortunately, the fire had no effect and the Longman cup semi-finalists and the Mary Rose finalists got under way within a reasonable time - just as the rain started. It bucketed down!

Luckily for the matches, Cheltenham lawns can absorb a lot of water without flooding. Luckily for me, I didn't have to play in it! At midday, Radio Gloucester outside broadcast unit turned up, amazed that we were actually playing. They then amazed me by taking a live interview. I was, of course, totally cool - and by the end, totally soaked. Around 12.30, Mother nature decided that she was wasting her time trying to stop play and stopped the rain instead. She did manage a minor triumph, soaking my order of play board, making it unreadable.

Due to a hiccup on the catering front, the caterer turned up and heated up 20 chicken pieces for hot lunches. Unfortunately I had told everyone to bring packed lunches! The foul weather turned into my friend because many people were so cold they took the hot meal anyway, and after some quick sales talk by me, 19 out of the 20 meals were sold.

Meanwhile, play was in progress. Despite the rain, play was quite speedy and results were

soon coming in. I find blow by blow reports boring, so there are none in this report. The results are given separately. The afternoons play took place under much better conditions, and the sun even came out for a while. In the early evening my wife presented the Mary Rose to the victorious



Leicester Captain John Riddington holds the Short Croquet Team Event Trophy after the final against Pendle, played at Southport.

Parkstone team and we all shared in the champagne brought by them. Wrest Park and Pendle went off to prepare for the next day's final.

### Snippets from the day.

Leicester v. Pendle, doubles match, time called. John Riddington (Leicester) in final turn of time, misses a two yard roquet near 5 and runs 4-back (his hoop) to tie the game. In going back to mother, he over-hits and leaves a short roquet for Pendle. Alan Siddle hits this, but misses the next short roquet allowing Dave White to run rover and win plus one on time (that phrase seems familiar!)

Hurlingham v. Parkstone. In a morning match, Bob Bailey wins + 2 for Parkstone by doing a roll

shot peg-out from corner 2, leaving his ball 1 yard from the peg, for an easy finish. In the afternoon, Les Butler wins for Parkstone, this time by hitting the peg from corner 4.

The Sunday dawned clear and sunny as I, with the help of David Maugham and Ian Burrige, set

banditry going on - one does not expect to see an over-10 player doing 8 hoops plus single peel plus technical adjustment for the peg-out, all without a bisque! Perhaps the handicap committee should address themselves to this problem, maybe saying that if a player reaches a trigger point without losing a game, he or she automatically moves to the next trigger point, i.e. the handicap drops by a two steps instead of one.

Overall, the idea of staging the three finals on the same day and at the same location was a great success. It gave the events a much higher profile, and had more publicity. Also, several teams brought their supporters; Parkstone had to hire a bus for theirs! I would be happy to see the same next year, and perhaps we could get national publicity as well.

### RESULTS

#### LONGMAN CUP

##### Semi-finals:

**High Wycombe 0: Wrest Park 5**  
(High Wycombe names first)  
Peter Mayers (10) & Sandra Shepherd (14) lost to Hugh Williams (5) & Paul Sharrock (11) -22; Geoff Youd (9) & Roger Jackman (5) lost to Mark Firth (9) & John Bevington (5) -22; Sandra Shepherd (14) lost to Paul Sharrock (11) -6; Peter Mayers (10) lost to Mark Firth (9) -3(T); Geoff Youd (9) & Roger Jackman (5) lost to Hugh Williams (5) & John Bevington (5) +6

##### Leicester 1: Pendle 4

(Leicester names first)  
Richard Whiting (11) & Richard White (4½) lost to David Roe (9) & James Coleman (13) -16; David White (3½) & John Riddington (18) beat David Gillot (7½) & Alan Siddall (17) +10(T); Richard Whiting (11) lost to James Coleman (13) -20; John Riddington (18) lost to Alan Siddall (17) -6; David White (3½) & Richard White (4½) lost to David Gillot (7½) & David Roe (9) -2.

##### Final

**High Wycombe 1: Pendle 4**  
(High Wycombe names first)  
Hugh Williams (5) & Paul Sharrock (11) lost to David Gillot (7½) & Alan Siddall (16) -10; Mark Firth (9) & John Bevington (5) lost to David Roe (9) & James Coleman (13) -18; Hugh Williams (5) & John Bevington (5) beat David Roe (9) & David Gillot +7; Paul Sharrock (11) lost to Alan Siddall (16) -16; Mark Firth (9) lost to James Coleman (13) -20.

##### MARY ROSE

##### Final

**Hurlingham 3: Parkstone 4**  
(Hurlingham names first)  
Paul Torrington & Tom Brown lost to David Harrison-Wood & Bob Bailey -2; Bob Stephens lost to Strat Liddiard -19; Mark Strachen beat +8; Mark Strachen lost to Strat Liddiard -16; Tom Brown beat Bob Bailey +17; Bob Stephens lost to Les Butler -12; Dave Torrington beat David Harrison-Wood +10.

##### INTER-CLUB

##### Final

**Southport 3: Colchester 4**  
(Southport names first)  
Chris Haslam & Dan McCormick lost to Chris Clarke & Ian Burrige -3; Adrian Saurin beat Michael Heap +22; Andrew Saurin beat Duncan Reeve +4(T); Dan McCormick beat Chris Clarke +11(T); Chris Haslam lost to Ian Burrige -17; Andrew Saurin lost to Michael Heap -17(T); Adrian Saurin lost to Duncan Reeve -11.

the hoops for the inter-club final. Having told Chris Clarke that I wouldn't start the match at a later time, I expected aggro when Colchester arrived, but it was all smiles - in fact they were early! Both teams, except for Colchester's Michael Heap, consisted of young players with their customary easy-going and tolerant approach to the game!

The morning saw little of note apart from a competent win by A.T. Saurin against a tentative Heap, while A.J. Saurin and Reeve showed that anything is possible by going to time. In the afternoon McCormick had a TP against Clarke and with Burrige and Reeve winning their games we were left with an exciting one-match-to-go finish with Heap against A.J. Saurin. At 4-back and first each, Heap hit the all-or-nothing shot and finished with a triple which was good but had a few nervous moments in it.

The Longman final had rather less drama since Pendle, after a slow start, eventually won both morning games, leaving them to get just one out of the remaining three. This they achieved by about 5 o'clock, nicely timing their win to the finish of the Inter-club. This allowed Alan Oldham, on behalf of the CA, to present both prizes at the same time.

There seemed to be a touch of

## Kings Edward's, Birmingham win Royal Bank's Schools Handicap Final

The final of the Royal Bank of Scotland's National Schools Handicap Event was held at Bowdon on Wednesday, 9th October.

Four schools took part, and the semi-finals, held in the morning, saw King Edwards beat Nailsea 3-0 and Ardingly win a tight match against Stowe by 2-1. In this latter match, all three games were decided by less than 2 points.

In the afternoon, King Edwards played Ardingly for the Trophy and beat them 2-1, with the games this time all being won by margins of 12 to 15 points. Stowe beat Nailsea 3-0 in the play-off for third place, but Nailsea's young team will have plenty of opportunities to succeed in years to come.

The Quaiich was presented to King Edwards by The Royal Bank's Gael Pollitt after the match, together with individual medals provided by the Bank.

Rounding off the proceedings, Chris Hudson emphasised how much the Royal Bank's sponsorship had encouraged schools to take up croquet, and how much their help was appreciated.

He also thanked the Bowdon Club for hosting the final once again, and gave special thanks to Peter Walker for all his sterling help in feeding the players - no small task!

Next year, this year's four finalists will all have an automatic place amongst the 16 schools competing in the Regional Finals.



Debbie Cornelius in play against Robert Fulford in YTV's "Speed Croquet" programme at Doncaster. At this stage, she had 9 minutes 8 seconds left, with the score at 6-1 in her favour, but Robert pulled back to win.

## Nominations Needed for Under-21 Squads

Because of difficulties in raising an under-18 squad last year, the CA has decided to run two under-21 squads in the coming season. Nominations for places in the second squad are now requested from any club or individual.

Nominated players should have single figure handicaps and be available for a two-day mid-week squad meeting. Nominations should be made either to the CA Secretary or to Bill Lamb, Chairman of the Coaching Committee.

## COACHING COURSES

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

The coaching fees have been held at last season's level. All players must be members of the CA.

Courses will be held this season at the following venues on the dates given: Surbiton 11/12 April; Budleigh Salterton 3/4 May; Southport 30/31 May. The course fee is £20.00 + £3.50 VAT

**Grade III (Advanced)** - This course is intended for players in the handicap range from 6 downwards. It deals exclusively with the tactics and technique of advanced play including the triple peel.

The course will be held at:

Nottingham 4/5 July

The course fee is £25.00 + £4.38 VAT.

The new CA Coaching Manual is based upon the CA courses and gives considerably more detail. It is available from the CA Office at a price of £10.00 + 50p p&p.

Applications for the above courses should be made as early as possible to: Bill Lamb, 5 Bondyke Close, Cottingham, N. Humberside, HU15 5ND.

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

Enclose an SAE and cheque for the appropriate amount, payable to "The Croquet Association".

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

## NOMINATIONS FOR COUNCIL

Anyone who wishes to stand for election to Council should note that nominations have to reach Tony Antenen at the CA Office before 1st February, 1992.

Nominations should be proposed and seconded by Associate Members of the CA. Candidates are invited to submit not more than 200 words stating brief biographical details and their objectives in standing for Council.

## APPS & STEEL AWARDS

Club nominations for the most improved man and lady player should reach Tony Antenen before the end of February.

## APPS-HELEY & TOWNSEND AWARDS

Nominations for the most progressive club are invited. The Apps-Heley Award is open to clubs more than 3 years old; the Townsend Award for clubs younger than this. Details from Tony Antenen.

Don't be shy about nominating your own club if you feel you deserve an award!

## HERE'S ONE FOR A RAINY DAY



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Mrs K. Longman died on 23rd October 1991. An appreciation will appear in our next issue.

# CROQUET

## John Walters is New Editor

Regretfully, this is the last issue I shall produce as Editor. After some 6 years and 40 issues, I am handing over the job to John Walters to give myself more time to concentrate on other development work for the CA.

John runs his own design and publishing company. As World Champion, and someone who is very much aware of all that goes on in the croquet world, he is uniquely qualified to take over.

For me, editing "Croquet" has been a most enjoyable task, and to all those who have provided reports, results, articles, photographs, cartoons, reviews and other material during my time as Editor, my heartfelt thanks.

Thank you also to those who have written to comment on particular aspects of the magazine. Constructive criticism is a great help to an Editor (as is a little bit of encouragement every now and then!), so please keep writing in. I

hope you will have much to praise during John's term of office.

The past two months have seen several important developments for the CA. The inaugural Federation Conference was very successful and worthwhile (see report below). Yorkshire Television have filmed Speed Croquet, and are currently editing a one-hour programme (transmission details will be advertised in the magazine as soon as they are known). Angostura Bitters are to sponsor next year's President's Cup. Council is considering alterations to the CA Rules to enable Federations to elect their own nominees to Council.

Meanwhile, Croquet looks poised for further growth, and our main task in 1992 will be to increase membership of the Association so that we can properly support the administration the game now requires.

CHRIS HUDSON.

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## CROQUET

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

#### Publication Details

"Croquet" is published on the first day of every second month. Copy should reach the Editor on the 20th of the month, two months before the month of issue (i.e. on 20th May for the issue to be published on 1st July).

#### 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:

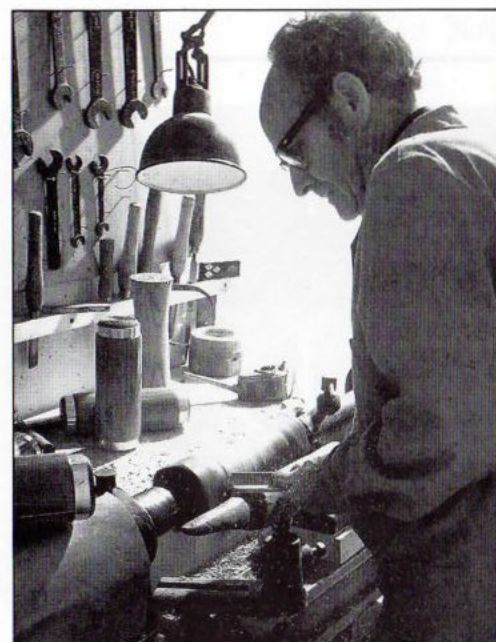
Mrs Adler, Peter Alvey, Angostura Bitters Ltd, Vincent Camroux, John Eardley-Simpson, Tony Garner, Ray Hall, Chris Hudson, Beryl Irwin, Syd Jones, Deborah Latham, Ian McDiarmid, Gary Norman, John Riddington, Ray Stevens, and Liz Taylor-Webb.

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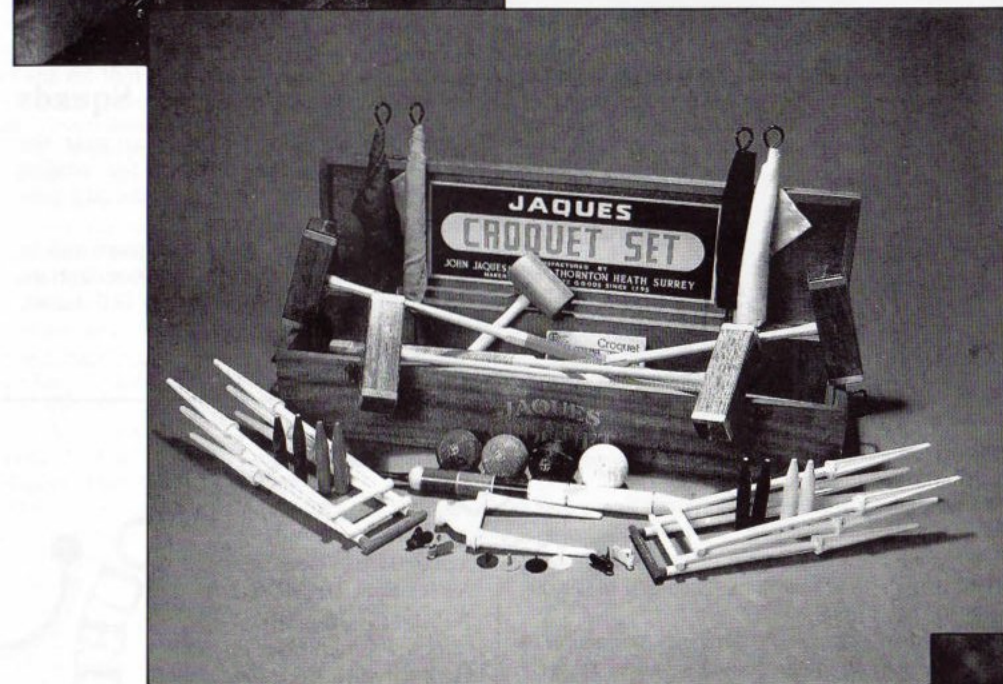
Chris Clarke, 1991 "President's Cup" winner.

#### Editorial Team

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Coaching ..... Bill Lamb  
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Pictures ..... John Walters  
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The Rowheath Centre Pavilion at Bourneville, Birmingham, where this year's inaugural Federation Conference was held.

## A Most Successful Inaugural Federation Conference

From Syd Jones

Twenty-five Federation representatives met at the Rowheath Centre on Sunday 17th November to attend the first ever Federation Conference. Every Federation (except for Yorkshire & Humberside) was represented at the meeting. The Conference was chaired by Stephen Mulliner, Chairman of the Croquet Association.

There was a lot of enthusiasm with a very useful exchange and development of ideas. Strong support was expressed for Federation representation on Council, and those who attended the Conference were keen to make it a regular annual event.

Amongst the decisions reached were the following:

1. The CA's Forward Plan for 1991-1994 outlines the responsibilities of Federations for

particular activities in their Regions. These were confirmed as still being the objectives of the Federations.

2. It was agreed that Council should be asked to accept Federation representation on Council.

3. It was agreed to consolidate the Federation constitutions as far as possible.

4. It was agreed that funding should come from the base of the structure, with federation and affiliate fees at a more realistic level.

5. It was agreed that the Federation Conference should become an annual event, and it was hoped that Federations would hold their own Regional Club Conferences, perhaps combined with their Federation AGMs.

"Croquet" and "Croquet News" are published by The Croquet Association, The Hurlingham Club, Ranelagh Gardens, London SW6 3PR. Tel: 071-736-3148.

Printed by Echo Press, Echo House, Jubilee Drive, Belton Park, Loughborough, Leics., LE11 0XS. Tel: 0509 239882.

## Wrest Park: 5-7 July

## Phil Cordingley Signs Off in Style

From John Wheeler

In a well run tournament there are few incidents which draw the attention of the player/reporter. In addition he is so busy attending to his own eight games that he has very little time to observe detailed play in others excepting, perhaps, the game with which he is double-banked.

There are indicators however; drama is usually preceded by a warning cry, e.g., "Feet!", cries such as "Stupid prat!" are usually uttered by players talking to themselves, but not quite sotto voce; play out of the ordinary is accompanied by an expectant hush among the usually chatty spectators.

So far as playing conditions were concerned each day was hot and sunny so that shade was sought as soon as one became the out-player.

In contrast to last year the lawns might be described as kind but the hoops were decidedly unkind. They had been set in fresh ground and the assistant groundsman and his aide, the club chairman, had been so keen in their quest to counteract sloppy play that they may have erred by setting the hoops too tight.

The ROT and his assistant referees were called on several times to reset hoops where slightly oval balls were found to have jammed. This weekend was also one of those chosen to try out the system for automatic handicap adjustment after advanced play.

The tournament was run in two sections, with players in the upper block having handicaps less than three. The management of this block was affected by the late withdrawal of "bad back Bogle" and the temporary absence of Brian Hallam.

After the first round of games, Roy Weaver was promoted from the lower block, there was a new draw, and the block played as a Swiss. The reinstatement of Brian caused an imbalance once more but the matter was resolved by players with byes playing non-counting, inter-block, friendlies.

Phil Cordingley, playing in what is likely to be his last tournament in the UK for some

while, won the top block. It was not won easily, for three of his wins were by small, single figures. His match with Brian Hallam could so easily have gone the other way. With Phil on four back and peg and his own clips on four back and one, Brian almost completed a triple. At rover he needed to peel yellow from about a yard. Yellow stuck in the jaws but was knocked through by red following up which also stopped in the jaws but too close to yellow for a jump shot. Brian roqueted yellow, croqueted it near to the peg and rushed blue, also for the peg, into a position so that he could cannon yellow onto the peg. The manoeuvre failed, Brian pegged out red leaving Phil an easy roquet and a subsequent lay up for four back. Brian just missed the peg but hit four back and that, as they say, was that, plus one to Phil.

My informant tells me that the bystanders would have pegged out Phil's blue and their own red rather than attempt the combination peg out. What do you think?

Phil's other narrow wins were +3 on time to beat that tough player Tom Anderson and +2 against Paul Smith. When Paul and Tom played each other, they had a nail biting finish. With time about to be called Paul pegged out one of his balls and one of Tom's. Tom wanting four back took position, Paul took position by the peg. Tom ran his hoop and then hit the ball waiting at the peg. Time was called, so Tom took off to penultimate and deliberated for some time before running the hoop by very little so as to avoid a possible hampered shot while trying to obtain a forward rush to rover. The match ended when, in spite of having a clear shot, Tom missed.

In one of Paul's games he responded to the cry of feet! by quick wittedly using his mallet to vault into the air but to no avail for the double-banker's ball hit Paul's mallet head.

The promotee, Roy Weaver, had a tough time and lost all his games so was awarded the usual banana. Local man Howard Bottomley, our catering officer,

acquitted himself well winning five games out of seven played.

Near neighbour, Duncan Hector, showed great determination losing only to Phil and Howard.

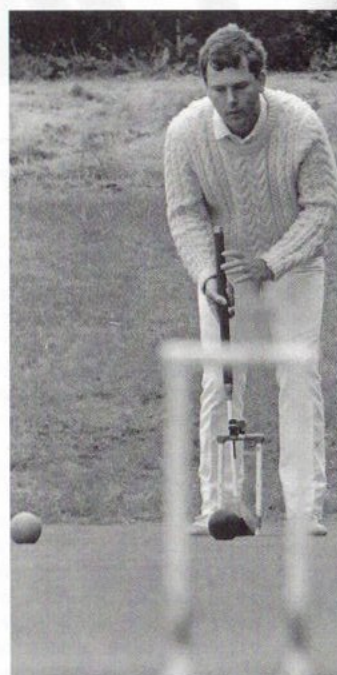
In the lower block the manager did his best to boost the rating of his opponents in his "once a year tournament" but refused to lose to a lady, Heather Pritchard. He also perked up a bit when he played Mike Hammelev, losing by 2 on time. Mike showed himself to be a player motivated by a strong desire to win the block and this must have roused Barry.

The block winner, Cliff Jones, and John Ruddock were the only players to avoid the stigma of having games go to time. In his short career Cliff has learned to play positively and quickly which gives his opponents almost as much pleasure as he gets from his games. Cliff is seeking the perfect mallet and tries out at least two new models per tournament, or so it seems. Mallets notwithstanding Cliff lost only to Judy Anderson. You see, Cliff is a gentleman after all.

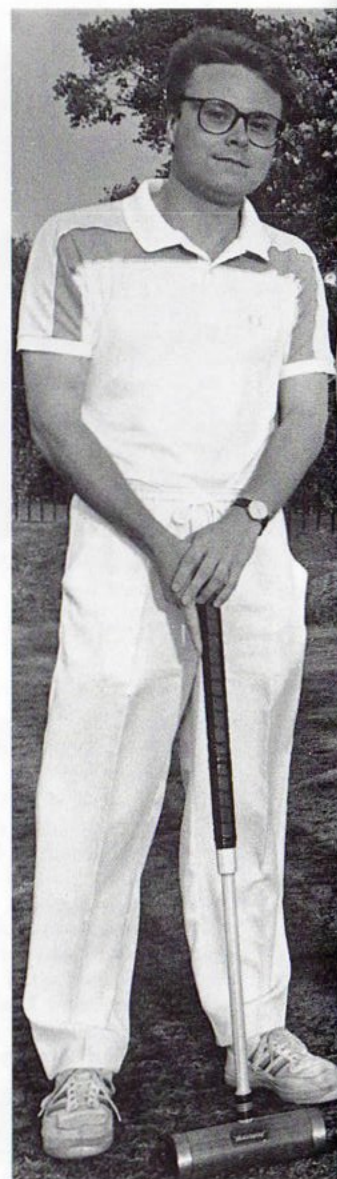
Welsh international, Vic Rees, made a rare appearance in a weekend tournament on Friday as part of the veteran Rees/Ward team. But surely that cap emblazoned with the Welsh dragon is not an official issue.

The social side warrants a comment or two. As usual the catering was excellent with "A" class stewardry by Enid, Pauline and the Audsleys senior. There were fish and chips, cheap beer and snooker in the Wrest Park Social Centre on Friday evening and an al fresco dinner at The Star and Garter on Saturday when one of the highlights of the evening was the sighting of a tawny owl perched on a yew tree in the neighbouring churchyard.

At prize-giving, when engraved glass tankards were presented to block winners, Phil spoke for the visitors and paid Wrest Park a great compliment by saying that he could not have wished to end his playing days in Britain at a better place.



Phil Cordingley signs off with a flourish at Wrest Park.



David Carpenter (S. Derbyshire C.C.) who won his CA Silver Award at Nottingham.

## Surbiton: 11-14 July

## Challenge and Gilbey Tournament Revived

From Derek Caporn

Last held in 1985, the Challenge & Gilbey tournament was revived this year at Surbiton and attracted 26 players, ranging in Handicaps from -1 to +17.

The tournament opened on Thursday with 2 rounds of 'The Gilbey' - a handicap event X + Y. The semi-finals were played on the Saturday in the middle of the 'Challenge', an advanced event for players in 4 different classes which started on the Friday.

This caused considerable problems for the manager who was trying to play one of his games whilst wrestling with the difficulties. Fortunately his assistant,

Julian Straw, came to the rescue and all was resolved, except that the manager lost his game!

All trophies were strongly contested. George Noble won the "Roehampton Cup", with 4 wins out of 5 John Greenwood Ian Bond and Alan Magee (who completed a triple) were joint runners-up with 3 wins, Martin Haggerston had 2 and Mick Tompkinson won the wooden spoon!

The 'Reckitt Cup' was won by Julian Straw with 5 wins out of 6, the joint runners-up were Edward Dymock and Julian Sheraton-Davies. Bob Fewtrell won 3

games, Alex Thomas and Derek Caporn 2, and Geoffrey Yonge 1.

The 'Trevor Williams Cup' produced a triple tie of 5 wins out of 6 by Chris Osmond, Robin Noble (son of George) and Pauline Healy. As it was then 6pm and Robin had to play the final of the 'Gilbey', the manager decided on a "shoot out". Pauline went first and hit the peg once in 4 shots, Robin followed with a 'white-wash' and then Chris hit the peg with her second and last shots to win the cup. Val Tomkinson won 3 games, Ian McDiarmid, Faith Fewtrell and Win Jones one.

The 'Stevenson Cup' was won by Ray Benson, a 14 bisquer, who won 4 out of 5 games. Runner-up was a 17 bisquer young Robert Stear with little experience of full size lawns - a remarkable achievement - also with 4 wins but he lost to Ray. Derek Powell, an 11, had 3 wins, Eileen Magee, a 12, had 2 wins, Linda Sheraton-Davies, a 16, had 1 win and gallant Kathleen Yonge almost won 2.

As darkness fell on the Sunday evening, Bob Fewtrell triumphed over Robin Noble + 5. Bob had pegged out Robin who had rashly gone to the peg having used up all his bisques whilst his other ball was only on hoop 4. With Bob for peg and 3 back, nonetheless, Robin hit in three times and ultimately reached 3 back where he stuck and that was the end!

The combination of a handicap and open event in 4 classes over 4 days is a difficult one to manage. It wants much thought to get the programme right.

This tournament is perhaps more suitable as a week's event with a handicap doubles added.

We hope now that it has been revived that it will grow from strength to strength.

The silver Challenge Trophies are all lovely cups, a pleasure to own even if only for a year.

Our grateful thanks go to our caterer, Hazel Kittermaster who presented the prizes and to Adeine Phillips, her assistant.

## Nottingham: 13-14 July

## David Carpenter wins Silver at Nottingham

From Graham Fowler

Saturday afternoon saw David Carpenter, who had just beaten Richard White by 25 on lawn 2, promptly despatched to ...lawn 2. Whereupon David continued in the same form against Graham Fowler, reaching peg and peg with 4 bisques remaining - at which point David walked off the lawn. His explanation was that in concentrating on completing the 12 hoop break (so earning his silver award, a feat repeated by Richard White) with the second ball he had forgotten all about the bisques. However Graham wondered if the short - but very HEAVY - downpour might have played a part. Subsequently, having taken one hoop Graham left the lawn - and the rain - to David.

Playing against Alan Tunbridge, Norman Bircumshaw ran hoop one with his first ball. Alan hit and left a very tempting tice. Norman used the tice to take his second ball through hoop one, failed to roquet the ball near hoop two, took a bisque, missed, took another one, missed, took another one, hit and went round to hoop 4; there he took one more bisque before allowing Alan to play the fourth ball onto the lawn. If Norman's use of bisques was somewhat profligate, Celia Bircumshaw excelled him. After two victories Celia found herself pitted against Peter Death: she took 5, 8 or 11 bisques to make hoop one - estimates vary. However, whereas Norman won his game, Celia lost hers.

Sunday saw what were effectively semi-finals between those with 3 wins: John Filsak had breezed through his first three games but was blown away (+22) by David Carpenter. Graham Fowler, despite some weak moments - including

playing with an opponent ball after all his bisques had gone - finally overcame Lawrence Whittaker, but in a way that served only to show how misleading a score of +26 can be.

As this meant that David Carpenter and Graham Fowler met again in the final. David was a little more edgy this time: he used all his bisques in reaching 1-back with the second ball. However he held the break together to win by one more hoop than on Saturday.

This really did turn out to be David's weekend: he won all his matches by large margins. Much of the weekend was taken up with exploring what to do about his handicap.

On the automatic system he would move from 15 to 14, but was there enough evidence to move David by 3 further points. Overall handicappers felt not, although they would have moved him to 12 willingly (and would have done so last year). Does this suggest rapid improvers should be dealt with more flexibly than the new regulations allow?

The weekend saw: very good weather (as is usual for Nottingham) - apart from the short aberration on Saturday; lawns that continue to deserve their superb reputation; marked improvements in the food, as well as the return - after a short absence - of the bar.

If David Carpenter had any rival for person of the tournament then it must have been Gordon Hopewell, who was apparently making his debut as manager.

Many thanks to Gordon for his industry and positive, friendly attitude, which helped to make the tournament such a success.

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John Anstey, Chairman of the Northampton Club, offers some reflections....

## My First Tournament

Compared with the champions of today, I suppose that I came to croquet fairly late: I was 53 when I first played on a proper lawn. I was even older, but probably rather better than most players are, when I played my first tournament at the age of 57. Apart from the very occasional game in our local Federation (East Midlands) league - 3 games in two years - and one match in the Longman Cup, I had never played outside the cosy confines of the Northampton Club, except for occasional visits to Belsay.

Coaching from Norman Hicks (7) who joined us from Pendle (and has since left us for Colchester), followed by Brian Hallam (½ then, -½ now) had improved my game to the point where the Club reckoned I was 9.\* Brian thought I was probably a bit better than that, and persuaded me to enter a level play, advanced rules tournament at Edgbaston, assuring me that, if I played any matches on lawn 1, I would have a chance against anyone. (I think he really wanted a lift to Birmingham).

Lawn 1 was, I must admit, a revelation. My first game was against R. Brand (½), and after 3½ hours (my games normally last about an hour and a half, win or lose) the manager imposed a time limit, of one more hour, at end of which I lost +1 on time. The next game went more to form when I lost very easily to R. Weaver (3), but I won my last game against A. Leggate (1½). Not bad for a 9\* in his first tournament.

Unfortunately, I did not only make an impression with my play. I was also too loud, and too given to irreverent remarks. Playing at a friendly club, we all make abusive remarks to each other, and tend to exclaim at things going well or badly. This doesn't go down well in tournaments, apparently, especially when there are double banked games or adjacent lawns to be disturbed.

The next day, I was banished (not for my sins, I think) to Rowheath, where I played people more of my own level, a 6, a 5 and a 4½, but lost again to Mr Weaver - though not so easily, and he told me that I could have won if I had been more tactically alert. No one complained - at least out loud - to me, and I enjoyed some good matches. At the end, the tournament handicapper made me a 6. I was now ranked above Norman Hicks, my early mentor, and rushed off to Colchester to prove it by beating him.

Fired by success, I found another tournament to enter before the end of the season, so I went to Wrest Park for their September Handicap. Here I found that the conditions were such that in almost every game, the higher bisquer won. Of my eight games, I only lost one when I received bisques (and that a single one), and I only won one when I gave them. What really surprised me however, was the finicky - as it seemed to me - attention to rules and etiquette.

Let me make it clear that I think rules are there always to be strictly observed, and that no-one



The scene at Southwick during this year's Inter-Counties Championship.

should ever attempt to distract or do down his opponent by breaches of etiquette or by bad behaviour. Let me also say that I play every game in a highly competitive way, and am very keen to win at all proper costs of mental and physical effort. But I did find the nit-picking attitude of my fellow competitors rather off-putting. (I should also say that they too apparently found my exuberant style offensive, since a semi-official warning was conveyed to me by Brian on the way to the ground next day.) I was not alone, however, in my views, since I met a charming lady who told me that this would be her last tournament, because she disliked the rigid and unbending attitude of some of the competitors.

I will itemise some of my complaints. Putting balls back on yard line: if someone shoots from the far end of the lawn, I wouldn't normally hesitate to put his ball on for him - or even on the next lawn, if I'm standing nearby - and if my opponent shoots at his partner in a distant corner, I can't see what harm is done if I play my next shot before he has walked forty yards to retrieve his ball, always assuming that it can't poss-

ibly be affected by my shot. Yet I got snarled at (that's perhaps a little strong) for doing so.

I was quite rightly rebuked by an opponent, for playing before he had absolutely indicated that he wasn't taking a bisque, so I'm not trying to claim that I'm perfect and that everyone else is out of step. That was clearly wrong of me: I had just assumed he wasn't going to, and therefore carried on too quickly.

Constant calling for referees or umpires (I'm afraid I still don't know the difference): shots which I (I was going to say, you or I, but I suppose that it may not be true

handicapping committee of the sport which has been my principal recreation heretofore) is that the better player should always win - or, at least, as often as possible - and that the handicap should only enable the lesser player to give him a game.

One last question. Why is it always Joneses who insist on the tradition of the winner standing the loser a drink? This caused me no difficulty at Belsay, with Syd of that name, because all they serve is tea, coffee and soft drinks, (though he insisted on having a slice of cream cake as well) but where alcohol is available I have to explain, as I did at Wrest Park to Cliff of that ilk, that as a bigoted teetotaler I refuse to buy anyone an intoxicating beverage. I didn't mind drinking Brian Hallam's iced water, since I'd given him a lift, but I normally won't accept drinks because I won't return them. That's obviously going to cause some embarrassment sooner or later. Syd also alleged that it's bad form to shake hands after a game, so I've been trying to avoid that - but I think that he may have been pulling my leg.

I have a feeling that anyone reading this article will think that I am a curmudgeonly old so-and-so whom they'll be only too glad to avoid meeting on the croquet lawn. I'm not, though. I'm a lovely chap, very keen and a good sportsman, desperately keen to win, although perhaps sometimes allowing my enthusiasm to bubble over in too vigorous a way. But I like to play, however keenly, in a friendly and informal atmosphere. I do hope that there are others out there who feel the same. I'll save the rest of my iconoclastic views on the game for another article, if the editor will stand for it.

Finally, just to prove that I really am a tough competitor - and not the only curmudgeonly one - I will tell you that at Wrest Park one of the finalists was the manager of the tournament. It was getting late, so he handed over responsibility for the conditions under which the final was to be played to the assistant manager. This gentleman decreed that it was to be played on the infamous Lawn 1. Hearing this, the other finalist said: "In that case, I concede". Had I been his opponent, I would have shaken him by the hand and lifted the silverware, but softer hearts than mine prevailed, and the match was duly played.

Cheltenham: 4-8 September

## Another Enjoyable Cheltenham Tournament

From Deborah Latham

An uplifting experience! On the very eve of the tournament all our spirits were lifted - but as the burglars omitted to steal the beer as well the deprivation was not as severe as it might have been. Thus, as manager Peter Darby and his intrepid assistant Hugh Smorfitt had been assiduous in ensuring the hoops were no more than regulation width, the hoops were tight, but the players were not...

The continuance of the warm weather caused the lawns to be dry and glassy, and this, coupled with the stringency of the hoops, may have accounted for the length of some of the games - for instance, Philip Wainman and Stuart Daddo-Langlois, who are both clearly capable of better things, may take a little while living down the fact that their game took just two minutes less than six hours. The manager scolded the two suitably penitent lads for this display of alacrity, saying it was a pity they'd hurried the ending, really!

The Hands "Egyptian" singles entrants were divided into four groups. Stan Harding, in a very gentlemanly fashion, let Betty Widdows share the glory of joint leadership of the fourth group, while in the third group Stephen Badger (who engages in some delightful self-advertising on one of his T-shirts) gave hot pursuit but could only attain second place behind Michael Hornby, visiting again from Australia with wife Margaret. (Michael does not nip off home overnight during the tournament...) Norman Gooch had to settle for being runner-up in the second group, since (notwithstanding the game alluded to above!) Philip Wainman was doing his prodigious best to be eligible for tournament bandit.

Hugh Smorfitt beat off the by no means inconsiderable challenge of the rest of the first group to secure second place, but it was clear that Cliff Jones was always going to be a serious contender. (This statement will probably confuse anyone who is acquainted with Cliff and has experienced precisely how seriously he treats Life, The Universe, and Everything!) It must have been the excitement of being handed the Gladstone Trophy that made him inadvertently leave his devastatingly customised mallet behind when he left; or perchance it was his last game, involving what he designated an "intermittent" quadruple (my favoured epithet is "staccato") - which became a triple... which became a double... which became a single... and, later on, the peg.... (A real Clifford-hanger?) An observer quipped that they'd obviously misunderstood this peeling business; they'd always been under the impression its purpose was to finish in a single turn! But astute prospective opponents should disregard this frivolous aberration; "the boy Jones done great", and will proceed to disturb the equanimity of you "A" class types out there - you mark my words!

Of the doubles matches I must make particular mention of Joan Orchard's game, where she found partner Edward Dymock pegged out when she was for the fifth hoop.

She wasn't going to let such a minor inconvenience hold her back! You doubtless know those games where the low bisquer tells the high bisquer to do all the shots they wouldn't normally do, so they don't come off? Well, Joan wasn't having one of those games - everything she was advised to do, she did, and won the game, hurrah!

The doubles, organised under the Wheeler system of playing with a different partner every day, was supposed to produce just one most successful high bisquer and one most successful low bisquer. Lovely theory, and as far as the high bisquers were concerned it worked beautifully, with Ed Turtle being on the winning side in all his doubles games, though with Dennis Regan and John Lansdown jostling closely behind. As far as the low bisquers were concerned, however, Bernard Weitz would have been the clear winner had I and Stan Harding not played out of our little cotton socks on the last morning and stymied him. Peter decreed a mini-tournament of one-ball croquet to sort out the four contenders; Bernard played Hugh, and I played Norman (an intriguing prospect, as we had both only ever played one-ball once before in our respective careers). Interest in these tactical confrontations was intense - I have never before seen the entire gallery desert lawn 8 to lay siege to lawn 9! Both games must have been exciting, judging from the applause they collectively generated, and the commiserations went to Bernard and myself. The final (along with the gallery) removed to lawn 8, and all eyes were glued to Hugh's and Norman's every move. Norman played tremendously well, but Hugh charged from behind to snatch victory from his grasp. A very exciting and interesting end to the week!

This tournament apparently marked Peter Darby's managerial debut (sounds incredible to me, so if I understood this correctly someone has been passing up golden opportunities hitherto, I judge). However, on the strength of it he will undoubtedly get lumbered - sorry, I meant asked - again, as he has a lovely relaxed style which persuades you that you're not being managed at all, but are finding your own opponent, choosing your own lawn, playing when you want, and stopping for tea when and for as long as you want, etc. etc. The atmosphere of sheer fun was super, too. For example, on Saturday evening, when the Nat West Trophy final was taking place, Hugh was stalking up and down with increasing urgency in front of the clubhouse, his Walkman glued to his ears. After several increasingly jocular inquiries as to progress, he rounded on us all and wailed, "Oh, you don't care, you Philistines!" We accorded this remark the respect it deserved .... The heights of repartee were often scaled, too - as you would have discovered if you, too, had been playing golf croquet with Peter Darby and Des Willetts in a dusk which was not so much falling as plummeting, with another equally "dignified"

game of one-ball taking place on the next court involving Hugh, Cliff, and various other exponents of the witticism!

It is possible that the combination of incessant sunshine, fast lawns, tight hoops and lack of time limits on the singles accounted for the Hands system not being utilized as fully as it might, because quite often by the time you had finished the first game you felt too exhausted to face another such marathon! But it made not a jot of difference to the enjoyment ratings and the atmosphere of camaraderie.

I shall conclude with a quotation from young Darby, which, although addressed at the time to his somewhat dubious doubles partner, seems to me a very repeatable remark by a manager - "Do exactly as I tell you, and you'll be amazed!"



Cliff Jones, winner of the Gladstone Trophy, in action with his customised mallet.

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By Keith Wylie

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Southwick: 22-27 July

## Good Entry for Veterans' Tournament

From Margaret Green

The Veterans' Tournament was once again welcomed by the Sussex County Croquet Club at Southwick. The lawns were in excellent condition thanks to Ron Smith who did the hard slog of rejuvenating them after storms and deterioration. John Eardley-Simpson has taken over the supervision of the lawns from Ron and a new groundsman has been employed. Allan Norman the new groundsman is a very experienced, efficient and willing worker. He was at work on the lawns, sometimes at 7am, to make sure the lawns were acceptable for tournament play. John Eardley-Simpson is a "bit of a boffin" and had invented an ingenious device for gauging the exact width of the hoops. This is done regularly each time the hoops are removed for the lawns to be cut. This means that Southwick members have plenty of practice at going through tight hoops. We have yet to discover whether their members' handicap indices have risen as a consequence. It was wonderful to hear so many visitors commenting on the excellent condition of Southwick's eleven lawns.

Above Southwick's antiquated club house was flying a brightly coloured new flag waving in the sea breeze welcoming the visitors. There were thirty-two doubles players and thirty-one singles entries, so a little bit of double banking was necessary. It was hard to think of those present as being not quite so young as they displayed plenty of enthusiasm, energy and skill.

The week started warm and sunny but by Tuesday evening we experienced some light thundery showers. These wettings didn't deter the players from concentrating on the intricacies of the game which was thoroughly enjoyed by all. On Tuesday afternoon the silence was broken by ripples of laughter coming from Lawn 11 where the Sussex County Golf Croquet players were enjoying one of their twice-weekly Golf Croquet sessions. This invigorating newly formed section of the club is regularly attended and it is hoped that Association Croquet will eventually benefit from these aspiring hoop runners.

The Veterans' Tournament



Veterans' Strickland Cup. Before the Shoot Out (L-R): John Green, Margaret Green (winner), Dorothy Mears, and Hamish Hall.

was managed diligently by Derek Caporn and ably assisted by the Treasurer of the Association, Alan Oldham. Alan has worked in the capacity of Treasurer for twenty-five years, and is hoping to beat the previous record for holding this important office.

On Wednesday 24th July, Sussex experienced heavy deluges of rain, but this seems to have had no effect on the hose-pipe ban in the county. Derek advised players to take shelter during the downpours and stop their time clocks. I noticed only John Green with his stubborn determination soldiering on, determined to prove that nothing could prevent him from finishing his break. After all continuity and rhythm are part of the essentials of playing well! The lawns remained playable and the only puddles to be seen were on the walkways between the lawns, and in the car park. The lawns drained remarkably quickly and Allan the groundsman repainted the white lines and continued to trim the lawns. The rest of the week remained pleasantly warm and dry.

One of the pleasures of the Southwick club is the facilities of eating lunches and teas under the shade of the pollarded trees that line the front of the clubhouse. It is on these occasions that one hears the trials and tribulations of the games that have been played. There were four challenge cups and a pair of trophies to be awarded to the winners of the events but every player gave a fine performance.

A very special mention should be made of Susan Wiggins who lost the chance to win

the Meredith Cup but managed to beat Peter Howell 26-0. This game was followed by Susan playing against Hamish Hall. Hamish was already on the peg before Susan had even started hoop running. Unfortunately Hamish was left unsuccessfully to peg out with one ball from the North and South boundary, while Susan did the rounds and won by plus one on time. Susan's next opponent was Val Tompkinson who wisely used her bisques and won the cup from Susan's grasp. Such are the frustrations of the game!

In the Rothwell Challenge Cup, Susan lost minus three to Vincent Camroux who pegged out from the yard line. She also lost to Peter Howell by minus eight, who, during the tournament managed to do a triple peel. The handicap doubles was won by Michael Hornby and Ian McDiarmid. Michael hails from Perth, Australia, making the tournament truly international.

Margaret Green lost to Hamish Hall minus two on time, to lose the lead in the Strickland Cup making them equal with Beryl Irwin and John Green. It was decided to play a Shoot Out between the four of them. Each were given four balls with which to hit the peg from East and West boundaries. Beryl and Margaret scored a direct hit in the first round and Margaret Green won the second round by scoring two hits and so won the Strickland Challenge Cup.

### RESULTS

**Rothwell Challenge Cup**  
(Open Singles Veterans' Championship; Advanced Play)  
**Winner:** Peter Howell.  
**Runner up:** Vincent Camroux.

**Felixstowe Challenge Cup**  
(Handicap Singles; 3½ bisques and over)  
**Winner:** Ian McDiarmid.  
**Runner up:** Arthur Rajotte.

**Strickland Challenge Cup**  
(Handicap Singles 7 bisques and over)  
**Winner:** Margaret Green.  
**Runner up:** Beryl Irwin.

**Meredith Challenge Cup**  
(Open Handicap Singles)  
**X Group Winner:** Val Tompkinson.  
**Runner up:** Susan Wiggins.  
**Y Group Winner:** Michael Hornby.  
**Runner up:** Gordon Drake.

**Longman Trophies**  
(Handicap Doubles: Combined handicap of 6 and over)  
**X Group Winners:** Michael Hornby & Ian McDiarmid.  
**Y Group Winners:** Diana Brothers & Hamish Hall.

## Southport: 2-4 August

### Nine Lawns Now!

From Andrew Bennet

Thirty competitors played 135 games in three days under the expertise of Peter Death's management in a Knockout plus Egyptian format. James Hawkins played 14, closely followed by Rick Harding and James Death on 13. Is this in any way due to the fact that they were the youngest players?

I don't know how Don Williamson, Paul Stoker and other locals found the energy to play after setting 54 hoops each morning. Then there was the handicapping and managerial paperwork to deal with at the end.

The new lawns are still a bit spongy after only a few weeks' use but are generally flat and already a lot better than courts I have played on this season at some other clubs. Being out on them made it a bit difficult to keep track of everything that went on. David Appleton did two triple peels and Rick Harding and Paul Stoker came close. The Saturday evening game on Lawn 1 delighted the gallery. James Death, having used bisques devastatingly in his previous game, thought he was going to do the same against the writer. Surely players of my age don't hit, go round and peg you out? Old age has its compensations in experience of the end-game.

Alain Giraud (14) had results of +26 in many of his games  
*Continued on page 11* ▶

The tangled knot of events facing the manager of the Hurlingham Summer Tournament is hard to unravel. Mark Wormald cut through it with sharp mind and pencil, aided by the sharp eyes of assistants Jean Henderson and Jeremy Glyn, to finish everything by 4pm on the last day, except for the Hurlingham Cup.

A good crowd was thus free to see the best match of the week. His opponent Thomas Coles had had a precarious route to the final, winning his first three rounds +2, +4 (after being peg alone versus the 3 & 3-back of brother Matthew, and +3. In the semi-final he looked like being pegged out by Bernard Neal (whose first of three wins in this event was 20 years ago) who however contrived a classic four-balls-around-rover leave. Thomas did exactly the same when about to go out but survived when Bernard stuck in the first hoop.

Mark's progress was smoother, helped by consistently accurate shooting. This deserted him in the final and allowed Thomas to build a confident early lead. An over-confident swipe with his second ball at a tricky hoop turned the game into a fascinating tussle of hitting in and pressured breaks. Mark won the 3-ball ending after 3½ hours,

### ◀ Southport – continued from page 10

with numerous bisques left, so it was no surprise to see him win the final against Rick Harding (2) who had played immaculately throughout until the final, where he never took croquet in a best-of-three with many bisques left in both games. We've done something drastic to Alain's handicap (try bouncing that one, Bill Lamb, said an ex-handicapper and two potential ex-handi-cappers) and did an equally deserved adjustment to Steven Wigg, another rapidly improving Yorkshireman who won the subsidiary event in which Brian Lewis was runner-up.

In the old days, we would have taken three bisques off Alain's handicap at the last tournament during play and four more this time, as the opponents are deprived of a fair game. I hope that reason will prevail when the automatic system has to be overridden. I'm not complaining about this year's procedures: I got that extra half-bisque I was after.

This was Southport's biggest tournament yet, with excellent support from all the helpers, including of course the catering, all done by members, and I must end by echoing the Manager's thanks to Don Williamson for battling with the bureaucrats to gain the extra lawns now up to tournament standard.

Hurlingham: 3-10 August

## Mark Wormald Manages to Win

From Robert Prichard

the first holder to retain the title since Eric Solomon in 1981.

Two players spent part of the tournament in hospital. Liz Neal suffered a wasp-sting that festered and after bravely winning a protracted Ladies' Field Candlesticks final (with Chris Osmond) spent a night there under antibiotics. Robin Brown arrived with strained knee (caused by falling off a chair watching TV!) which caused him so much pain that he had to be whisked off by ambulance in mid-game. He had already limped round to the peg, leaving his high-bisque partner Mark Middlebrook for 4, versus the Browne family's 2 and 3. Mark had no bisques left but still won on his own. Sadly he and Robin were scratched from the next round against the eventual winners of the Wine Coolers, Tim Russell (another successful title defence) and Steve Allen; whose closest match was a dusky semi-final against Matthew Coles and father Walter.

When Robin returned from hospital he read the drug medication

regulations carefully and went on to win the Big Handicap Silver Jubilee Cup over fellow Surbiton member Ed Dymock. The Baillieu Plate was won by Steve Allen, with a narrow +8 victory over Lionel Wharrad, who is celebrating his 80th birthday this year. The B Level Turner Cup (won last year by Tom Browne "with an e") was another triumph for Brown "with a knee", who saw off Mike Llewellyn-Williams in the final. The C Level Younger Cup was yet another trophy for Steve Allen, but only by 1 on time against Bevis Sanford. Last year he had won the D Class Longworth Cup. This year's Longworth winner Mark Middlebrook could well follow the same progression.

The Open Mixed Doubles attracted a mere four entrants, of which the new pairing of Thomas Coles and Veronica Carlisle was the strongest. In the final, against John Greenwood and Dorothy Miller, Veronica was pegged out but Thomas produced a splendid 3-ball break from the third hoop to secure

the title yet again for her. Next year she is being claimed back again by son James. The more popular Handicap Mixed Doubles saw another final for the holders, smiling Northern bandits Rupert and Liz Webb. Scores were level when time was called. Bob Stephens, who had made good use of his partner Ginny Greig's carefully guarded 16 handicap, took several tense turns to score the winning hoop for Hurlingham.

The Hurlingham tournament provides a wider variety of events than any other and for all standards. Open Championship players who moan at being banished to the cricket field or terrace lawns should note that this year's Hurlingham Cup was played entirely on the front lawns. Nor should weaker players be deterred from playing at our most august club. The best reply of the week came from a high-bisquer in the doubles who was surprised to be receiving as few as 7½ bisques. When asked how many bisques it took her to go round she remained puzzled: "I've never been round".

Roehampton: 17-18 August

## Tallest-ever Rowlock Final

From Robert Prichard

the first game of this semi-final was played on Saturday, Jeff Dawson going one up against John Greenwood. Next morning Jeff pegged John out but his own ball also trickled onto the peg, leaving him too far behind in the 2-baller. John won the even closer third game to reach the final.

This started after lunch, by when in previous years it had often been finished. John's winning run continued in the first game, spurring Thomas into an elegant TP in the second. In the

last game John's shooting was too blowy for Thomas and brought him the not-retained-by-Fulford Rowlock and the "Gold Tier" tankard. The "Silver Tier" (losing semi-finalists and top two in the Swiss) was swept magisterially by Aspinall. Brown's fortunes reversed savagely, as in two of his three losses in this tier he did not take croquet. The "Bronze Tier" (the remainder) was won by the elusive Jerry Guest as he had beaten David Wiggins, who also had 5 wins out of 7.



An historic photograph. Mrs 'Sookey' Adler (left) with the late Daisy Lintern, former Secretary of the Croquet Association. They are pictured at the 1957 Peels Tournament in front of the old Club house at Toehampton.

## Sports Psychologist Graham Jones (Loughborough University) describes his work with our national squads...

### Croquet and Sports Psychology

The Sports Council is currently providing funding (as part of its Sports Science Support Programme) for my services as a sport psychologist to work with the Croquet Association. The project was initiated in December 1989 and will continue at least until the end of 1992. This article describes very briefly the nature of the service a sport psychologist can provide and how the project has progressed to date.

The rapidly growing interest in mental skills training in sport is indicative of the realisation that psychological factors play a crucial role in determining sports performance. It is clear, for example, that at the top level in the majority of sports there is very little difference in the skill levels of performers. Consequently, the major factor which is likely to distinguish the winner from the loser is psychological in nature, and in particular the ability to cope with the intense pressure which often accompanies high level competition.

What seems particularly crucial is the ability or 'skill' to control the mind and what is occupying it, sometimes referred to as 'mental toughness'. Some sports performers seem to have a natural mental toughness, but others have to work

hard at acquiring the necessary mental skills, which can be thought of in much the same way as physical skills; they require regular and dedicated practice over a sometimes long period of time and, once learned, must be continually practised to avoid 'rustiness'.

The sport psychologist is largely concerned with the mental preparation of the performer. In many cases the sport psychologist will not actually be able to inform the performer of anything of which he or she is not already aware. Most performers will have their own methods of trying to manage the pressure of competition, of trying to concentrate, of mentally rehearsing, etc. However, these are all likely to be carried out in an unstructured manner. What the sport psychologist can do is to structure these strategies in perhaps a slightly more effective way in order to maximise their effectiveness. Such questions as 'when should I try and relax?', 'how should I relax?', 'how and when should I mentally rehearse?', 'how can I learn to concentrate better?' etc. can all be directed towards the sport psychologist.

In some cultures, notably in Eastern Europe, sports performers are introduced to mental training at an early age and they grow up with it as a natural part of their training regime. The situation in the U.K. is that formalised training in the mental aspects of performance is not introduced, if at all, until much later in the performer's development, and almost certainly after the physical skills have been developed to a high level. Although

not ideal, this is certainly not too late; world class performers may benefit substantially from advice about how to structure their mental preparation in a better way, and also through being trained in specific mental skills.

There are four main areas in which a service can be provided for individual performers: handling pressure; improving concentration; enhancing self-belief or confidence; and enhancing motivation. In the context of a team, the sport psychologist can offer advice on cohesion, communication and motivation. A variety of techniques are at the sport psychologist's disposal, but common ones include relaxation, visualisation, goal setting etc.

Relaxation, for example, is a skill used by many sports performers and is a particularly useful skill to have at your disposal under the sometimes intense pressure of competition. Indeed, research has shown that one of the important factors which distinguishes elite performers from less successful ones is their ability to control their anxiety during the crucial moments of competition.

It is important to emphasise that, in the context of competitive sport, relaxation is not synonymous with total relaxation; this would be inappropriate for virtually any sport. Relaxation for the purposes of aiding sports performance is about being able to lower and control anxiety so that it is at an appropriate level, which will obviously vary from player to player.

As well as using relaxation before a competition, it can also be very beneficial if practised during performance. This requires the performer to be able to relax within a very short space of time, perhaps a few seconds at most, but it allows the performers to dispel any negative thoughts from the mind and to compose themselves. I have used this form of relaxation with several world-class sports performers.

In one case, a female squash player ranked in the top three in the world, it was used by the player actually on court to help her with problems of concentration at crucial points in matches. The technique we worked on was a meditative relaxation technique which she first acquired at a very general level until she was able to relax within a fifteen minute period. Over a period of a few months she gradually reduced this time until she could achieve an appropriate level of relaxation within a few seconds. She now uses the technique in between rallies when the pressure of a close match or the frustration

of a bad shot distracts her, and has reaped huge benefits.

It should not be too difficult to imagine how relaxation could be used in pressure situations in croquet, and there are several other mental skills which can be extremely useful. For example, the use of structured mental rehearsal and concentration techniques prior to a difficult hoop or long roquet shot can make the difference between a near miss and a successful shot. And what about those times when croquet players are sitting out and watching their opponents making a long break. Maintaining concentration, confidence, and motivation is clearly crucial in such circumstances. Of course, you may be able to do these things very effectively already, but for those of you who can't, then a bit of training can help to maximize your potential.

Since the project began, my presence at three tournaments, including the British Open at Hurlingham in July, has provided a valuable insight into the psychological demands and requirements of top level croquet. The expert guidance and commentary by the Director of Coaching, Bill Lamb, at each of these tournaments has proved particularly useful in this context.

It has become clear that successful performance at the top level in croquet requires not only a high level of physical skill, but also intense powers of concentration and the ability to handle pressure situations. It is with these particular mental skills in mind that I have embarked upon my initial work with the Great Britain Under 21 squad.

At a squad session at Bowdon in April, I ran an introductory workshop on mental skills training and also had individual discussions with squad members. At a follow-up session in August, I ran workshops on consecutive days on relaxation and concentration and also imagery. However, the work is primarily individually-based. A technique known as 'performance profiling', in which performers analyse their own strengths and weaknesses and then decide which aspects of performance they would like to improve upon, has formed the basis of this individual work.

This initial work with the Under 21 squad has proved encouraging and will continue during the coming months. In addition, I will be aiding the preparation of the Great Britain National squad for the Test series against Australia in 1993.

Budleigh Salterton: 2-6 September

### THE SPENCER-ELL CUP

## Paul Day Emerges: A Most Promising New Player

From Paul Smith

An unexpected cast, containing only four of those originally selected, descended on Budleigh Salterton for the 1991 Spencer Ell. The reserve list had not proved long enough and the identity of the eighth player was in doubt until a large container of orange juice accompanied by a packet of chocolate digestive biscuits, backnumbers of the Scientific American, and a redundant fluffy dice hove into view. Richard Hilditch had arrived.

Play began in very pleasant weather on well presented but rather slow lawns. The weather stayed the same all week but the lawns got faster as they dried out. As early as round two the joker in the pack - one Brian Storey - emerged. Indeed the best report of this tournament would probably consist simply of a list of Brian's exploits. No-one touched him for the variety of incident which inevitably accompanied his games. His first trick was to resolve a tight finish in his game with Don Gaunt by hitting in with his ball for the peg and then accidentally pegging it out on the following take-off. He'd performed this feat once already this season and had allowed yards of space so as to avoid a repetition! Don went on to win but lost his third game of the day to Tony Mrozinski's triple peel, leaving Paul Day with the only clean sheet.

Your reporter would be in serious trouble if Tony's second triple peel were not mentioned. It took until Friday to resolve who was doing the report owing to the ingenuity of the excuses deployed for not wanting the job. These included: "I've got to finish my latest book", "I'm eleven months behind with Scientific American", "I've no experience of this sort of thing", "I did last year's" and the

entirely plausible "I can't write". Against this lot your correspondent's commitment to the Open University didn't cut much ice. Tony was therefore forced repeatedly to remind everybody who might possibly write the report, including the manager of his hotel and the check-out girl at Norman's supermarket, that he had completed all the peels by hoop four. His opponent was of course the Joker.

Jokerman worked his magic again in his round six match against Richard Hilditch. Richard became hampered around first hoop and went for the scatter - with conspicuous success, for he not only cast the balls to the four winds but sadly did the same for his mallet. It is an ill wind, however, just the excuse he needed for a new head - any offers for Richard's old head? Amidst the hilarity of these events the only personalised number plate owner amongst us was calmly and efficiently seeing off two of his nearest rivals in the lean shapes of Don Gaunt and Francis Landor, thereby establishing a two game lead at the end of day two.

Wednesday saw Paul Day's first defeat at the hands of "peels before four", but this was a minor hiccup as he took his next two



Paul Day receives the Spencer-Ell Cup from Lt-Col G.E. Cave, who won it in 1957 and 1959 when it was known as the Surrey Cup.



The Spencer-Ell competitors. Standing (L-R): Don Gaunt, Ray Ransom, Richard Hilditch, and Brian Storey. Seated: Tony Mrozinski, Francis Landor, Paul Day, and Paul Smith.

games by convincing margins. No other player was matching his consistency and positive play. This somewhat brief offering for day three is because Jokerman was saving himself for the next day. Firstly he had a long tense game with Paul Smith in which Brian pegged out, deliberately this time, both one of his and one of Paul's balls, leaving himself for penult against one-back. A little nervous of taking position for the centre hoops he ultimately surrendered the initiative to Paul who, having run a long rover, dribbled to the peg only for Brian to miss the last shot and go down by one. Like many games this was watched by an appreciative audience of club members. Their presence certainly provided a lift to the players and we congratulate them on their patience, which was often essential.

In the third game of the day Brian played Paul Day in a match which represented a late opportunity to peg him back and bring him within range of the pack. Paul was for three and penult when Brian got in and performed a double peel on the opponent leaving Paul under significant pressure in the ensuing three ball game. Paul's response was typically courageous and cool-headed. He needed only two opportunities. He immediately seized the first chance of establishing a three ball break which he was unfortunate not to go out on. Brian reclaimed the innings but Paul instantly hit a twenty yard shot and finished.

The most complex mental contortions of the week were reserved for ordering the tournament dinner on Thursday night in the Chinese restaurant. Richard had clearly been building up to this, his command of the menu causing the staff to overlook the improbable combination of white shorts, black shoes and smart jacket. This restaurant, claimed "peels before four" was prone to

exert a disastrous effect by spinning vertiginously. This stems from using too much ginger and has nothing to do with Tony's propensity for stout! At least this time he did not embarrass himself before an officer of the law. Our manager Ray Stevens could not join us, preferring to celebrate his wedding anniversary with his wife rather than with eight sweaty males. Who can blame him, but we were sorry you couldn't make it Ray, and thanks for your sterling service throughout.

Going into the final day Paul Day could only be caught by Francis or Tony but they both lost their first games and Paul's triple peel against Richard was an appropriate way to take the title. His final margin of three games over Francis and Paul Smith, who made a late stuttering charge, by no means flattered him. In the words of the number plate PD1!

Paul's experience of sporting competition at the highest level (he was a considerable table tennis player) is clearly a factor in the mental strength of his approach. He has an abundant enthusiasm for the game, a very positive attitude and will, I believe, be a very good player indeed when his tactical repertoire becomes broader. Some might think he eschews the percentage shot for the higher payoff of the aggressive shot, but this is no bad thing in the higher reaches of the game today. His break play was very controlled throughout and he kept foolish errors to a minimum. His win was thoroughly deserved and a considerable achievement for someone only two years in the game. The presentation of the trophy was made by Gerald Cave twice winner of the old Surrey Cup. His gentle reminiscences took us back to our croquet roots and Paul Day's eloquent vote of thanks to the members of the Budleigh club for their excellent hospitality and thorough preparation for the event set the seal on a highly enjoyable week.



"Put it over there."

"No, why don't you put it over there?"

"But if we do that...."

Tony Ashton and Ted Huxley at Woking.

## TOURNAMENT REPORTS

Cheltenham: 22-27 July

## Visitors Scoop The Prizes

From "The Southport Six"

A rare event happened at Cheltenham during the week. Unable to raise the flag for "technical reasons", the decision was made to lower the flag pole. "Captain" Bob Fewtrell brought his tools, a party of men was assembled, and without any problem the job was quickly done. If only we could play croquet that easily!

The week started on Sunday evening with a barbeque at the Club to celebrate 75 years of this July week. Visitors, members, and guests had a lovely evening and the Club Chairman's speech was most welcoming. Little did we know, that Sunday evening, the tremendous week of croquet that was in store for us.

There is no doubt that the standard of competitors and format are of the highest quality. Dab and Roger Wheeler had put in a great deal of hard work in preparing for 50 players in 8 events. Their operation ran like clockwork and they made sure that the time scale was adhered to and so everybody was kept active.

The "Hands" system for the Daniels Cup was particularly suc-

cessful, with an average of 7.5 games per player. The weather was kind to us with only two short bursts of rain. The Winchester Club (is Arthur Daley a member?) were represented by Les "Cap and Braces" Chapman, who fell over on two occasions while trying a very fine cut rush, landing full stretch with balls between his feet.

Hugh Smorfitt gave Margaret Selmes encouragement to beat Les both verbally and materially. This was the most entertaining game of the week for spectators.

Incidentally, the shot of the tournament was performed by Dab in the family doubles. When taking Croquet half way along the West boundary (both 'balls' were for 2-back) she contrived to peel her partner's ball through the hoop and followed by running the hoop with her own ball. In her excitement she leapt in the air, exclaiming to the spectators "Did you see that!" We certainly did, and a few moments later saw her execute a complicated 'jump shot' through Rover and thence to the peg for a convincing win.

As the week progressed each

Block produced its own exciting brand of croquet. Time and time again players reported back results and recalled enjoyable games played in the right spirit.

The Mixed Doubles gave some very interesting pairings and produced some unusual situations when players were together for the first time. Perhaps when the Family Doubles are played in future, a solicitor (Cheltenham Chairman?) should be present to prevent threats of divorce.

As we neared the end of the week the closeness of the potential Block winners became apparent. In six of the Blocks winners were decided on net points.

The Doubles for the Barwell Salvagers was won by Jon Wurml and Don Cornelius, who were undefeated. There were four runners-up.

The Family Doubles for the Secretary's Spoon went to Barbara and John Haslam, with four out of four wins. Ian and Catherine Storey, and Bob and Faith Fewtrell, were runners-up. The Daniels Cup for the handicap event produced a close finish on the "Hands" system. Dab Wheeler and Bob Fewtrell were

runners-up on a rating of 70 each but John Haslam finished on 73 to win.

On Saturday the semi-finals and finals of each Block were played. Results were as follows:

**Block A:** Wurml bt Chapman +25; Moorcroft bt Madams +19. Final: Moorcroft bt Wurml +11.

**Block B:** Whittaker bt Weitz +13; Haslam bt Judge +2. Final: Haslam bt Whittaker +11.

**Block C:** Fewtrell bt Cornelius +10; Sanford bt Mrs Weitz +6. Final: Fewtrell bt Sanford +11.

**Block D:** Hammelev bt Lewis +19; Storey bt Mrs Haslam +8. Final: Storey bt Hammelev +10.

**Block E:** Mrs Widdows bt Mrs Fewtrell +7; Edmonds bt Mrs McClements +2. Final: Edmonds bt Mrs Widdows +6.

Apart from Dennis Moorcroft winning the 'A' Class the visitors took the prizes. We had a super week and we must commend Cheltenham on their first-rate facilities and Dab and Roger Wheeler on their undoubted skill in managing the tournament.



Peter Darby, Chairman of the Cheltenham Club which has staged many successful and enjoyable tournaments once again this year.

## Wrest Park: 17-18 August Short and Sweet

From Tom Anderson

This was a 2 day advanced weekend, run as a zoned Swiss. This seemed to result in the quicker you played, the more games you played.

Like everywhere else this Summer, wasps were plentiful wherever there was food and drink about. Our Catering staff, however, came well equipped to deal with the situation. They had a magnificent swatter which people were queuing up to use.

On Sunday morning, musical sounds were heard wafting across the lawns. What the players did not realise was that they were being produced by some of the other croquet players. This was due to four of the tournament participants, who were also bellringers, joining in the ringing at the local church for the Sunday morning service.

For the first time for a long while, the tournament was won by a local. In a late last-game tussle Jon Watson beat another local member, Adrian Craxton, to be the outright winner.

Another local member, Brian Hallam was second. Yet another local member, Colin Mackenzie, does NOT want to be asked how many games he won.

## TOURNAMENT REPORTS

Budleigh Salterton: 5-10 August

## Cliff Jones Shines in South West Championships

From "Minos"

A typical week of Devon Weather – the first three days dull and misty; the last three sunny, clear and occasionally very hot. However, as the weather improved, the standard of some of the croquet deteriorated, so supporting your correspondent's long-held view that bright sunlight improves nobody's game.

On the Saturday, the courts became the happy hunting ground for up to a thousand seagulls, as the hot weather brought myriads of ants to the surface. The gull's activities, on the ground and in the air, proved more entertaining for many spectators than the croquet.

The winners of the 4 Swiss blocks in the Big Handicap (for the Oliver Bowl) were Peter Howell (1), Peter Dorke (0), Susan Wiggins (1), and Tony Dusten-Smith (14), a newcomer from Sidmouth. No hope for the low-bisquers here, as in the play-off Tony beat Susan Wiggins in the semi and Peter Dorke in the final, both by 26 with 6 bisques standing. Tony also partnered Bobbie Wiggins to win the Y Handicap Doubles by 1 on time from Kevin Wells (14) and Cliff Jones (3), of whom more later.

A cluttered Saturday programme forced Dusten-Smith to scratch from the semi-final of the C Class, which he had also reached in fine style. Tony was rewarded with a handicap reduction to 8, which one hopes the HCC will have the good sense to support, along with other recommendations made by local CA

Handicappers – they are, after all, the ones with the information.

The X Handicap Doubles, for the Le Mesurier Cups, saw a final between the Sidmouth pair of John Hatherley (3½) and Mary Hardman (7½) and the strong pairing of Michael Hornby (6) from Australia and Trevor Howard (9) from Cirencester.

The Hornby-Howard combination proved irresistible and the Sidmouth pair were defeated by 16 in a 22-point game. Trevor later went on to win the C Class, for the Stone Challenge Cup, beating Kevin Wells (14) by 9 in a close game. Kevin, from Wrest Park, had played consistently well throughout the week, both in the C Class and as Cliff Jones' partner in the Doubles. His handicap was recommended to be reduced to 11.

Due to the heavy Saturday programme, Trevor had been obliged to scratch from the Big Handicap. Despite this, he achieved two event wins and a handicap reduction of 6. His future progress will be watched with interest.

The B class, played Advanced under Law 53, for the Longman Cup, saw a victory for Donald Cornelius over Jim Davey by 13, after numerous close finishes in earlier rounds. This event and the doubles was marred by the withdrawal, through illness, of Somerset Lowry of Cambridge and Budleigh, who had been playing well until his enforced retirement.

In the South West of England Championship, for the Colman Cup, the qualifiers for the play-off were John Toye, John Hatherley, Peter Thompson, Peter Dorke, Susan Wiggins, Cliff Jones, Brian Redford and Martin Granger-Brown. Neither of the Brands, Ivor and Richard, had had much previous play this year and were not firing on all cylinders. John Toye, who was regarded by most as favourite to win the event, was also not playing with his usual accuracy and although he reached the final, after victories over Brian Redford (+7) and Peter Thompson (+9), John was then beaten by 5 by Cliff Jones, after a rather scrappy game. Cliff reached the final after a clean sweep in his block, followed by play-off wins against John Hatherley (+17) and Martin Granger-Brown (+15).

Cliff has come a long way in a very short time. He is improving with every game he plays, basing his game on a simple ability to hit the ball straight. With greater experience of A Class play giving him a broader tactical armoury, he should become a powerful player.

Dennis Moorcraft combined effective tournament management with playing in three events, while the referees had a straightforward week, but one does wonder whether all players (including some very experienced) have an adequate grasp of the laws. Altogether a very enjoyable tournament.

Nottingham: 5-10 August

## Robin Hood and the President of Nottingham

From Graham Fowler

A rather smaller entry than usual – certainly down on last year's record number – produced a relaxed tournament, with 1 of the 7 lawns readily available. Yet, with a little more co-ordination between clubs it ought, perhaps, to be possible to avoid 4 major week tournaments overlapping; thus increasing attendance at all tournaments and the opportunity to play in week events.

The script for this week was that Alain Giraud would continue the same form that resulted in his move from 14 to 8 after the preceding Southport Weekend Tournament. Certainly Alain's early games suggested this: the way he began against John Death – who won the main Robin Hood event 2 years ago – was to hit in, third turn, roll his partner ball to hoop 2, getting behind John's longish tice, rush that to the first hoop and play further outrageous shots that left John nursing the fourth ball and bemoaning his fate.

The Robin Hood event was run as a Swiss, followed by a knock-out. Five players reached the knock-out phase: James Death, John Wheeler, Gordon Hopewell and Graham Fowler, all of whom had won 4 out of 5; Alain Giraud who had won all

his games. The draw for this phase produced a pre-semi-final match for Graham Fowler; this was unfortunate as he was involved in the draw and process sections of his class event, and consequently had up to 5 matches to play between 5pm Friday and a similar time on Saturday. Ian Vincent, the manager, was even heard to mention Sunday play – if it's good enough for Wimbledon....

Alain and Graham thought it would be fun for them to play four times during the week, as would have been the case if they both reached the Robin Hood final. James Death and Gordon Hopewell had not read that particular authorised version: James played with a mixture of determined 2-ball turns and some very stylish hoop approaches to defeat Graham easily. Alain helped to bring about his own downfall with a spectacularly defensive leave: his first ball had reached the peg at the cost of 3 bisques, Alain opted to place a ball in (approximately) each corner. Nothing for Gordon, but it took Alain 3 bisques to get the break together; when it faltered Gordon pegged out the first ball and, in due course, won the game. When he returned to the clubhouse, Gordon was heard to

say: "Not, I venture to suggest, a result upon which many people would have bet their life savings."

In the final, James made good use of his bisques, but perhaps not enough. However Gordon was left with difficult positions and needed to work the balls around, making ground quite gradually. There were still chances for James. Finally, though, Gordon, having pegged James out earlier, won by 1.

The winner of the Robin Hood last year, Brian Hallam, had to be content with winning the A class event on this occasion. Brian beat Stratford Liddiard in the final of the draw; in the process final Brian defeated Ian Vincent.

The B event was dominated by Alain Giraud and Graham Fowler. Graham beat Alain in the semi-final of the process. Alain beat Graham in the final of the draw. Then, after Graham had beaten Arthur Weightman – who had a good week considering he had just been moved from 10 to 7½ – in the process final, they met again in the class final. On this occasion, Graham was a surprisingly comfortable winner.

Similarly, the C event had two major players: Ian Hill and Andy Neely. In the final of the draw, after

six hours, Andy beat Ian by 5. The final of the process was won by Ian by 5 after 6 hours.

Given that less than 6 hours remained they reached the – admittedly somewhat wimpish – conclusion to divide the spoils.

In the D class, John Handy reached both finals; however he was beaten by Irvine Smith in the draw, and Jeane Ackermann in the process.

The event final saw the dogged play of Irvine Smith overcome Jeane.

Finally, the doubles saw another success for Irvine over John Handy. For, in the final of the event, Irvine and Lawrence Whittaker defeated John and Strat Liddiard +1 on time.

Special mention should be made of Brian and Melissa Hallam, who reached the semi-final despite the comparative inexperience of one of the team.

Prize-giving provided a suitable climax to a friendly tournament and saw several humorous incidents, not least Gordon Hopewell presenting the Robin Hood Cup to himself.

It was Gordon's first Robin Hood win, and collective memory suggests the first victory in the event by a Nottingham club president.

## Results of National Competitions – continued from page 2

## INTER-CLUB

## Round 1

Cheltenham 6 Roehampton 1  
Nottingham 4 Wrest Park 3

## Round 2

Colchester 5 Cheltenham 2  
Surbiton 5 Parsons Green 2  
Southport 5 Harrow Oak 2  
Bowdon 5 Nottingham 2

## Semi-Finals

Colchester 5 Surbiton 2  
Southport 4 Bowdon 3

## Final

Colchester 4 Southport 3

## MARY ROSE

## Round 2

Roehampton 6 Woking 1  
Pendle 6 Ipswich 1  
Hurlingham 5 Cheltenham A 2  
Surbiton 5 Wrest Park 2  
Colworth 4 Southport 3  
Bristol 4 Bowdon 3  
Nottingham 4 Edgbaston 3  
Parkstone 4 Tyneside 3

## Round 3

Pendle 5 Roehampton 2  
Hurlingham 5 Surbiton 2

Bristol 4 Colworth 1

Parkstone 4 Nottingham 3

## Semi-Finals

Hurlingham 6 Pendle 1  
Parkstone 5 Bristol 2

## Final

Parkstone 4 Hurlingham 3

## LONGMAN CUP

## Round 1

Bristol 4 Dyffryn 1

## Round 2

Bear of Rodb'gh bt Bristol  
Sidmouth 3 Plymouth 2  
Bath bt Cirencester w/o  
High Wycombe 5 Worcester 0  
Cheltenham 3 Harwell 2  
Harrow Oak 3 Letchworth 2  
Ipswich 5 Norwich 0

## Wrest Park 4 Hunstanton 1

Surbiton 4 Southwick 1  
Woking 3 Ramsgate 2  
Oxford U. 3 Brethby 2  
Leicester 4 Stourbridge 1  
Bowdon 5 Edgbaston 0  
Ormesby Hall 4 East Riding 1  
Pendle 5 Edinburgh 0  
Tyneside 3 Southport 2

## Round 3

Bear of Rodb'gh 3 Sidmouth 2

High Wycombe 3 Bath 2

Harrow Oak 3 Cheltenham 2

Wrest Park 4 Ipswich 1  
Surbiton 3 Woking 2  
Leicester 5 Oxford 0  
Bowdon 3 Ormesby Hall 2  
Pendle 4 Tyneside 1

## Round 4

High Wycombe 5 Bear of Rodb'gh 0  
Wrest Park 3 Harrow Oak 2  
Leicester 5 Surbiton 0  
Pendle 3 Bowdon 2

## Semi-Finals

Wrest Park 5 High Wycombe 0  
Pendle 4 Leicester 1

## Final

Pendle 4 Wrest Park 1

## SECRETARY'S SHIELD

## Round 1

Bowdon bt Dyffryn  
Leicester 5 Edgbaston 2  
Ipswich 7 High Wycombe 0  
Ormesby Hall 4 Vine Road 3

## Semi-Finals

Leicester 4 Bowdon 3  
Ipswich bt Ormesby Hall w/o

## Final

Ipswich 5 Leicester 2



## Croquet Glossary

Dear Sir,  
It must be at least a fortnight since we had a glossary of croquet jargon.

Dr Appleton's glossary based on "The Meaning of Liff", although a sterling effort, did not include any of the French croquet jargon which we shall have to use as from 1992.

Here are a few examples:

**Ardennes** (North East), vb. What the ground does in hot dry weather.

**Auch** (gascony), interj. Noise made by a player hit by a fast moving double banking ball.

**Berck** (Pas-de-Calais), n. Double banker who doesn't look before hitting his ball in your direction.

**Biscarosse** (Gascony), adj. Disappointment experienced after taking a bisque only to miss a two-foot roquet.

**Boulogne** (Pas-de-Calais), interj. The ball is on (cf. Berlin, Bologna).

**Carcassonne** (Roussillon), adj. Very accurate (dead on).

**Condom** (Armagnac), n. Device used for playing "safe croquet".

**Grasse** (Provence), n. Material on which croquet used to be played before hosepipes were banned.

**Homps** (Roussillon), n. Hills with hoops on.

**Montparnasse** (Paris), interj. My partner is an ass.

**Porquerolles** (Provence), n. Delicacies served for lunch at Harrow Oak tournaments.

**Prat** (Roussillon), n. Compiler of glossaries of croquet jargon.

**Roquefort** (Gascony), n. Not a rush or hard roquet but an unexpected or silly one, as in "What did he want to make that Roquefort?"

**Socx** (Pas-de-Calais), n. Nigel Aspinall has requested that all tournament players wear these.

**Toulon** (Provence), adj. A take-off that goes off the lawn.

**Toulouse** (Languedoc), vb. To see your opponent pegging out. Also **Toulouse-Latrec**, to forget which hoop you are on.

**Varades** (Loire Valley), adj. A take-off which fails to reach the opposition balls.

Martin Kolbuszewski,  
West Hampstead.

## Answer this one!

Dear Sir,  
I would like to take up Croquet, in fact I know a little about it, but I cannot follow patterns.

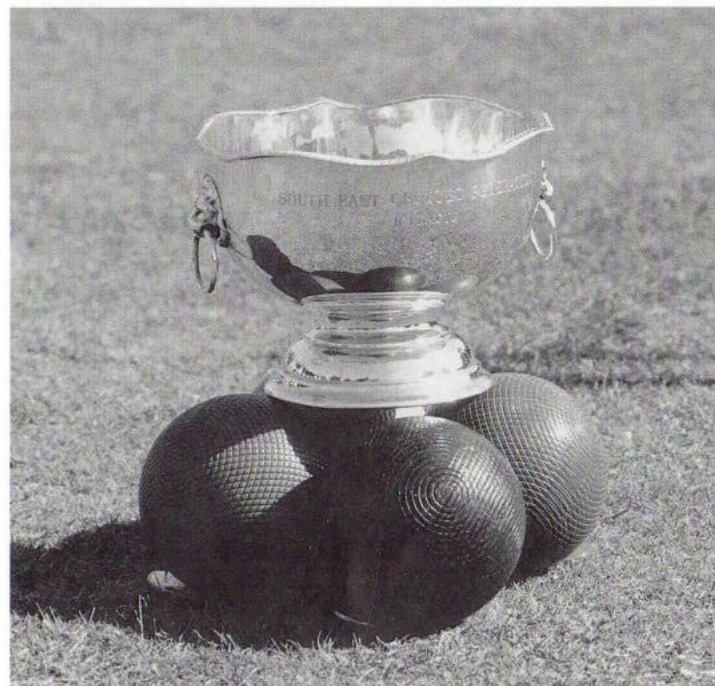
Please would you send me details of the cost, the duration, and the areas of work we will be covering.

M. Howell,  
London.

## S.E. Federation Trophy

Dear Sir,  
Regretfully Preston have not been able to retain the Cup for a second year and will be handing it on at the AGM in November.

However, we have a very nice photograph to keep and enclose a copy in case you would wish to publish it in "Croquet".



The South East Federation Cup.

With best wishes to all clubs for 1992,

Beryl Irwin,

Chairman,

Preston LT & CC, Brighton.

## Cover Photos

Dear Sir  
More than one of your cover photographs recently have, in my opinion, left much to be desired, but the current offering is really the limit, or should I say, more appropriately, the bottom.

In one of the articles inside a lady is quoted as saying "I'd pay him to buy a bigger pair of shorts". She was not referring to this gentleman, so far as I know, but the remark could equally apply to him. Trousers would be an even better buy, but REALLY - we don't want to look at such a posture at all, whatever the garb.

Diana Perry,  
Budleigh Salterton.

Dear Sir,  
Fame at last! For me that is!!

Never did I think that I would make the front cover of the Magazine.

The man facing is Doctor Robert Bawden, my partner in the Bury St Edmunds Team when

playing at the National Trust East Anglia Tournament at Wimpole Hall in Cambridgeshire on 30th July 1989. Note the long grass - always a problem at Wimpole!!

Incidentally Dr Robert was the first Classic winner in '87.

Last weekend we played at the Kings Lynn Indoor Leisure Park on the carpet with Timer. The Club was offered 4 games and we took 7 players to enjoy the fun -

(c) Games need less time than in usual bisque usage.

(d) Break building is encouraged.

The pattern of play was much as previously: 65 entrants of handicaps ranging from -1 to 18, all handicaps represented except 1½ and 6. Play was in blocks of 6 followed by a Knockout for block winners and seconds.

The first surprise was in the composition of the quarter finals of the Knockout. In the two previous years the eight handicaps there were: 14, 9, 5, 4, 3½, 1½, ½ and minus ½ in 1989; 14, 11, 5, 4, 2½, 2, 1½ and ½ in 1990. But this year the players who got there were a 5½, two 13's, 15, 16 and three 18's, with the 15 beating a 13 in the final. One example doesn't tell us everything, but perhaps bisque taking is catching on down the ranks and maybe handicaps need some adjustment.

The other surprise was that, even so, almost a dozen games of the 180 needed over 3 hours, though at their start more than 25 bisques were sticking out of the ground. In these games bisques still got taken only to avoid losing the innings just as though only 4 bisques separated say a 13 and a 17. Aunt Emma still lives! Why is it that long bisquers don't take the trouble to watch middle bisquers' games to learn a bit.

As to the quickness of our full bisque games, it has been suggested to me that our 2 hours on average is caused by the high number of scratch players here. For them the full bisque game with scratch as base is just the same as an ordinary handicap game, for which two hours is all that is needed. So I decided to look at the time needed by the various levels of handicaps in the 180 games played. The results are shown in the table in which the 65 entrants are divided by handicap into six groups of roughly equal size.

The three left-hand columns in the table refer to the Cheltenham 1991 full bisque event in which there was no time limit. Column 3 gives the average duration of all the games played by those given in column 1. The right hand column gives the average time limit needed in normal handicap games, without time limits, when the play was against the whole range of handicaps.

Handicaps	Number of players	Time needed for 1991 Full Bisque	Time needed in normal h'cap play
-1 to 1	10	1hr 50m	1hr 55m
2 to 3½	11	1hr 50m	2hr 20m
4 to 6½	11	2hr 01m	2hr 35m
7 to 11	11	2hr 01m	2hr 50m
12 to 14	10	2hr 16m	2hr 50m
15 to 18	12	2hr 15m	3hr 00m
Overall play			
-1 to 18	65	2hr 03m	2hr 30m

I really enjoyed it.

Kind regards and Christmas Greetings,

Bryn Lewis,

Bury St Edmunds.

You win some, lose some - Ed.

## The Full Bisque Game

Dear Sir,  
The Cheltenham Club again played its season-long Big Handicap under full bisque rules. Though there were two surprises, previous findings were confirmed: (a) Scratch as base gives no advantage to low bisquers as some feared. (b) Scratch as base has the virtue of simplicity avoiding confusion in the number to be used.

These figures come from the hundreds of such games timed from 1971 to 1989 inclusive. They have been marginally adjusted periodically to account for the changes in handicap values. (An initial report with details of the recording method used was given in *Croquet* No 139, page 13.)

This review of the 1991 timings shows that the long bisquers, a third of the company, in fact had little overall influence. Their own high figure of 2 hours results chiefly from a minority of the entrants whose games drifted on because there was a failure to use bisques except in defence.

Edgar Jackson,  
Cheltenham.

## Balaclava Syndrome

Dear Sir

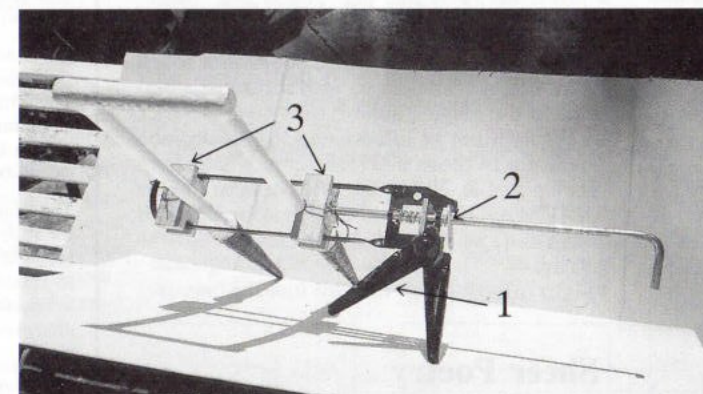
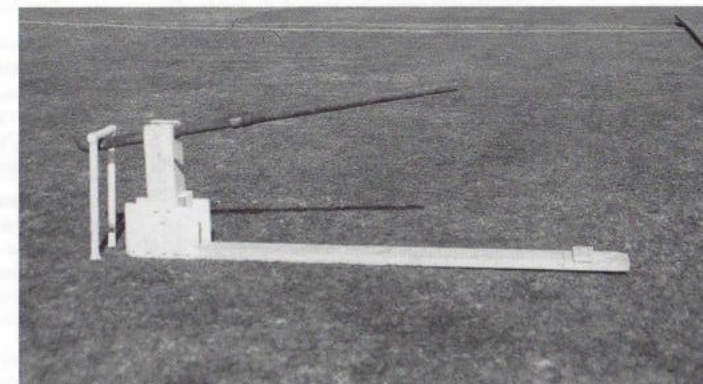
I am writing in reply to Eric Solomon's letter about etiquette and the claiming of cannons. In the game as it is currently played there are several occasions where a player hits a ball 20 yards and has to judge where the ball goes off. It is hoped that in the long run players errors will balance out. The character of croquet, which is played in a friendly spirit without fixed referees, is reflected in the rules and etiquette which assume the striker is not going to take a too opportunistic view of where the ball has gone.

Most of us have known of someone who seems to get a lot of 'phantom' roquets or who always shoots at partner near fourth corner on the third turn but never leaves a target or who gets a suspicious number of cannons. Yes, this is galling and it does give these players advantages of which not the least is upsetting the opponent.

Thankfully however in my experience this is a tiny percentage of players. I don't see any reason for the vast majority to stop every time they have a rush to a boundary ball and get an umpire. I, along with most other people I guess, will simply concede my right to a cannon rather than stop and call an umpire. This is my main objection. Why should I lose my right to a cannon just because of an unscrupulous few? I should be able to umpire myself.

I am not going to do a thorough dissection of Eric's rule (a) but it is worth pointing out that it could lead to arguments over whether the striker was in the 7 yard zone or if he was at a good enough angle. The sight of players sprinting after the ball to see where the ball goes is not uncommon now, but will you be able to slide your mallet into the crease or will it be chest across tape?

An idea for Eric which suggests itself from the fact that his rules would stop players getting yard-line cannons at long range is simply to change the rules so that a 3-ball group has to be in contact with the corner. This would wipe out the advantage of the players with 'Balaclava Syndrome' and would be a much neater solution than rules (a) and (b). It would also solve the problem of where to put the ball with Eric's rules if you would have claimed a cannon normally which he hasn't mentioned.



The "lifter" (top) and the clamping device fitted to a hoop (bottom).

If this solution sounds drastic to you, good. I'm not really in favour of banning yard-line cannons - they are probably the most common situation where players can exercise their imagination and improvisation - but maybe Eric would be. It certainly seems to solve all his problems.

In general cannons are over-rated, often players try to be too clever or simply don't judge the reactions of the balls correctly and would have been better getting a nice dolly rush. (Incidentally, if you are coming across the idea of cornering for the first time, ignore what is said about how easy cannons are in "Coaches Corner" and go right into the corners. This is not a hard and fast rule but the exception. If you are 20 yards away you aim at the corner and hope the ball goes into it!)

Overall the etiquette of our game does not need changing.

Most of us are aware of giving the outplayer the benefit of the doubt. If a player rushes a ball from third corner and while he is still there it goes off 5 yards north of fourth corner and claims a cannon it means that player probably needs a good talking to - not that the rules are inadequate.

Robert Fulford, Colchester.

## Hoop Setting

Dear Sir,

At Southwick we keep 11 courts

here, and cheap to make, it calls for a wooden base up to 4 feet long, and some 3 inches wide.

A block of wood, say 3ins square and 12 ins high, is screwed into this base, from underneath, about 4 to 6 inches from one end of the base, and is reinforced at the sides with plywood brackets nailed as necessary to give the block stability.

A rebate is cut into the top of the block into which a piece of iron pipe can be fitted as a lever.

The pipe needs to be strong, about 3 feet long, and have a right-angle bend at one end so that it does not slip when placed under the hoop for lifting. Light pressure downwards will release the hoop enough for it then to be lifted by hand.

The second device is more complicated, and is needed to hold hoops at a fixed internal width when setting them. Some 70% of our hoops start too wide, so it is a problem. Designed by Arthur Rajotte, an enterprising member of the club, it is basically an adapted sealant gun used by builders.

The device consists of a trigger (1), two blocks of wood (3) cut at top and bottom to slide along the gun's guides and in the middle to fit the hoop wires, and a quick-release mechanism (2) which easily causes the blocks to loosen their grip on the hoop. Bits of wire keep the blocks attached where they are wanted.

The hoop width is fixed, with the aid of the C.A. Hoop Gauge, before any marker holes are made on the grass; then the carrot points are pressed down to mark hole centres.

The holes are then prepared (with or without a bit and brace - we use a 5/8" bit to take out a core of earth), to receive the hoop and the hoop hammered home in the usual way. Make sure that the grip does not change with the vibration of the hammer blows by checking with the hoop gauge from time to time.

We use this device when re-setting hoops even if some 'gardening' has been done to the holes to make them tighter.

Getting the hoops square and upright calls for the invention of another gadget - but why re-invent the spirit level?

We are experimenting with a further device designed by yet another enterprising member of the club, Clarie Rudland, which is similar to that illustrated in the March 1991 'Croquet' because we have hoops which start with too narrow a width. Perhaps all our problems would disappear if hoops were made in the first place to a precise specification!

John Eardley-Simpson,  
Brighton.

## Count your Bisques!

Dear Sir,  
The September 1991 issue of Croquet included a report by Vincent Camroux on Compton 24-28 June. It is a tidy piece of reporting but I consider his comment about one match to be offensive. At the conclusion of his report of a match in which more bisques were used than were due he says "One can't help wondering about their receivers".

My wife and I were the receivers. We are both eleven handicap. The five bisques used were determined, collected and carried to the lawn by the (by far) most experienced and skilful player in the match. We did not seek details of the calculation. Neither do I recall them being offered. We had no reason to think that he would take either fewer or more bisques than we were due. Clearly he was a little careless. I believe our opponents shared our view that we were equally careless. This seemed to be the manager's conclusion when he learned of the error. We accept our share of the blame but not more.

This letter has a message for all players. Always check the bisques you give or receive. In our case it has taken a little of the fun out of croquet and we would have avoided an offensive innuendo.

John and Margaret Green, Rottingdean.

## Those Swingers

Dear Sir,  
In response to Heather Handley's letter (*Croquet* No 217) what on earth is wrong with swinging your mallet a few times to assess the line of aim? If a player feels comfortable with his style, and swinging his mallet enables him to hit accurately then so be it - it certainly isn't 'ruining' croquet.

Perhaps Ms Handley would also like to see players placing their foot on the ball when playing croquet shots.

Sacha Standen, Ealing.

## A Crisp Account

Dear Sir,  
I enclose a crisper account of the Selectors' Weekend. I apologise for the gratuitous use of the word Newcastle but it was put in specially to please David Appleton.

Waiting for Godard or plumber - Blue Peter over Ark on sea shore - Great Scott surely Williams wins Jenkins' ear or nicks Vincent van Griethuysen's - Cart her Coals or Alum to Newcastle for Davis? Cup.

Nick Smiths-Walker, Norwich.



A rush to lay up on the West boundary! Cherryburn House, Tyneside (National Trust).

## Agricultural Croquet

Dear Sir,  
It is always an honour to play a game of such particular significance that the report singles it out for special mention (see M. Saurin - A "Poor Do" at Harrow, Issue 217), but I feel that I must write as he has failed to do the game justice.

The exceptional agricultural conditions on Lawn 3 meant that all spherical objects had to be inspected to avoid the mistake of either striking or roqueting a Turnip. Notwithstanding the above it was the managers' remark after we had quit the lawn that summed up the game's complex tactics and deep psychological struggle which should be remembered: "Magnificent! What a pity there had to be loser - there should have been two!"

Nick Harris, Norwich.

## Croquet Hotels

Dear Sir,  
Recently the *Daily Telegraph* featured an article about croquet and listed a number of hotels which advertised facilities for playing.

This was taken up by a member from Reading who wrote to the paper pointing out that at many hotels facilities were sub-standard and should more properly be described as "fun-croquet".

From personal experience I agree most strongly, having found that so-called croquet lawns, including some named in the above article, consist of a few wire hoops in a rough piece of grass, sometimes with shrubs or a bird bath in the playing area.

Would it not be of advantage to Association members if those establishments which have good playable lawns were listed in future issues of "CROQUET"? I am sure that members, if requested, would provide information for the listing.

Allen Jenkin, Bath.

## Sheer Poetry

Dear Sir,  
I offer a limerick relating to my favourite piece of legislation, namely Law 22(a) dealing with a ball at rest that moves and apparently even scores a hoop point for itself between strokes:

## ENTICEMENT

When my ball for itself clearly scored a Quick succession of hoop points in order,  
Me thought: "Oo, now I've 'ticed  
An outdoor poltergeist  
Or some camouflaged spectral marauder."

Tommy Cameron, York.

## POET'S CORNER

## A Fantasy

(With apologies to Lewis Carroll)

The sun was shining at the club,  
Shining with all his might.  
He did his very best to make  
the lawns all smooth and light.  
It's just as well he did because  
of flooding in the night.

The Narwhal and the Musicman  
were walking to their court.  
They spoke no word at all because  
they were immersed in thought.  
"An easy game", the Narwhal mused,  
"I'm one he cannot thwart."

"A roquet," said the Musicman,  
"is what I chiefly need.  
Rushes, hoops and triple peels  
are very good indeed.  
Well, Narwhal, if you're ready now,  
you toss and we'll proceed."

"But wait a bit," the Narwhal said,  
"before we have our toss,  
for one of us is sure to win,  
the other have a loss."  
The Musicman smile wryly and  
observed the weeds and moss.

The balls were round as round can be.  
The hoops were tight as tight.  
The Musicman had mallet-twitch  
(been up too late last night).  
"No trouble," thought the Narwhal then,  
"he can't put up a fight."

Cigar alight, the Narwhal struck:  
produced a cheeky tice.  
The Musicman just shook his head:  
"I've missed those once or twice.  
A join-up on the boundary  
would be the best advice."

The Narwhal hit, took off and rushed:  
for four-back he was bound.  
He split and scooped and did not fail  
to take the break around.  
While this went on the Musicman  
observed from distant ground.

A barrel full of Boddington's  
sat on the clubhouse shelf.  
"Come taste of me," she seemed to beg,  
"I cannot drink myself."  
"I'll help you," said the Musicman,  
"Es ist schon zehn nach elf."

He hit the lift and played two breaks  
as if a man possessed.  
We don't know what it was that made  
him play his very best.  
"Oh dear oh dear," the Narwhal quoth,  
"I think I need a rest."

"A pint?" the Minstrel offered him,  
the pegout neatly done.  
"Aye, grand," replied the Narwhal, beat,  
"I could just do with one."  
But just too late, because, you see,  
They'd drunk it...everyone?

CLANGER.

## Advice From A Coach

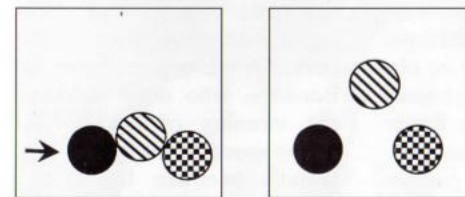
Wield the mallet boldly, sirrah,  
To and fro before a mirror;  
This drill seeks out inept backswings  
And mallet head meanderings.  
But better still, it overturns  
A false idea from Robert Burns,  
Who reckoned that God didnae gie us  
Sight of ourselves as others see us.  
Tommy Cameron.

## \* Ian Plummer Provides More Tips from his Intermediate Coaching Course...

Section 8  
SPECIAL SHOTS

In this section we consider some of the details of cannons, peels, promotions and jumps. They are obviously best demonstrated and only the major considerations will be covered here. These shots need practising. The 'original' ball in the cannon is the one which was initially on the yard line or corner spot. The word cannon has two distinct meanings; a cannon is a croquet shot involving three or more balls in contact; "to cannon" is the same as "to promote" - to cause a ball to move by striking it with the croqueted ball.

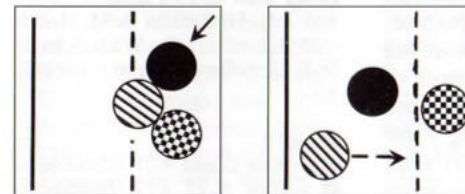
8.1 Cannons are well described in books, e.g. "The World of Croquet". They are



Simple Cannon.

highly formalised and a simple prescription can be given for each corner depending on which hoop is required. The standard cannons rely on the striker's ball roqueting and rushing the original ball in the croquet stroke. The less standard varieties of cannons are given below.

8.2 The simple (or worm) cannon is not really a proper cannon and it fails to get both balls away from the boundary. It generates a perfectly aligned rush though. The striker's ball and original ball are arranged either side



Modified Simple Cannon.

of the roqueted ball so that their centres point in the correct direction for the required rush. The centre, roqueted ball, is placed in contact with both with its edge just overlapping the centre line of the two outer balls. A little tap causes the centre ball to move out sideways and the rush to remain pointed in the original direction. There is another (more reliable) way to play the equivalent shot which guarantees that the croqueted ball is well away from the rush.

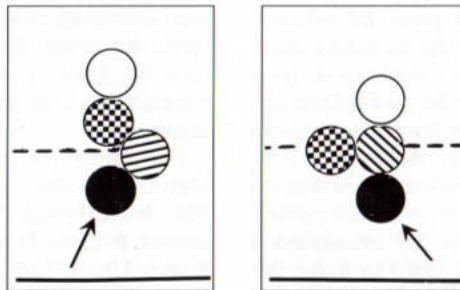
8.3 The modified simple cannon. The essence of this cannon is that a small roll shot (or stop shot) is played once the balls are in

position. The roll shot however is towards the boundary which does not move the original ball and both the striker's ball and croqueted ball are moved to inside the yard line area. The croqueted ball is then replaced on the yard line away from the original ball and the striker's ball now has a rush on the original ball.

8.4 The super worm (or promotion) cannon. This is a cannon used when you do not require to roquet the forward ball in the cannon, yet want to get the balls out into the lawn. For instance there may be a pick up ball close by and you have a corner cannon. The balls for the cannon are aligned almost in a straight line. Small kinks in the alignment allow you to send the balls in useful directions. A substantial roll shot is played and the striker's ball ends up near the adjacent pick up ball whilst the other balls are sent into the lawn.

8.5 The wafer cannon. This is a cannon in which the front and back balls are separated by a very small gap, the centre ball lying well off to the side. This is played as if it were a rush. The centre ball can however travel a few feet which must be taken into account when lining up the balls. By aiming towards the centre ball both the front and centre balls can be sent large distances.

8.6 Four ball cannons. These crop up reasonably often, especially in the fourth turn of the game when everyone has been shooting to the East boundary. To help the description the striker's ball, the ball being croqueted, and the ball to be croqueted, are



Normal Four-ball Cannon (left) and Non-standard Four-ball Cannon (right).

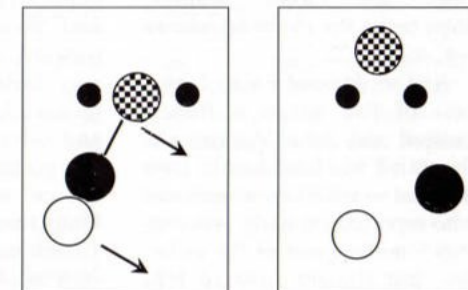
called the first, second, and third ball. The intention is to croquet a ball into the lawn, roquet the ball following that, and promote the fourth ball. The fourth ball can be promoted using the roqueted ball or croqueted ball.

8.7 The normal four ball cannon. In this the fourth ball is promoted by the third ball in the cannon. Consider that you are playing from the East boundary by hoop 4, for hoop 1. The striker's ball is placed in contact with the roqueted ball to send it to hoop 2. The third ball (to be roqueted) is placed in contact with it, to its left and finally the fourth ball is placed in contact with the last ball so that the lines of centres of the two

balls point towards hoop 1. Any movement of the third ball means that the fourth ball must travel along the lines of the centres. A heavy roll is played on the striker's ball to send the second ball to hoop 2, promote the fourth ball to hoop 1, and roquet the third ball into the lawn. You now have a four-ball break by taking off from the third ball to the pioneer at hoop 1.

8.8 Non-standard four-ball cannon. This differs from the above since the fourth ball, later to be croqueted, is placed in contact with the ball from which you are taking croquet in the cannon. This has been called the 'Tee' cannon. Taking the example above, the first, second, and fourth balls are placed in a straight line pointing at hoop 1. The third ball is placed in contact with the second ball to its left. A good thump aiming left sends the fourth ball accurately to hoop 1. The roqueted third ball ends up by the South boundary and the second ball in the centre of the South end of the lawn. The third ball is stopped to hoop 2 and pioneer at hoop 1 approached. A four-ball break awaits after running hoop 1. This does not sound as satisfactory as the normal cannon, but it can be improved slightly by arranging the balls more in a 'Y' than a 'T'. To be practised before use.

8.9 Promotion cannons. These are real fun. In essence you arrange that the forward ball in another ball causing it to move (a promotion) to a favourable position. They are a serious tool in a game.



Promotion Peel. The croqueted ball promotes the peelee, whilst the striker takes position.

8.10 One classic instance of this is the rover peel when the peelee is stuck in the jaws. By arranging to take croquet from just to the side of the hoop on an enemy ball, the enemy ball can be croqueted into the forward ball peeling it whilst your striker's ball takes hoop position.

8.11 Another frequent instance is when your opponent sticks in a hoop off their partner ball and you hit in. You cannot get a rush on the hoop ball. If however you roquet the partner ball you can use that to cannon the hoop ball out of the hoop whilst positioning your stiker's ball to obtain a rush on that ball. It requires a little practice to get the positions of the striker's ball correct.

To be continued in our next issue...

Compton: 20-22 September

## SOUTH OF ENGLAND CHAMPIONSHIP

### Fulford Justifies Seeding and Gains Revenge on World Champion

Most of the players from the preceding week's handicap and class events had headed home or to tournaments new, but a few of us were fortunate to have the opportunity to remain and do battle with the 'names' who arrived on Friday morning.

In the end, there were no surprises in the first round, though Michael Llewellyn-Williams took the first game off the current World Champion and immediately sent out for a bottle of champagne. However, in the time it took him to try and organise his celebration, John had rapidly won the second game +24TP. The third game, in John's words, 'was a bit sweaty' and he eventually won +3, leaving Michael to celebrate what might have been.

David Goacher upset the seeding by beating Martin French +22, +19 in the second round but then lost rather easily to Robert Fulford -26TP, -24QP in the semi-final. In the bottom half of the draw, the second semi-final matched the totally contrasting styles of Ian Burridge and John Walters: John being the eventual winner -4, +17, +22.

And so dawned Finals Day - best of five between Robert Fulford and John Walters. At the start I was banished to lawn five and so relied on a spectator who reported on early proceedings - nothing out of the ordinary, just straight forward brilliance. Game one to JW, games 2&3 to RF, and game 4 to JW. There was a moment during game 3 which roused the gathered multitudes from their post-lunch somnolence: Robert hesitated after his ball had just run hoop 5; whilst he was cogitating his next shot, the ball decided to roll back into the jaws of the hoop. Question - had the striker taken his stance before the ball rolled back? A flurry of activity between a group of referees (what is the collective noun - a deliberation!) who eventually decreed that Robert was not in his stance and so, end of turn.

It was unfortunate that most people had left by the start of the fifth game and therefore



The Scottish CA and English CA teams pose before their match at the Bush Club, Edinburgh, in July this year.

missed the exciting finale. John took his first ball round to 4-back and, when Robert missed the lift, the temptation was to say 'that's that'. However John missed the return roquet after having run hoop one with his second ball which, unfortunately for John, ended up next to one of Robert's balls on the south boundary.

Robert took full advantage going all the way round, peeling and then pegging out John's forward ball. Then ensued a very tactical game of cat-and-mouse. John hit in at one stage and set up a 2-ball break (was this going to be an Ed Dymock special) from hoop 2 to 1-back. Unfortunately the approach to 1-back meant that there was no rush available to 2-back having run the hoop. He attempted a long roll but failed to make the hoop. The next 45 minutes saw Robert's cautious progress of his second ball punctuated by some very close misses off long range shots by John. In the last minutes of daylight, Robert pegged out to take the last game by 6 and thus retain the Championship and the O'Callaghan Gold Cup.

Away from the main event, play had progressed in the less tense atmosphere of the Plate where several of the players had relaxed sufficiently to demonstrate their prowess. Ian Burridge was seen 'regularly' attempting to emulate Roger Bannister and beat 4 minutes for an all-round break. Richard

Hilditch exhibited his non-chalance and talent for multiple peelings. (Unfortunately he obviously hasn't read the chapter entitled 'must not stick in Rover with own ball having just completed five peels of partner ball').

Martin French was observed playing from a kneeling position but whether this was to ease his back or in a state of supplication is not known. Not to be outdone, the otherwise competent manager, Roger Wood, was seen seemingly being catapulted from the lower branches of a tree by lawn 4 and landing unceremoniously in a heap in corner one.

The winner of the plate was David Goacher over Martin French. Although they both recorded 6 wins, David won the Sussex Union Cup by virtue of his having beaten Martin in the main event. The Peeling Prize was won by John Walters who, with a total of 5, had one more than Robert Fulford.

The over-riding impression of my first Championship was the tenseness and expectation of defeat which pervaded this final weekend in comparison to the convivial atmosphere of the preceding week. It seemed that Croquet dominated the conversation with past and current performance being the sole topic of discussion. I also learnt a new phrase 'Oh hill, hill' which apparently means 'Damn, I've missed the roquet/hoop approach again'.

There is always talk of comparison between Croquet and Snooker and watching play at this level emphasises the comparison - the controlled rushing and accurate positioning of pioneers equates to the close control of the cue ball in Snooker, and the long-distance hit-ins reminiscent of the long pots at Snooker which recover or set up breakers.

Personalities have a lot of similarity as well - the marvellous, seemingly effortless, flow and control of Fulford reminds me of Ray Reardon in his prime and contrasts strongly with the more manufactured and laboured style of Walters which resembles that of Cliff Thorburn. And then there is that Jimmy White impersonator, Ian Burridge, who does not know the meaning of caution and whose speed of play must occasionally overtake his thought process. His, though, is the style that will attract the audience if our sport ever becomes a media event.

#### RESULTS

##### South of England Championship (O'Callaghan Gold Cup)

###### Round 1

R.I. Fulford bt D. Magee +17 +13; D.L. Gaunt bt P. Howell +7 +8; D.J. Goacher bt Miss A. McDiarmid +23 +2; M. French bt J.E. Guest -18 +17 +14TP; I.J. Burridge bt Dr R. Wood +26 +14; D.W. Shaw bt L. Palmer -14 +17 +2; J.R. Hilditch bt A.M. Hornby -17 +2 +21; J.O. Walters bt Dr M.J. Llewellyn-Williams -6 +24TP +3.

###### Round 2

Fulford bt Gaunt +21 +2; Goacher bt French +22 +19; Burridge bt Shaw +17 +6TPO; Walters bt Hilditch +23TP +26TP.

###### Semi-Finals

Fulford bt Goacher +26TP +24QP; Walters bt Burridge -4 +17 +22.

###### Final

Fulford bt Walters -17QP +26TP +5 -17TP +6TPO.

##### Sussex Union Cup

6 wins: Goacher, French.  
5 wins: Burridge, Palmer.  
4 wins: Gaunt, Guest, McDiarmid.  
3 wins: Hilditch, Llewellyn-Williams, Magee, Shaw.  
2 wins: Howell, Wood.  
0 wins: Hornby.

Bowdon: 23-26 August

## THE NORTH OF ENGLAND CHAMPIONSHIP

From Mark Saurin

With 8 out of the top 10 players in the country competing, in order to win this year the championship would have no easy match. The 4 seeds showed displeasure afterwards at receiving byes in the first round.

This was clearly evident from World Champion, Robert Fulford, who lost the first game to Debbie Cornelius, late on Friday evening, obviously shocked by Debbie's tactics of shooting when safety looked the better choice. Many expected Robert

wristy winning 2-1 against Paul Smith.

Colin Wild lost 2-1 to Alan Sutcliffe but he took longer than normal because David Goacher locked him in a hut by accident thus stopping him from bolting on to the lawn upon his opponent's breakdown.

As the weather got better so did the standard of play. Out went Cornelius to Burridge playing steadily rather than brilliantly which meant a clash in the semi-finals with Chris



The two finalists in the Northern Championship with the Trophy: Champion David Openshaw (right) and Ian Burridge.

to win the next two games comfortably on Saturday morning but how wrong they were to be! Robert did win the second rather scappily and continued his below par form in the third.

To the spectators delight, the third finished in a 2-ball game with Debbie having pegged out 2 balls. I seem to remember possibly 2-back against penult. Well, things progressed to 4-back (Robert) against rover. Debbie ran rover and instead of trickling to peg with Robert in position at 4-back she went to middle of west boundary. Robert ran 4-back took position at penult, Debbie missed the peg, Robert ran penult and took position at rover, Debbie went between penult and peg, Robert ran rover then missed at the opponent ball and Debbie pegged out.

Out also in the first round was David Maugham 2-1 to Steve Comish but other big names went through although Irwin won two traditionally close games against Mark Saurin and Chris Haslam looked awfully

Clarke was set-up. Chris had progressed quietly to the last four with the help of his opponents, in particular John Walters who's 'tight 4-ball breaks' needed to be taken with a pinch of salt.

In the other half, like Cornelius, Comish had found it too hard to reproduce his earlier form, allowing Irwin to set up a GB clash with Capt. Openshaw who had no trouble in overcoming Chris Haslam this time. Chris' mind seemed to be more on parties than croquet.

In the Egyptian, Fulford was the only one to complete the many sextuples attempted. It was quite a turn which finished with a peg out from the South boundary - easy enough you might think! Not when you allow your striker's ball to drift into the back of rover. The finishing shot, off a wire, playing for hill got approximately a foot of it, to hit centre-peg!!!

So Saturday passed, Sunday and semi-finals arrived. The manager was heard to say to spectators that Clarke/Burridge

Roehampton: 9-13 September

## LONGMAN BOWL

### Christine Osmond Wins Ladies Second Six

From Beryl Saunders

Roehampton Club is set in the heart of London Suburbia with continuous heavy traffic roaring right past the gates. And in the club there is constant bustle, tennis players rushing off to play on countless courts, golfers pushing their trolleys to the first tee, streams of parents and children making their way to the new indoor swimming complex. Yet in the midst of all this there is a quiet oasis in an almost rural setting where enthusiastic croquet players congregate. A perfect setting for the Ladies' Second Six.

All six of us greatly enjoyed our croquet, playing each other twice over 5 days, 10 games in all, and the weather, apart from one day, was quite superb. A newly installed watering system has apparently greatly improved the condition of the turf - certainly without it the exceptionally dry weather of the previous few months would have made the conditions very difficult. As it was, it was difficult enough for some of us because of the very tight and firm hoops set each day by our Manager and Referee, Paul Macdonald; I don't think I was alone in hoping that he would have been more lenient, especially towards the end of the week!

Christine Osmond emerged as a clear winner of the Longman Bowl, winning 9 of her 10 games and losing only to Pat Macdonald. Pauline Healy was a worthy runner-up, winning 7 games out of 10. Perhaps the

most outstanding feature of the week, apart from the tight hoops, was the excellent long roqueting of Pat Macdonald and Kay Yeoman.

By starting promptly at 9.30am each day, by not taking long over our lunches, and by expeditious play, we were able on most days to get over to Hurlingham in the late afternoon to watch some of the play in the World Championships to see how croquet should be played and to inspire us for our next day's play.

Our thanks go to Roehampton Club for staging this event and providing such excellent facilities.

#### RESULTS

1. Mrs C. Osmond (9 wins) beat Mrs P. Healy +10, +15; Mrs P. Macdonald +3; Mrs B. Mansfield +16, +9; Mrs B. Saunders +7, +6; and Mrs K. Yeoman +3, +10.

2. Mrs P. Healy (7 wins) beat Mrs P. Macdonald +21, +2; Mrs B. Mansfield +4; Mrs B. Saunders +12, +15; and Mrs K. Yeoman +16, +14.

=3. Mrs P. Macdonald (4 wins) beat Mrs C. Osmond +5; Mrs B. Mansfield +15, +12; and Mrs B. Saunders +7.

=3. Mrs B. Mansfield (4 wins) beat Mrs P. Healy +7; Mrs B. Saunders +9, +8; and Mrs K. Yeoman +14.

=5. Mrs B. Saunders (3 wins) beat Mrs P. Macdonald +9; and Mrs K. Yeoman +5, 8.

=5. Mrs K. Yeoman (3 wins) beat Mrs P. Macdonald +7, +8; and Mrs B. Mansfield +8.

incredibly seems to have developed his shooting ability. He may fancy his chances in the world championship should Fulford exit. Maugham won the Egyptian beating Fulford in a shoot-out.

#### RESULTS

##### The Championship of the North of England

Round 1  
I.J. Burridge bt K.M.H. Aiton +16, +7; A. Saurin bt C. Southern +12, +15; J.O. Walters bt J.E. Guest +17, +13; D.J. Goacher bt F.I. Maugham +13, +25; S. Comish bt D.B. Maugham -17, +17, +3; B.J. Storey bt N.G. Hyne +10, +16; C.J. Haslam bt P.L. Smith +23, -14, +12; A.F. Sutcliffe bt C.H. Wild +13, -3, +22.

Round 2  
Burridge bt Saurin +18, +26; Miss D.A. Cornelius bt \*R.I. Fulford +13, -14, +1; Walters bt Goacher +26, -17, +26; \*C.D. Clarke bt J.R. Hilditch +18, +26TP; Comish bt Storey +9, +26TP; \*C.J. Irwin bt M.A. Saurin +4, +3; Haslam bt Sutcliffe -3, +17, +10; \*D.K. Openshaw bt A. Bennet +22, +6.

Round 3  
Burridge bt Cornelius +24, +17; Clarke bt Walters +15, +20; Irwin bt Comish +26TP, +14; Openshaw bt Haslam +23, +26.

Semi-Finals  
Burridge bt Clarke +19, -17, +4; Openshaw bt Irwin +4, +15.

Final  
Openshaw bt Burridge +19, +17.

## CHAMPIONSHIPS

Southport: 2-6 September

## THE CHAIRMANS SALVER

## David Goacher Retains Salver: Strong Challenge by Burrige

From Tim Haste

Fine, sunny weather greeted Southport's second Chairman's Salver. The event was notable for contrasting styles, frequently attempted triples, many pegged out games and close competition right to the end.

**Day 1.** David Goacher, last year's winner, established himself in contention as his steady style of play left him unbeaten after three rounds, while Ian Burrige's quick approach led to similar success.

In the first round, Ian was soon on 4-back and stick, only to find himself pegged out by Jeff Dawson, whose other ball was still on 1. Jeff was however unable to make much progress, leaving a number of long shots, and eventually Ian hit from 30yd to finish +15. Against David Foulser, Goacher uncharacteristically missed a peg out from about 4yd, but shortly afterwards he shot for his own ball on a lift shot, rushing it to within 4ft of the peg. This time there was no mistake: Goacher +11.

**Day 2.** The day started with a rapid, high class game between Ian and Lewis Palmer. Only one error was made, but it was sufficient to decide the game, Palmer +25. On the front lawn, David Goacher found himself pegged out when for 2-back, by Alan Sutcliffe whose second ball was on 4-back. David was unable to take advantage of several opportunities for hitting in, including after Alan had missed the peg-out with his front ball, the back one rolling on. Eventually Alan was able to finish after trickling up to the stick

+6. In a further pegged out game, David Foulser hit in twice with the single ball against Jeff Dawson, going from 2-back to 4-back, then 4-back to penultimate, but was unable to make the rush to rover and could not hit in again.

The afternoon saw Danny Palmer on the receiving end of triples by David Goacher and an improving Jeff Dawson. Alan was less lucky than in the morning. After pegging out David Wiggins he left his opponent with a shortish lift shot and a ball in the lawn. David hit to go out from 3-back immediately, +4.

**Day 3.** The joint leaders David Goacher and Ian Burrige played at the end of the first series; David won +24. Andrew Hope, after a lean spell, achieved a clean sweep against David Foulser. David soon recovered, with a win against Alan Sutcliffe, then a +26TP (40mins) in the eighth turn against David Wiggins. David Goacher took a two-game lead, winning from 4-back against Jeff having been pegged out again, Ian losing a two-ball ending against David Wiggins after himself being hampered after rover. However this did not last long, Lewis Palmer beating the leader to reduce the margin to 1 game again.

**Day 4.** In the morning Ian beat Lewis after pegging him out to maintain his challenge for the Salver. In the final round of the day, the manager had the pleasant sight of triples being attempted simultaneously on all four lawns. However, only David Goacher was successful, finishing +26TP in text-book style with the rover peel

going to 3-back, this after a +23TP in the previous round. The day finished with half the players still in contention and several chances of a tie.

**Day 5.** In the morning, the situation resolved itself with David Wiggins beating David Goacher and Ian Burrige winning against Jeff Dawson to set a 'final' between Goacher and Burrige in the last round. Against Jeff, Ian preferred the option of a double peel and peg-out against his opponent, rather than a triple on his own forward ball, leaving a 2-ball ending, 4-back versus 4. This lead was soon decisive.

The deciding game started cautiously, with few early points scored. Ian was first to 4-back, however David hit the lift and followed suit. Ian elected to take the short lift, missing into fourth corner. David started a standard triple, going well until an over-hit rush on the pelee at rover led to a breakdown with both balls still on rover. Ian took his 4-back ball to rover, but although the lift was missed David soon regained the innings and took one ball to the peg.

After a spell of long shooting Ian regained the initiative but went off the lawn when splitting to 3-back and 4-back from near 2-back. Following some tense play

David eventually rushed to beyond rover, made the hoop and laid up for the peg. Ian missed the long shot, David finished +7 to retain the trophy by a single game.

In the end, David's consistency triumphed over Ian's speed and flair. Jeff Dawson's careful, accurate play gave him joint third place with David Wiggins, always in contention. To close, many thanks to the Southport and Birkdale Club for hosting the event, and to all who contributed to the pleasant occasion.

## RESULTS

1. D.J. Goacher (11 wins) beat I.J. Burrige +24, +7; J.P. Dawson +19, +9; D.R. Foulser +11, +25; A.B. Hope +14, +23TP; L.J. Palmer +26TP; A.F. Sutcliffe +26TP; and D.C.D. Wiggins +5.

2. I.J. Burrige (10 wins) beat Dawson +15, +6; Foulser +22, +3; Hope +25, +14; Palmer +3; Sutcliffe +21, +17; and Wiggins +12.

3. J.P. Dawson (9 wins) beat Foulser +2, +17; Hope +14, +11; Palmer +24TP, +18; Sutcliffe +17, +9; and Wiggins +17TP.

4. D.C.D. Wiggins (9 wins) beat Burrige +12, Dawson +6; Foulser +25; Goacher +17; Hope +16; Palmer +4, +17; and Sutcliffe +4, +18.

5. L.J. Palmer (7 wins) beat Burrige +24; Foulser +26; Goacher +23; Hope +6, +5; and Sutcliffe +20, +9.

6. A.B. Hope (4 wins) beat Foulser +26, +24; Sutcliffe +18, and Wiggins +17.

7. D.R. Foulser (3 wins) beat Palmer +8; Sutcliffe +11; and Wiggins +26TP.

8. A.F. Sutcliffe (3 wins) beat Foulser +10; Goacher +6; and Hope +8.

## The "Crofter" Crossword

The winning solution to "Crofter" No 3 came from: Michael Town, of Farnborough.

The draw for "Crofter" No 4 takes place on 21st December, and the winner will be announced in Issue 220.

Meanwhile here is the solution to No 4.

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

I	M	M	E	D	I	A	T	E	T	O	P	I	S
M	J	O	U	L	Y	R	S	P					
A	U	D	I	O	B	L	A	C	K	B	A	L	L
G	D	R	E	S	E	C	H	E	R	O			
O	B	L	I	T	E	R	A	T	E	R	O	O	T
E	E	O	G	I	S								
R	E	S	I	D	U	E	C	U	T	R	U	S	H
A	E	O											
B	O	X	W	O	O	D	M	A	L	L	E	T	S
B	R	E	A	I	S								
E	R	G	O	H	I	G	H	A	N	D	L	O	W
T	R	C	L	D	G	O	A						
I	R	O	N	A	L	I	B	I	R	O	W	A	N
N	A	S	S	A	L	L	E						
G	E	N	E	T	H	A	M	A	D	R	Y	A	D

Chris Hudson, The Oaklands, Englesea Brook, Near Crewe, Cheshire, CW2 5QW.

Please mark the envelope "Crofter No 5".

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 February, 1992, when a draw will take place.

The first correct solution drawn from those received will earn the sender a £5.00 voucher to be credited against books or goods sold through the CA Office.

## SHORT CROQUET

Southport: 7 September

## Worthy Final to Revived Short Croquet Team Event

From Lawrence Whittaker

After no competition had been held in 1990, the National Short Croquet Team Event was revived with a splendid new (well, it was new in 1913) silver cup from the treasure house of Ranelagh.

Matches in the early rounds all proved decisive, except that at Ashby, where Leicester defeated local rivals South Derbyshire only after a shoot-out employing the skills of Richard White.

There was a lovely day for the final between Pendle and Leicester at Southport on 7 September. The peace of a cloudless sky was punctuated only by the drone of the adjacent radio-controlled model cars - also in national competition, we were told.

The teams were doubly fortunate in having the selected Birkdale balls used over the previous few days for the Chairman's Salver and also Tim Haste, manager of the Chairman's, to set firm, uniform hoops. He and Andrew Bennet provided refereeing to a standard rarely seen in Short Croquet. Several complicated incidents arose to exercise their judgment, with the perverse Short Croquet wiring law helping as usual.

The match itself presented an interesting struggle. All Pendle's points were scored by the improving Coleman brothers, William (20) and James (13). James, in particular, caught the eye with his flowing style and accurate hoop running. Leicester for their part depended heavily on Richard White (5): his brother was absent!

In an evenly shared first round, Leicester's Richard Whiting (11) - +9 winner over Pat George (18) - and John Riddington (18) (-3(T) loser to William Coleman) showed no signs of the virus infection and back trouble which had troubled them in the days before the final. The second round also seemed to be heading for an equal division when James Coleman, in his only significant mistake of the afternoon, missed the peg out against Richard White (still on 1 and 1) and pegged out his backward ball. Richard fought back hard and with gradually improving accuracy came back to win +1 and give Leicester a 5-3 lead.

Pendle came back in the final round, however. James Coleman beat John Riddington easily, but Leicester's hopes were raised when Gary Yates (7½) pegged out William Coleman. The latter, however, immediately hit a long shot to third corner and used his two remaining bisques to go all round and finish in the same turn. Richard White defeated Pat George +9 but in the last game to finish Pendle's experienced David Gillett (7½) who had been trailing against Rick Whiting, took a ball round as time approached,

sticking in 6. With 1½ minutes remaining, David hit in with his backward ball but couldn't finish the job. After time Rick took a complicated route and via a fine take off made the hoop needed to win by one on time and secure the cup for Leicester by 7-5.

A splendid tea resulted from food brought by the teams and drinks provided by Alice Dawson and her helpers. The cup has been duly engraved with the names of previous winners - Nailsea (twice) and Glasgow - and I hope its appearance will encourage a larger entry in 1992.

## Results

## Round 1

Pendle 8, Bowdon 4; Tyneside 9, York 3; Dyffryn 7, Reading 5, High Wycombe scr.; South Derbyshire 7, Leicester 7 (winners), Northampton 4 (won after shoot-out).

## Round 2

Tyneside 5, Pendle 7; Dyffryn 5, Leicester 7.

## Final

Leicester 7, Pendle 5.

Woking: 28-29 September

## A Well-Supported Weekend

From Geoffrey Cuttle

The manager's first mistake at Woking's end of season event was to forget to appoint a victim to write the tournament report and his second was to attempt to do so himself. Consequently the report, like the croquet, will be short.

The event was substantially oversubscribed and the tennis section was prevailed upon to make a further two lawns available so that the numbers could be increased to the maximum possible: twenty-five in the singles and twelve pairs in the doubles. Both events were run as a Swiss, with the proviso that if time ran out they might be curtailed to the minimum necessary to achieve a result, since it was clear that six games a day for each player could be hard to fit in.

Indeed by the middle of the first day the manager felt that it would be remarkable if there were any results at all, as a series of torrential downpours played havoc with the timetable and the

steady drizzle the rest of the time hardly encouraged enthusiastic play. But in fact the contestants responded magnificently to the challenge and only one round was lost that first day, although several of the final games were played in virtual darkness - notably Heather Perren (Bristol) and Margaret Hornby (Perth, Australia) battling it out on lawn 3 by sound alone. It was also remarkable and a great credit to the groundsman that the lawns remained playable throughout the weekend despite their soaking.

Saturday evening everyone recovered their spirits over an excellent dinner in the club house - the last event to be held there before it is gutted and rebuilt over the winter. So visitors please note that everything will be new and spotless at Woking next season. Also note that the Short Croquet Weekend will be earlier in September in the hope of that this will bring less rain and more light.

Sunday brought sunshine, smiles, and an early result in the doubles when Lionel Wharrad (Surbiton) and Gina Pellegrini (Woking) were the only pair without a loss after three rounds. The manager seized his chance, declared them the winners, and concentrated on seeking an equally happy conclusion to the singles. In fact the win there was even more conclusive as after seven rounds Adrian Wadley (Reading) had not lost a game whereas all the rest of us had lost at least two. However, since there was also a goblet for the singles runner up, a four-way tie breaker was required between the players with five wins. Each had ten shots at the peg from the end boundary, and Dennis Goulding (Harrow Oak) gained the second prize with three hits, followed by Roger Schofield (Pendle) and Derek Caporn (Woking) with two each, whilst Roger Hayes (also Woking) narrowly missed every shot.

The prizes were distributed by Marion Nalder and from the comments made as people left it was clear that, despite the weather on Saturday, the tournament had been a great success.

It was also interesting, looking at the detailed results, to see that the short croquet handicapping system appeared to work well both in the singles and the doubles, with no significant bias despite exploiting the full range from three peels (-1) to 7 bisques (18).

## National Short Croquet Competition



The six Short Croquet national finalists (L-R): Basil Townsend (Glasgow), Greg Field (Ludlow), Chris Wood (High Wycombe) who won the event, John Riddington (Leicester), Gary Norman (S. Derbyshire), and John McCullough (York).

## Chris Wood Wins Again

From Peter Dorke (Manager)

Fifteen clubs entered, one hundred and twenty one players, twenty-three of whom went on to the Area Finals in Glasgow, York, Cheltenham, and Leicester. These produced six national finalists who met at Himley Hall on September 29th under the tournament management of Chris Hudson.

The winner at Himley was Chris Wood.

Though not without incident, the competition ran comparatively smoothly, thanks in no small measure to the efficiency and firmness of Tony Antenen, who made management an almost unalloyed pleasure.