#### THROUGH THE HOOP

... the 1993 Membership surge ... Au revoir to CA Office helpers ... welcome to a replacement ... and, is there anyone out there???? ...

tide of cheques and Standing Orders is behind me and the packaging and bulk posting of some 800 plus Membership Cards, Fixtures Books and Handicap Cards to both Tournament and Non-Tournament members closely followed by a further posting of a Club Secretary's pack was effected in two-and-a-half working days thanks to the invaluable assistance of Alan Stockwell (giving a "half" Pauline and to creditable impression of Lazarus!), the indefatigable Brian Macmillan and (Welcome to the Show) Roger Jackman.

The delayed arrival through your letter-box of January "Croquet" made a nonsense of my remarks concerning early pay subscriptions but to all those (the vast majority) who took the trouble to 'get it right' with their cheques - "Thank you". (And to the minuscule minority who had not noticed the passing of the year; invalidated their cheque with differing

lack January, amounts being recorded with its flood- in writing and in figures, or, indeed perpetrated any one of the numerous variations on the rebound cheque routine - I forgive you. After all, what a dreary life this would be if to my mention in this we all ploughed the same column that any one straight furrow.) January was made

blacker by the departure

of two (Well! Two-and-a-

half really) people whose contribution to the running of the CA Office has been significant. I refer, of course, to Alan Stockwell - and his other Eileen Magee. Brian Macmillan, has penned a to all three and there is little I can add. Alan, and Pauline on numerous occasions, have given tremendous support to the guess what I will miss CA here at Hurlingham with Alan's contribution ranging wide and covering good humour and sense not only the routine work of the Office but also providing back-up outside during the playing of the major championships here at Hurlingham. The last call I received from him just a couple of days ago was to intimate that, as

BCM was off on a well earned week's leave 'Stockers' would come in to hold the Secretary's hand! Thank you both. Sincerely

Eileen Magee responded within striking distance of Hurlingham who could spare the odd half-day a week to help out here at the Office would be welcome. It is more than my life's worth to publicize the full impact that lady made by her weekly visits, sufficient to say that, her time, freely given, was always fully utilized and certainly helped to keep graceful acknowledgement the Secretary's head above water on more than one

> As a final word on their collective departures I most, more, even, than the knowledge of practical work ethos, is their sheer of fun. The Secretary Bird, like the proverbial owl, may have a tendency to solemnity. Not with that crew around he won't!!

One door closes, another one opens. Welcome Roger Jackman from High Wycombe who

is testing the waters as a possible replacement for Alan S . Roger arrived in mid January which is the equivalent to commencing a wallpapering job at the holiday shack in Florida as the next typhoon arrives. He has been very quiet so far as he learns new tunes on the Elonex piano but I have high hopes that he will survive the initial immersion and stay with

Finally, finally! If there is another locally based volunteer who can make it into Hurlingham for a couple-or-three hours a week to help out with the mundane tasks of which there are many, please get in touch. The coffee is on the house (it's the only reward I'm afraid, except for the grateful thanks of the CA Sec and the assistance being rendered to "the best game in the world"!!).

The new Season dawns - and a new era? Now, I fully appreciate the significance of the old Chinese curse "May you live in interesting times".

**Tony Antenen** 

lan & Pauline Stockwell also Eileen Magee will be leaving the Croquet Association office staff this month, Eileen moving back to Cheltenham with her husband David who has left the Royal Air Force and taken a civilian job. Alan has decided he needs a break after six years and hopes to spend more time improving his

handicap. Alan who is a cofounder of Vine Road (Barnes) Croquet Club, a great enthusiast for the game came to Hurlingham with his wife Pauline to join the Association. During showing them around he asked me if I needed an assistant. Owing to the increase in the volume of work I was desperate for assistance



L to R: Tony, Brian, Pauline, Alan, Eileen

and welcomed him with opened arms. It was one of my better decisions, he has a marvellous sense of his hand to anything, a real Jack of all trades, his experience as a former Chief Fire Officer was invaluable with all the odd jobs that turned up. Additional to this he brought with him another asset, his wife Pauline who took over the typing times so he won't be in the office, the coffee

hasn't been the same since joined the Mad House. she left.

Although Eileen has only been coming into the humour also willing to put office during the last two years we enjoyed her visits, her assistance was invaluable, she did so much in a short time.

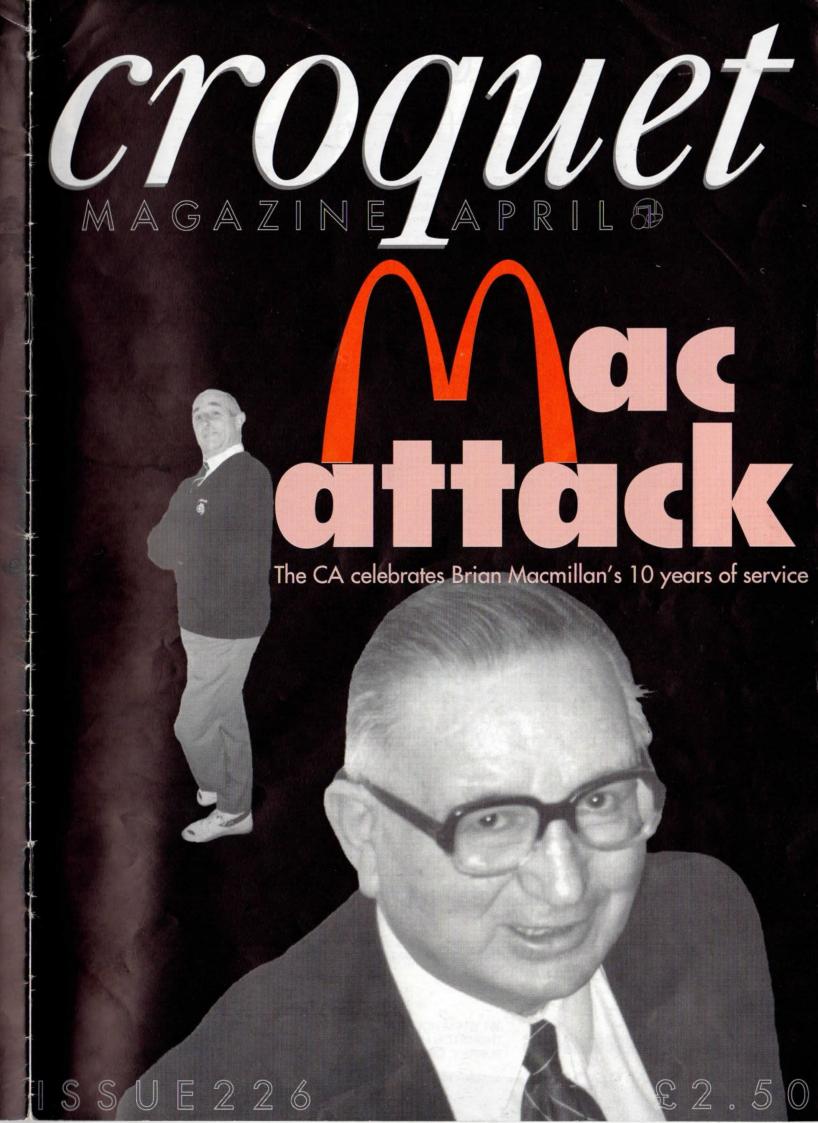
We wish all of them the best of luck. Alan has informed us that he will be willing to come in and assist during the busy completely lost to us.

Alan & Eileen were presented with framed prints by Tony Antenen on behalf of The Croquet Association at a luncheon at Hurlingham.

We have now been fortunate in getting the services of Roger Jackman who will be coming in two days a week to give assistance on the computer, welcome aboard Roger you have now

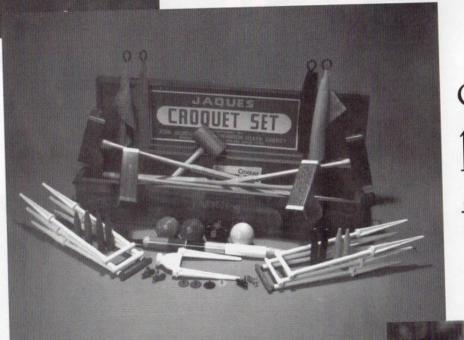
I personally had two additional celebrations other than Christmas. At the beginning of the month I completed ten years with the Association and on the 14th I reached the landmark of becoming seventy years old. I have been very fortunate with my health so you never know you may have me for another ten years.

Macmillan





JAQUES craftsmanship and style has provided the finest equipment for over 100 years



Still leading the way

JAQUES ECLIPSE BALLS Chosen for the 1992 World Championship in USA



SETS from £75 to £700 Custom Made MALLETS, HOOPS, BALLS etc from £25 to £110

Send for Coloured Brochure and Price List from:-



361 WHITEHORSE ROAD, THORNTON HEATH SURREY, CR4 8XP

PHONE: 081-684 4242

# croquet

'Croquet' No. 226 (April 1993) PRICE £2.50 Cover "Mac Attack!" Brian Macmillan and Tony Antenen Design & Photography by John Walters **Published** every other month throughout the year on behalf of the Croquet Association by Eastern Rose Publi contributions on computer disk (any IBM compatible format ASCII text) or typed and photographs/illustrations preferably black & white are welcome and should be sent to the Editor at the Publisher's address Ordinarily the copy date is the 20th of the month 2 months before publication **Tournament results & reports** should be sent via the CA Secretary any correspondence about non-delivery of th should also be addressed to the CA Secretary **Advertising** details (rates etc.) are available from Eastern Rose Publishing with whom should be booked. Editor John Walters Development Chris Hudson Coaching Bill Lamb Photos/Illustrations Jo Chris Hudson Design/Typesetting Eastern Rose Publishing Film Imagesetting via Eastern Rose Printing & binding The Echo Press Eastern Rose Publishing 17 Wroxham Road, Ipswich, Suffolk IP3 OPH (tel 0473 253950 fax 0473 253950)

The Croquet Association The Hurlingham Club Ranelagh Gardens London SW6 3PR (tel: 071 736 3148) Secretary L W D Antenen Chairman C J Irwin

CONTENTS

News 4 Worth a Fiver 5 Letters 8 MacRobertson Preview 10 Handicapping 12 Federations 14 Rankings 18 **Tournaments 20** Last Word 24



FROM THE PRESIDENT CROQUET ASSOCIATION

Dear John

May I through your columns advise all your readers that the British team will soon be leaving for Australia for the MacRobertson Trophy competition between ourselves, Australia and New Zealand and these three countries will be joined for the first time by the United States. I am sure you will be covering this in your editorials but my purpose in writing is to remind associates that

We are fortunate that through the prudence of Council over many years we have maintained a Test Tour Fund which has enabled us to give reasonable grants towards the expenses of those concerned. The assets of this fund are now nearly exhausted.

I have just written to all those who have previously represented Great Britain asking them to make contributions to the Fund and their responses are now being received. Whilst we are not making any formal appeal to Associates the Council would be most grateful to all those who would be prepared to make a donation to the Fund, which now needs to be replenished. Our ex-internationals, who have themselves in the past borne considerable expense for the privilege of representing their country, are now forming the spearhead of this effort to restore the Fund which it is important to preserve to enable us to meet future commitments in international competitions,

We would be most grateful if cheques could be made payable to the Croquet Association and sent to the C.A. office marked 'Test Tour Fund'. All contributions will be personally acknowledged by me. Yours sincerely

John Solomon, President



Appeal for croquet exhibits; **Improvers** courses; British robbers steal overseas titles; NZ dissident to defect?

#### **Milan Exhibition**

The British Council intends to hold an exhibition on International croquet from May 24th to June 4th, 1993 at its Headquarters in via Manzoni 38, Milan, Italy.

The exhibition will consist of fourteen panels of prints, pictures and text and a video demonstrating how the Association game is played. Your kind cooperation is sought in providing or loaning materials you think may be of interest

Invitations will be printed at the beginning of May. It is hoped that the Italian Croquet Association will provide an Open Day on May 31st to coincide.

The aim of this event is to widen the knowledge of croquet and encourage new players. However, it cannot possibly succeed without your help. Nicky Smith, British Council

#### **Coaching Courses**

Grade II (Intermediate)

Technique and tactics for handicaps 6 to 14 who are members of the CA Cheltenham 22/23 May Nottingham 12/13 May Fee £20.00+£3.50 VAT Grade II/III (Advanced)

Technique and tactics exclusively for advanced play and handicaps 8 to 4, but deliberately excluding the triple peel to give more time for other subjects. Southport 15/16 May Fee £25.00 + £4.38 VAT

The new CA Coaching Manual is based upon the CA courses and gives considerably more detail. Available from the CA Office £10.00 + 50p P&P

Applications for courses as early as possible to: Bill Lamb, 5 Bondyke Close, Cottingham, N Humberside HU16 5ND, stating name, address, tel. no., club, handicap and category of CA membership, enclosing SAE and cheque to The Croquet Association

#### **New Coaches**

Players wishing to become Grade II coaches and able to attend one of the courses mentioned should write to Bill Lamb. Courses start on the Friday evening for coaches.

Grade I (Beginners) seminars will be held at Budleigh Salterton on 1st May and East Riding on 8th

#### **Fixtures Book**

The dates given for the INDIVIDUAL Mens & Womens events are incorrect. Also the Womens Championship WILL be played as best-of-three throughout, not single game early on.

#### Conquering Heroes

Robert Fulford (Ball & Chain) narrowly missed out on an astonishing sweep of titles when he failed to win the Australian Open during February. Having beaten Bob Jackson in the final of the New Zealand Open a few weeks before, Robert held that title as well as the British Open, World Championship and Sonoma Cutrer (strongest US event) titles.

Nevertheless, team-mate David Maugham (Stocks) took the Australian title instead!

#### **NZCC** deals further snub

Following the astonishing omission of their number two player, Aaron Westerby (pictured scrutinising Stephen Mulliner at the computer), from the 7 person NZ Test Team (apparently due to internal politics and differences between Westerby and NZCC President Roger Murfitt) the NZCC have dealt him another blow. This time omitting him from the list of a further 4 players to represent New Zealand at Sonoma Cutrer, where Westerby was a medallist in 1992.

Westerby (New Zealand Mens Champion and North Island Champion) may yet appear at the US event via a

direct invitation to play as one of the world's top players. He will certainly be seen in the UK during 1993 where, free of domestic shackles, he will be making a number of appearances on the croquet lawn.



#### STOP PRESS

Joe Hogan has been forced to pull out of the New Zealand team due to work commitments. Steve Jones will take his place. New Zealand will now enter the contest missing three of their top six players - Westerby, Hogan and Prince.





**OFFICIAL CROQUET** 

**ASSOCIATION SHIRTS** 

**OUALITY "SCREEN STARS" SHIRTS.** 

Sizes as available: small/medium/large/x large Sweatshirt £12. T-Shirt £7. inc P&P

Make cheques payable to "Croquet for Leisure" Post your orders to:

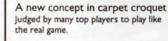
Brian MacMillan at the Croquet Association

#### **WANTED TO BUY**

Old croquet books, pictures, drawings or anything else related to the subject matter of croquet. Send me your list and price of items to sell. My interest is to see that these items do not get lost over time, and stay within the "croquet family" in a preserved collection.

TREMAINE ARKLEY, 9775 HULTMAN ROAD, INDEPENDENCE, OREGON 97351, USA. PHONE: 503 838 4886. FAX 503 838 6121

### CARPET CROQUET



Excellent value at £69

For further information: Fieldcourt Games

PO Box 1228 Colchester COI IWT Tel: 0206 42629 or 0722 33898





#### **RELEASE YOUR FULL**

#### MINDPOWER!

You could rid yourself of fears, tension, depression, frustration, excess weight, phobias, insomnia, migrane & smoking. Successful analysis can increase self-confidence, concentration, relaxation, enthusiasm, memory & creativity.

Qualified analyst DHP, MIAH. Free stress check & brochure: Marble Arch NH Clinic. 071 258 0014 / 0022 (24 hr.s)

# Worth a





hen I first joined Bowdon, the club membership consisted mainly of elderly ladies. who used to play social croquet in their own little groups

The few members who played "proper" Association croquet looked down on the activities of these ladies, wondered why they never played seriously, and expressed concern about the lawns being taken up for such frivolous purposes.

It was only some years later, when I read the club minutes, that I discovered these selfsame ladies had been instrumental in saving the club from closure. They had kept croquet alive in Bowdon by their own efforts and commitment to the game, so that myself and others like me could continue to enjoy its pleasures.

These ladies did not go round telling everybody what they had done. Had they done so, they would have been written off as crashing bores, but unfortunately this meant that none of the newer members appreciated their efforts.

one lady told me that her club could see no need for the CA... She was totally unaware that the CA had funded me six years previously to establish her club.

Similarly, few of today's Bowdon members will know that the CA helped the club over a difficult patch in 1972 by running a recruitment drive at Bowdon to increase the club's membership. My predecessors, part-time CA development officers Liz Neal and Barbara Meacham, spent three years, from 1971 to 1973, reviving croquet in the Midlands and the North West, acting as catalysts for the formation of the West Midlands and North Western Federations, helping clubs like Bowdon and Edgbaston to survive, and forming many other clubs in these areas that still exist today.

The recent discussions on subscription policy have highlighted similar lack of knowledge. One lady told me, for example, that her club could see no need for the CA. She was totally unaware that the CA had funded me six years previously to establish her club. Without the CA's efforts, she would not have been able to play the game locally today.

The circumstances of every club and every

player are different. To some extent, we are all blinkered because we lack full knowledge of what is going on around us, full knowledge of what has happened in the past. One thing, however, is sure. That the fortune of our clubs will continue to wax and wane, and that the continued existence of croquet is dependant on our having an effective national governing body, able to provide central support as and when required.

Now for a few more thoughts to add to the debate about subscription policy and the relevance of the CA to croquet players, of all denominations

The registration fee In broad terms, CA tournament costs are covered by entry fees and tournament levies; development costs are covered by the Sports Council grant and Sponsorship; and coaching is self-financing. The registration fee is intended solely to cover adminis-

Given this situation, the application of the registration fee to all croquet-playing club members, including Golf Croquet players, means that all who play the game in whatever form will contribute equally to the costs of its administration.

This seems a fair and reasonable proposal, in return for which I would expect that ultimately players of every description would have a vote and be able to influence CA policy. If, for example, Golf croquet players felt in future that the CA was not attending to their needs, they could then take the necessary action.

Tournament Players Tournaments play a most important role in the game, providing croquet with its main source of publicity. However, what is sometimes overlooked is the considerable benefit tournament players provide for non-tournament players, by insisting on better quality lawns, providing coaching, and keeping the cost of membership subscriptions down through tournament income. (At Bowdon, if we held no tournaments, every member's subscription would increase by £15, whether or not they were tournament players themselves.)

Once these benefits are generally realized, then perhaps there will be less call for tournament players to bear such a large proportion of the costs of administering the game. I have a feeling that it would be much better for all of us if we could get away from the somewhat artificial distinction between "tournament" and "non-tournament" players. We are all croquet

The CA Contribution Without the CA, the rules would not be kept up to date - in fact, they would not even be published, as their publication is not a commercial proposition. As a result, organized croquet would wither and slowly die. (When the USCA was formed, their first task was to produce a book of standard rules, so that clubs could play against each other.)

Without the CA, there would be no standard handicapping system, no official referees, no training of officials, no central point for inquiries from people interested in taking up the game, no publicity leaflets for recruitment purposes, no national tournament framework, no equipment standards, no development of the game, and no organized communication between individual clubs and members, through the magazine or other central publications.

Volunteers or paid staff? We need to make a decision. Do we want to continue with substandard administration, relying mainly on voluntary helpers, with all the uncertainties that implies, or do we want an efficiently-run, paid administration? Members often complain when administrative errors occur, but these are frequently caused by volunteers being too busy with their other day-to-day activities, and unable to spare the time to do a proper job for the CA. At present, we have to rely on volunteers

if we held no tournaments every club member's subscription would increase by £15... whether or not they were tournament players themselves.

because of the lack of funds to employ sufficient

Members realize this, and make allowances. However, we also have to consider how we look to outside organizations, both in this country and overseas. We must realize that if we are to maintain our position as one of the leading croquet-playing nations, we need to ensure that our administration and general cohesiveness compares well with that of other

Conclusion In my view, croquet players of every sort get remarkably good value from the Croquet Association. Many governing bodies raise a per capita charge on their club members, and the proposal to charge £3.50 in 1993 is modest in comparison.

Next time you pay for something with a £5.00 note, look at what you get, and then compare it with the value of the work the CA does on your behalf, and on behalf of every croquet player.



Croquet returns to Peckforton Castle: The Croquet Club Vilemov - Castle Vilemov, the Czech Republic; **Ealing Croquet** Club Devon tour 1992

is summer for the first time in years, perhaps for the first time since the War, Croquet balls were again being struck across the lawn in front of the impressive facade of Peckforton Castle, near Tarporley, Cheshire. Peckforton was at one time the home of Lord Bently Tollemache, one of the game's all time greats and author of what must be the finest book on the game - "Croquet", published by Stanley Paul in London in 1914.

Chester Croquet Club lies only ten miles away from this one time Mecca of the game and a couple of members were delighted to be given the chance to set up a demonstration at Peckforton for one of the City's major hotels at their invitation on July the 11th this year. In the book

there are many photographs of Tollemache demonstrating 'how to do it' and in those days the lawn was immaculate and looks as if it was cut with nail scissors. Unfortunately time and Twentieth Century Fox have taken their toll. Last year the lawn had been dug up in the process of filming Robin Hood and had not been reinstated to its former glory, although to be fair to the film company the lawn was very much the worse for wear before then. On the day the rain luckily stopped as the guests arrived and the sun broke through. As an afternoon's entertainment they could, naturally, only be introduced to play golf croquet, but a demonstration of the real game was also put on for propaganda purposes. It is certainly one of the most delightful settings in which Lodging is 40 US\$ per Roger Croston | night per person. This

astle Vilemov, located in the rolling hills of Bohemia, 90 Km South-East of Prague, is a baroque structure built in 1720 by Count Caretto Millesimo. It is now being restored to its original condition. The castle is situated in a private 32 acre park with lake, tennis court and croquet court. The castle is within easy access from Prague airport (motorway Prague - Brno). It can also be reached from Vienna by car in two and a half hours. In November 1992 the castle became the seat of the first Croquet Club in Czechoslovakia. In August of 1993 the Club will hold a Tournament at the castle Park. Accommodations are available. It is recommended to book reservations early in the year to secure rooms in the castle.

includes the use of the tennis court, the croquet court and fishing in the lake. There are also other sporting opportunities available, such as, riding and hiking in the nearby forests. The Club has also the facility of providing high quality croquet sets, hand-crafted by Czech artisans. -The Set includes: Winning peg, smasher, boundary pegs, six Hoops, four balls, four mallets with box, at 450\$ per set. Delivery: Two months after order is received.

For Membership in the Croquet Club Vilemov, room reservations and registration for the tournament for those wishing to participate, and for placing orders for croquet sets, please write to: The Secretary, Mr. Lubomir Sobotka, Castle Vilemov, 582 83 Vilemov, The Czech Republic or fax to 0042-451-93785. Lubomir Sobotka, Secretary

#### Lord Tollemache: upright split shot (from his book); "On this spot..." Roger Creston 76 years later; Chris Boon on hallowed ground with the book.







#### CROQUET BALLS by TOM BARLOW

'CHAMPIONSHIP' £77, 'XT' £110, per set. Both types C.A. Championship Approved

3 year guarantee Mail order add £4 per set P&P

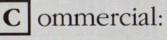
Also Garden Croquet Balls, Top Quality Mallets and complete range of C.A. Spec. Equipment

All available from U.K. Barlow stockists J. & K.M. Beech

WOODLANDS CROQUET PRODUCTS Woodlands, Skipton Road, Barnoldswick, Colne, Lancs, BB8 6HH. 0282-813070

#### THE CROQUET **ASSOCIATION**

The National Voice for Croquet -Responsible for:



Sponsorship; Grants; Finance for Federations & Clubs; Insurance; Books; Equipment; Clothing.

The CA: Working for Croquet Worth your Support!

aling Croquet Club is not large, with only four short lawns and one full size superimposed on top of them, but with 58 members and an enthusiastic team, we felt confident to approach the new season with a view to as much inter-club play as possible. It was well into the season when the idea of a bank holiday weekend tour occurred to me. This was met with instant enthusiasm by the club president and coach, Ron Welch, who suggested the West Country as a possible location.

The organization was surprisingly simple - a few telephone calls and it was done, although it took me the best part of a minute to explain to the groundsman at Budleigh that I wasn't the water board official from whom he was angrily expecting a call, and that I really had absolutely nothing to do with the parched state of their lawns! (Luckily the long dry spell broke a couple of weeks before

were in good shape.) The forecast for the enjoyable afternoon, bank holiday weekend was the worst we could have hoped for. Sitting on the sea front at Sidmouth on Friday afternoon and stuffing our faces with the first of the obligatory Devon cream teas, we had observed the combination of spring tide and high winds throw waves high over the promenade and onto innocent and treated to the second unsuspecting bystanders. In the event, however, the rain clouds which threat-

ened us all weekend

miraculously and very

courteously offered to

break only when we were

recovering in the pub with

our arrival, and the lawns

a pint of Dartmoor Best or couple of years earlier, and safely tucked up in bed at remembered being our respective B&B's. stunned by the ten The team consisted of immaculate lawns, the four of us - Ron Welch, trimmed hedges, the innumerable pavilions and his wife Joan, chairman Quiller Barrett and myself. the sea views but I had The first afternoon was forgotten quite how spent practising on one of wonderful it was. The the lawns at Sidmouth. order of play in the Twenty-four hours later morning was the same as we were back and Ron the previous day, with one and I paired up for doubles and two singles. doubles while Quiller and After a pub lunch we all

anything less impressive

would be unforgivable. I

had had a poke around a

Joan both played singles. played singles, 3-3 on time Ron and I both had an and my opponent, Ian Birdseye, used his final taking shelter from the turn to play a humungous wind in an appropriately and seemingly impossible Devonian thatched hut. roll across the lawn to 4-No such luck for Quiller back, ending up perfectly and Joan - their shelter placed to run the hoop was facing directly into the and put himself 1 point wind out to sea. The score ahead. Having run the (purely incidental) was 2-1 hoop he missed the next to Sidmouth. The club roquet, leaving me wired shares a pavilion with the from an easy roquet but cricket, tennis and hockey with a 6 foot shot at the clubs, in which we were same hoop, for which I was also due. I was left cream tea of the weekend. with the dubious responsibility of settling the score Everyone was rather impressed by the club at in favour of Ealing, which Budleigh. But then for a needless to say I failed to town with such a name do. A fittingly tight end to

a closely fought but very friendly and enjoyable day. The Cranford club in Exmouth, we were pleased to find, was even smaller than Ealing. One not quite full size lawn and a couple of sets of Walker balls was what they had on offer. I had the impression that the Walker balls were generally used as a weapon against the few unsuspecting clubs that ventured to Exmouth, but they weren't going to win

that way against Ealing. Although we at Ealing are trying slowly but surely to rid ourselves of every remaining Walker ball, we have all been brought up with them and know their characteristics inside out! So really we felt quite at home. After an awful lot of double banking, we somehow managed to fit in the largest amount of games we had played on any one day. The final score was 6-6 (or was it 5-5?) and we decided, sportingly, not to play a decider.

All in all we had a great time; each of the clubs were extremely welcoming and all provided great teas. Special thanks go to Gwynneth Dart of Sidmouth, George Webb of Budleigh and both Margaret Tucker and Edith Holly of Exmouth for organizing things at the other end. Maybe other clubs will consider organizing similar tours in the future. We'll certainly be doing it again next

Sacha Standen



### The ultimate high performance croquet sets and mallets

Finely crafted in England for the recreational, club and tournament player. Mallets individually made to your specification. Send for detailed colour leaflet to:-

Stuart Leisure Products Ltd.

Portersfield Road., Cradley Heath, West Midlands B64 7BZ. Tel: 0384 69231



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

All at competitive prices.

Ask for Townsend Croquet equipment at your local sports shop.

TOWNSEND CROQUET LTD. **CLAIRE ROAD** KIRBY CROSS FRINTON-ON-SEA **ESSEX CO13 0LX TELEPHONE: FRINTON (0255) 67-4404** 



Ball dropping; knuckles for Cornelius on Full Bisques at

#### **Croquet Balls**

Dear Sir,

In this enlightened day and age the balls will no longer put up with the barbaric Law 2(c). Callously dropped onto a steel plate 1 inch thick and set rigidly in concrete, they must rebound within prescribed height limits if they are to be declared fit for play:-

#### 2(c) OR NOT 2(c): THAT IS THE QUESTION.

They're bounced upon steel plate set in concrete Unceremoniously from 5

Subjected thus to such a violent bump Small wonder croquet balls can take the hump, And infiltrate Sir Isaac Newton's laws With strange effects lacking apparent cause. A deviant ball, perchance for impish fun, While willing that stop

shots should run and run, May simultaneously find it droll To put a stop to those who play the roll.

Exists there, if chicanery be the norm, A prima facie case for law

reform? Remember, when you miss and wonder why,

There's more to croquet balls than meets the eye. Yours truly Tommy Cameron, York

#### Dear John, 'Croquet' No.224, December 1992 **Talking Point -Australian Balls**

In your 'Talking Point' you seem to be advocat-Big Trouble in ing reinstatement of the Little Ferring; Jaques monopoly, arguing that small differences in A rap on the ball behaviour are far more difficult for the 'A' class player to adjust to, Debbie than lawn differences. You do however concede that the Barlow Ball is Women's very close to what we want, but with a bounce croquet; slightly below the ideal, but considerably below in warmer temperatures. 'If Cheltenham Barlow made balls 'temperature resistant' and a little more 'bouncy' we may have found the Holy Grail' you say.

Well we have good



The CA equipment and development committees provided bounce test comparisons in March 1992. Facts must prefer anecdotes. Quoting from their statement - 'average bounce heights are Barlow regular 33.0";

typically: Jaques Eclipse 31.1'; Dawson 2000 mk2 31.3"; Barlow XT 31.8"; Birkdale mk2 35.2", with measurements in the temperature range 10-20C. Barlow Balls have recently been retested for CA Championship Approval from 1.1.93 to 31.12.95. Barlow 'Championship' balls (otherwise called 'regular') scored an average bounce of 32.3" and Barlow 'XT' an

average bounce of 31.6",

tested in a temperature of

The Barlow Championship Ball has guaranteed bounce performance between temperatures of 10 C and 30 C, hence a few stories of 'soggy dead Barlows at Parkstone'! But for most days anywhere in the UK they are fine. The Barlow 'XT' (extreme temperature) model has guaranteed bounce performance between 0C and 50C. I doubt whether temperatures exceed 50C even at Parkstone!

So John, the scientific tests show that Barlow has produced a croquet ball 'to our exact specification' it's a little more 'bouncy' and if you play 'XT' it's 'Temperature Resistant'. Look no further, you have it available for 1993. Yours sincerely John Beech

I'm sure that if I asked for a mallet 36" long and weighing 3lb no-one would offer one either 36" dubs long or 3lb in weight! Ditto with balls - I'm were not looking for balls with the bounce we have become prepared used to and temperature to have resistance, not one or the other. Regarding temperaus, as we ture specifications: the air temperature in the UK were not seldom gets much above 25 C, but I promise you the temperature of the balls goes significantly drinkers! above that! On the

news. 'The cup runs over'. equipment committee tests, it should be noted that laques Eclipse when brand new are painted and

consequently bounce about an inch less than when having been worn in - when they reach the ideal. It is a little worrying that the new tests appear to show lower bounce for more recent Barlow Balls despite a lower testing temperature, which we know has the opposite effect. Though currently the Committee gives too little attention to temperature variation for us to draw too many conclusions. It is good to see the Committee introducing

than medium ones. Though we are still looking for the Holy Grail, I'm sure there are a lot of players who are grateful to Tom Barlow (and UK representative John Beech) for being at the forefront of the search.

bounce tests at two beights

'deader' on gentle bounces

for the future (see news).

since some balls are far

#### Southwick CC

Dear Sir,

'Southwick's' many friends may be interested to know that the Appeal for Planning Consent to develop some land has been dismissed.

It will be recollected that at the time the Planning Application was made the Club's finances were at a low ebb. However, through the tremendous efforts of our members the position is improved to-day. Almost entirely owing to the introduction of Golf Croquet, a Newcomers special subscription, and many more club events and socials, we are

gaining new members. We are still hopeful that eventually the C.A. will be able to prove to the Foundation for Sports & Arts that Croquet is at least, if not more so, as 'athletic' as Bowls, so that we (and other Clubs) may obtain a grant to complete the repairs to our aged Pavilion.

We wish you all the best, and look forward to ments. Diana Brothers, Hon. Secretary S.C.C.C.

#### Croquet **Bibliography**

Dear Sir

Readers interested in the history of our game who, like myself, have been disappointed to find the bibliographies in recent croquet books described as 'select' may be heartened to know that I am attempting something much more ambitious - no less than a definitive worldwide bibliography. This book will include references to magazines, literary works in which croquet features more than incidentally, and manufacturers's equipment catalogues, as well as books and pamphlets, and original articles dedicated to all aspects of the game.

To date I have traced 259 editions (including reprints etc) of 183 books and pamphlets, excluding manufacturers' catalogues and multi-sports' books, plus 14 magazines and 48 literary works. But there must be more, many more

Would fellow bibliophiles who know of rarities I might have missed, and anyone who can help me to get a handle on the implements, kindly get in touch? I should be delighted to hear from them on 0923 774048 or at Roefield, The Green, Croxley Green, Herts WD3 3HJ. (But readers of Nancy Rhoades's recent book please note that I am aware of this excellent source.)

Yours sincerely David Drazin Harrow Oak CC

#### Ferring CC

Dear Sir

Your February Issue No. 225 comments on a proposed Croquet Club in Ferring. It includes some facts which are inaccurate.

Arun District Council's Planning Committee refused the application on planning grounds alone

seeing you at our Tourna- and were not influenced by any campaign. It clearly conflicted with the Countryside Policies of the County Structure Plan and the Environmental Policies of the draft Arun District Local Plan. Only in compelling circumstances is development allowed in the Strategic Gap between Ferring and Worthing.

It would have resulted in the clearance of a valuable wildlife site comprising a mixture of elm and sycamore trees, scrub and ground flora. Birds, foxes and bats are present. It therefore has value as a local nature conservation area. It is one of the few wooded areas in the Gap.

The Committee had also refused three previous applications for residential development on the site. Yours sincerely G.R.Hurle-Hobbs, Chairman Planning & Housing Committee

It is with extreme regret

Dear Sir,

that the article published in the last issue of the Croquet Magazine has evoked controversial correspondence. The intention was to inform the Croquet world how hard we are working to give potential players a club in the village and perhaps to glean information from members who are working for the same good cause. Having recently been in touch with members forming new clubs, it would appear that Ferring has unique problems. We will continue to overcome these difficulties until we can report that we have our own village croquet club. We can only apologize most sincerely if the article offended any one at all. Doreen E. Box, Secretary FCC

#### **Tournament** Reports

Dear John.

As a keen tournament player I do like to read Tournament Reports but I quite understand that the percentage of the maga-

zine devoted to them had to be reduced to accommodate other interests. I was therefore appalled to find that half a page of precious Tournament space had been virtually wasted on the Northern Championship report. It is presumably more decipherable when one knows all of the characters alluded to so therefore could be mildly amusing but it can hardly claim to be a report. By contrast the Report on the Southern Championship is excellent. I thought croquet was supposed to span all age groups and all areas but this is just promoting the north-south divide. Surely they are not all as daft up there as your anonymous reporter. Yours sincerely Bob Fewtrell

#### **Womens Croquet**

All thanks to Gail Curry, for her article on Ladies Invitation events, reproaching Debbie Cornelius for her views. Just because Debbie herself thinks she is too good to waste her time playing in them, there was no justification for her condemnation.

Having played myself in seven Barlow Bowls (with both 8 and 6 players) I endorse Gail's views of the comradeship and fun, enjoyed by all, even during that time when Surbiton had been chosen, when the Club had just started, the pavilion wasn't finished, no loos and no refreshments, fortunately saved by dear Hazel's sumptuous lunches in her own house. When I asked why this venue had been chosen I was informed, that clubs were not prepared to have us, as we were not beer drinkers!

In all those events I played in, only 2 members of the Committee on separate occasions, came to watch.

Why is not the main Women's event played at Hurlingham, as it should be? Thanks Gail, for your

much-needed article. Yours, Pat Asa-Thomas

#### **Full Bisque Game**

Dear Sir.

The Cheltenham Club once again played its season-long Big Handicap under Full Bisques rules with scratch as base. The broad details are that 70 players competed, initially in blocks of 7, without time limits, winners and seconds going on to play in a simple knock-out. Handicaps represented were 1 to 20, only 5 1/2, 17 and 19 being absent. A 13 beat a 7 in the final. 82% of the games were timed.

Thank goodness the pattern of results shown in 1989 and 1990 was repeated, implying that 1991 gave an unusual record. A representative spread of handicaps did get to the quarter-finals. Vis: 3 1/2, 4 1/2, 5, 6, 13, 14, 16 and 18. Last year, at this stage, the only handicap below 12 was a 5 1/2, the rest being 13 1/ 2 and above: see Croquet no.219 page 16 for details.

Also encouraging is that the average length of games was still 2 hours (1 hr 58 actually). Also only 14 took longer than 2 3/4 hours and of these but 2 went beyond 3 1/4 hours. Not a 4 1/2 drudgery in

All in all a boost to the full bisque game; matches needing half an hour less than with the subtractive handicap method and showing the simplicity of scratch as base is sensible. Better court use or more people and so more fees and more at the bar! Less confusion in bisque

distribution! Cheltenham seems to be alone in playing this game or else, which is more probable, others don't write and tell us of their findings. If they can't write to the mag. Please write to me. And will someone explain in print, the merit of handicap 6 as officially in CA matches. Edgar Jackson, Cheltenham

a boost to

the full

bisque

game;

matches

## **MacRobertson Shield**

## Preview

#### **AUSTRALIA**

#### **Barrie Chambers**

Age 56, won his first Championship in 1973 and represented his country the following year in the Mac. This will be Barrie's fourth appearance in the Mac but his first as captain. In last year's World Championship, he won all his block games and is currently ranked in the world top 12. Barrie is an insurance representative.

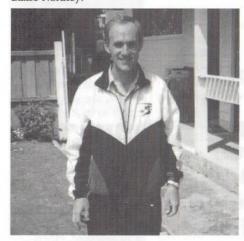


#### Colin Pickering

is playing in his third Mac. Colin is probably Australia's best and most consistent player. A regular participant in World croquet, he rarely puts in a poor performance, reaching the quarterfinals of last year's World Championship. An all round sportsman, Colin is widely respected in all croquet playing continents. Colin is currently a University Sports Co-ordinator.

#### Michael Taylor

is making his international debut. Recent reports from Australia have indicated that his form is likely to be impressive, having just won the Australian Open Doubles Championship with Blaise Northey.



#### John Tyrell

is making his first appearance in the Mac, but has an excellent career record. He has won the Victoria Gold Medal five times, the Australian Open in 1987 and the Australian Open Doubles in '87, '88 and '91. John is an excellent shot and a solid break player. On his international debut at Sonoma Cutrer last year, he came a creditable fifth. John is currently a Funeral Director's Assistant and will no doubt be hoping to bury his opponent's.

#### Player Profiles on the Teams

#### Blaise Northey

Age 20 (next page left with Jerry Starke), is the youngest Australian to play in the Mac since 1974. On his international debut in last year's World Championship, Blaise produced Australia's best ever finish, reaching the Quarter-Finals. A friendly outgoing personality will ensure that Blaise is a popular member of the team. He is the holder of the 1993 Australian Open Doubles Championship. Blaise is currently a student.

#### Mark Prater

Age 35, is playing in the Mac for the third time having previously played in '79 and '82. Having performed well in the crucial Melbourne test match in '82, Mark has shown his ability to play well under the most severe pressure.

#### **NEW ZEALAND**

#### Graham Beale

Age 27, was selected in 1986 with a view to the future and has now been given the captaincy of the NZ team. Having taken a couple of years off from the game to get married, Graham is now once again performing consistently. He won the NZ Presidents Cup in 1986 and is sure to put up tough resistance. Graham is currently a teacher.

#### Bob Jackson

Age 61 (on right of group photo), is New Zealand's number one player, having won the NZ Open nine times and the doubles ten times. His strength lies in his shooting ability and he is often happy to leave himself seven yard roquet. A vital part of the NZ team, this will be Bob's fifth appearance in the Mac. He is the only player to have completed an octuple peel in a match and rates as one of the best players of all time. bob is currently a semi-retired croquet mallet manufacturer.

#### loe Hogan

Age 33, held the title of the world's best player in the late eighties, winning the inaugural World Championship in 1989. Recently married, he seems to have lost some of the edge to his game but is nevertheless still a dangerous opponent. Renowned for his excellent shooting, Joe is also a very successful triple peeler with one of the best percentages in the world. Joe is currently working as a carpenter.

#### Greg Bryant

Age 29 (on left of group photo), was for some years on the outskirts of the NZ but has now broken through to make his first appearance in the Mac. An excellent 91/92 season was confirmed by a good performance in this year's NZ Open where he retained his doubles title partnering John Prince. Greg is not currently working.

#### Paul Skinley

Age 33, is one of the game's most stylish players. His excellent performance in the '86 Mac was a key part in NZs historic win. Paul has won the NZ Presidents Cup seven times and the NZ Open three times. This will be Paul's fifth appearance in the Mac and he is to date the only player to complete a sextuple peel in the event. Paul is a restauranteur.

#### Richard Baker

Age 17, is the youngest of all the competitors and the youngest for over thirty years. Richard reached the semi-final of this year's NZ Open and despite his lack of international experience was given a place in the team over stiff opposition. A hard and accurate shot, he should prove to be a tough opponent. Richard is currently a student.



#### Steve Jones

(middle of group photo). Is first reserve for the NZ team. A precision player who thrives on fast lawns, using the unusual 'pen-holder' grip previously associated with another Mac player - Bill Perry. Steve played for NZ in some matches of the 1990 Mac. He is a past winner of the "World Invitation" event at Sonoma Cutrer and performed well throughout the 1991/92 New Zealand season. Although a resident of New Zealand for many years now, Steve previously lived in Cheltenham, England.



#### **GREAT BRITAIN**

#### David Openshaw

Age 46, is the oldest member of the GB team and the only member to have played in Australia in 1982. He has held the captaincy since 1982 and is widely respected. David relies on good break play and sound shooting, a combination which has made him the only player to reach the quarterfinals of every World Championship. He has won the British Open 3 times and the Northern Championship 6 times and is one of the most determined players in the game. David is currently the Managing Director of a tyre company.

#### Chris Clarke

Age 21, is one of the three British players making their debut this year. Chris has won the Presidents Cup twice and is the only player to have completed a sextuple peel in the World Championship. Partnering Robert Fulford, he has won the British Open Doubles in '90, '91 and '92, becoming widely recognised as the best doubles pair in the world. Chris is one of the more precise break players in the GB team and prefers a fast paced lawn. An accounting graduate, Chris is currently unemployed.

#### Robert Fulford

Age 23, has established himself during the last three years as the best player in the world. He currently holds the World, World Invitation, British Open and New Zealand Open Championships. Last year, he had 19 consecutive triple peels thereby smashing the previous record. Every aspect of his game is sound and his relaxed style of play should draw spectators to see possibly the best croquet player ever.

#### Colin Irwin

Age 41, is playing in his third Mac and is a very consistent player under pressure. his outstanding performance in the last test series was a key part in GB's success. Current holder of the British Mens Championship, Colin is one of the toughest opponents on the British circuit. Colin is a technical representative with BASF.

#### David Maugham

Age 23, is making his first appearance in the Mac. Winner of the Presidents Cup in 1990, David has shown consistently good form ever since, including winning the "World Invitation" at Sonoma Cutrer in 1991. One of the best shots in the world, David also completes a high percentage of triple peels to make him a very dangerous opponent. David is currently between jobs.

#### John Walters

Age 27, came to prominence by winning the World Championship in 1991, since when his play has become even better. A very deliberate player, John has the ability to lift his game at the crucial

moment and rarely misses a last shot. Despite being a debutant, John is very experienced having first played in the Presidents Cup in 1986. John is currently an Editor/Publisher.

#### Keith Aiton

Age 34, is coach to the GB team. An international player in his own right, Keith now concentrates his efforts on the development of the national teams. Widely liked and respected he is an important member of the team. Keith is currently a tax lawyer.

#### USA

#### Jerry Stark

Age 39 (below right with Blaise Northey), has the privilege of captaining the first US team to compete in the Mac. Jerry's friendly personality guarantees him a warm welcome wherever he travels. In 1990, he reached the semi-final of the World Championship and proved America's rightful place in World Croquet. Jerry is currently a croquet professional at the Meadowood Country Club.



#### Jim Bast

is one of the world's most under-rated players. His academic studies have meant that he has not

played as much croquet as he would have liked. Jim proved his ability at Sonoma in 1991 when he came within a hoop of winning the prestigious title. Since then appearances have been rare, but he remains a very tough opponent.

#### Kiley Jones

Age 25, first played for the US aged 13 and has represented them every year since. He has an all-round game and the experience to back it up, having played in the British Open more than once. Kiley is currently teaching while continuing his work on a children's TV series.

#### Tremaine Arkley

Age 53, first represented his country in 1987. He has played in all four World Championships and has twice reached the last 16. Despite a rather ungainly style, Tremaine improves with each international appearance. Tremaine owns a company which markets and manufactures specialised electronic equipment.

#### Erv Peterson

Age 43, only started playing the game in 1988. Since then, improvement has been rapid with his first appearance for the US being in 1991 against GB when he won both his singles matches. International singles appearances have been disappointing but the chance to represent his country should bring the best out of the likeable Californian. Erv is currently a college lecturer.

#### **Bob Kroeger**

Age 41, is an experienced international campaigner having represented the US in several Solomon Trophy matches. Having started playing aged 11, Bob won the inaugural US singles Championship in 1987. When not instructing at the USCA, Bob is a musician.

#### 1993 Shield Stats

	Total	Av	Oldst	Yngst	# of	
	Caps	Age	Player	Player	deb's	
Aus	13	?	56	20	3	
NZ	20	33	61	17	2	
USA	6	?	53	25	6	
GB	13	30	46	21	3	
				C	oris Clar	ke

#### Warm up match in New Zealand

#### New Zealand defeats England

Sunday 24th January

As another one of it's innovations this season the Hamilton East Croquet Club hosted a foretaste to the up and coming MacRobertson Shield.

The teams were:

New Zealand: Joe Hogan, Aaron Westerby, Richard Baker and Dennis Bulloch

England: Robert Fulford, David Maugham, Ian Burridge and Jerry Guest

The flexible format (which changed as the day progressed) was designed to give the gallery of spectators a continuous flow of top croquet.

The day started with best-of-three doubles. In the Baker & Westerby vs Fulford & Guest match the latter won the first game easily with a delayed triple to Robert, but Westerby and Baker bounced back (just!) to take the second.

In the other doubles it looked like Hogan & Bulloch would easily take out the first against Maugham & Burridge until Hogan became hampered at Penultimate while finishing a triple. Maugham pegged out Bulloch and after a bit of in and out play the New Zealanders were two breaks up before Maugham hit their last lift. At this point both doubles games were pegged down to allow

the much awaited singles to commence.

The bottom two singles attracted the most spectator interest - both for different reasons. Fulford vs Hogan because it was the only chance many locals had of seeing the World Champion in action and unfortunately for NZ this is exactly what they got! Robert won the first easily 26-0TP and Joe's resistance in the second was only to be matched by Robert hitting the lift to take the match with another triple peel.

Maugham vs Westerby was the closest match of the contest and the only one to go to three games. Aaron hit top form early winning the first game in less than 40 minutes with a rare 5th turn triple (26-0TP). In the second he looked set to take the match without David scoring until David faced with his last long lift - hit, pegged out Aaron's peg ball and finished with a 3-Ball break after an aggressive (by NZ Standards) 7 yard pick up.

The beginning of the third saw mistakes by both players. However it was Maugham who was first to 4-back. An aggressive TPO by Westerby ended (perhaps accidentally) with 2 balls in the game (Maugham for 2, Westerby for 1-back). The exciting 2-ball finish was won by Westerby with Maugham having a claim to being a little unlucky

on his last shot.

As it was late in the day the two unfinished doubles were abandoned, the best the English team could do was to force a draw by winning the two unfinished doubles, and as this seemed very unlikely the New Zealand side decided to claim a moral victory.

I would like to thank the English players for making themselves available to participate in this fixture as well as the many spectators who came from as far away as Auckland, Tauranga and Thames.

Aaron Westerby

#### Final Results

Hogan & Bulloch vs Maugham & Burridge 26-21 (Unfinished)

Baker & Westerby vs Fulford & Guest 0-26TP, 26-18 (Unfinished)

Hogan lost to Fulford 0-26TP, 8-26TP Westerby beat Maugham 26-0TP, 22-26, 26-23TPO

Baker bt Burridge 26-15, 26-18

Bulloch bt Guest 26-11, 26-3 New Zealand beat England 3-1

EDITOR ADDS: But bow will the New Zealand "B" team playing in the MacRobertson Shield fare against the British side? **JOW** 

## handicapping automatic System

#### **GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR 1993**

#### 1. INTRODUCTION

These guidelines, published by the Handicap Coordination Committee (HCC), supersede all previous guidelines

After the two-year trial period of the Automatic Handicapping System (AHS) the CA Council has ratified the recommendation of the Handicap Coordination Committee (HCC) that the AHS should be the principle method of adjusting handicaps for the time being. There are some minor changes this year so that players with minus handicaps can be accommodated fairly within the AHS, but most players will find that the system will operate for them exactly as it did last season.

#### 2. DOMAIN

The AHS operates nationally for all CA Associates within the domain of the Croquet Association. The Scottish Croquet Association uses a system which differs only marginally from the AHS and games played in Scotland may also be used. Overseas countries, including Ireland, do not have an automatic system and games in these countries are not applicable unless they are between CA Associates played according to CA handicaps. Handicap changes made by handicappers overseas are not valid within the domain of the CA.

#### 3. QUALIFYING GAMES

All singles games in CA Calendar Fixtures, Federation Leagues, inter-club contests, and designated club tournaments qualify for the system. Club handicappers should provide a list of designated club tournaments at the beginning of the season. All such games should be played with hoops set to CA tournament standards.

Short croquet, golf croquet, friendly or ad hoc games, walkovers and abandoned games are specifically excluded from the system.

#### 5. HANDICAP PLAY

Each competitive singles handicap game played to normal handicap laws, whether normal bisque difference or full-bisque, that you win will increase your index by 10; each loss will decrease your index by 10.

#### **6. LEVEL SINGLES PLAY**

This includes ordinary and advanced singles play. The index change for both players is calculated from table 2. NB This table is not based on simple handicap difference; rather, it is based on the number of steps difference

in handicap between the two players. A step is one bisque from handicap 5 upwards and a half-bisque between handicaps 0 and 5; below 0 see table 3.

## 7. STARTING HANDICAPS AND INDICES

All players with handicaps above scratch will carry forward their handicaps and indices from the end of last season to the beginning of the new season.

Separate arrangements have been made for scratch and minus players (see article 9 below).

Thanks to new sponsorship the opportunity has been taken to make a minor change to the layout of the handicap record cards. The first column has been widened to make it easier to incorporate the score in each game. The smaller card has also been expanded to become a folded A5 card.

Overseas countries, including Ireland, do not have an automatic system and games in these countries are not applicable....

Games should be played with hoops set to CA tournament standards....

The lowest handicaps have been returned to -2 with some tightening of the standards for other minus handicaps....

To help handicappers and tournament officials to complete handicap return forms accurately, please enter your name on your card in the CA style, i.e. surname followed by title and all initials (the title Mr. may be omitted).

## 8. PROCEDURE FOR HANDICAP CHANGES

You are responsible for recording your own results, calculating your new index and determining any handicap change. It will not be necessary to hand in your card at the start of

each tournament but tournament officials may ask to see it.

At a CA Calendar Tournament, a handicap change can only be triggered at the end of the event. Then, if your handicap index is on or past a trigger point for a handicap change, you must notify the tournament handicapper or manager of your change of handicap before you leave the tournament, so that it can be notified to the CA as soon as possible. The tournament official will initial your card on the front cover to acknowledge the change.

In club and federation matches, one-day events and rounds of extended tournaments, changes of index and handicap will normally be calculated at the end of each day's play. As a matter of courtesy you should always tell your club handicapper of any handicap change whether at a CA Tournament or not. If you are a CA Associate but do not intend to play in any later CA Calendar Tournament, you should ask your club handicapper to notify the change to the CA.

If your handicap has changed between CA Calendar Tournaments, you should notify the tournament manager or handicapper at the start of the event and have your card initialled.

#### 9. MINUS PLAYERS

At the expense of some complication to the system minus players will be included within the AHS. In order to accommodate such players fairly with as little disruption as possible to the existing system, notional handicap step differences have been introduced for handicaps between O and -2. These step differences are shown in Table 3 and are cumulative. For example, if a -1/2 plays a -1 1/ 2, the number of steps difference is 6, i.e. 3 notional steps from -1/2 to -1 plus a further 3 notional steps from -1 to -1 1/2. Similarly if a -1 plays a +1 the number of steps difference is 7, i.e. 2 steps of a half-bisque from 1 to 0, plus 2 notional steps from O to -1/2, plus a further 3 notional steps from -1/2 to -1

The lowest handicaps have been returned to -2 with some tightening of the standards for other minus handicaps. This has caused some adjustments to the trigger points for automatic handicap changes to minus handicaps. The new trigger points for minus players are shown in Table 2 together with those for all other players.

Because of these changes all active scratch and minus players will be notified of their handicaps and starting indices before the beginning of the season. Any player who has not received such notice by April 1st should contact me. Minus players will still be subject to an annual review at the end of each season.

The inclusion of minus players within the automatic system should remove one of the main points of contention of the AHS.

#### 10. RAPID IMPROVERS

Rapid Improvers are players whose skills are improving much more rapidly in relation to the number of competitive games that they play so that their handicaps become substantially out of line with their ability. Such players will usually be in their first or second season, and procedures exist to deal with their cases.

## TABLE 1. HANDICAP AND INDEX TRIGGER POINTS

Нср	Index	Нср	Index	Нср	Index
-2	2600	3	1700	11	1200
-1 1/2	2400	3 1/2	1650	12	1150
-1	2250	4	1600	14	1100
-1/2	2100	4 1/2	1550	16	1050
0	2000	5	1500	18	1000
1/2	1950	6	1450	20	950
1	1900	7	1400	22	900
1 1/2	1850	8	1350	24	850
2	1800	9	1300		
2 1/2	1750	10	1250		

## TABLE 2. SUPPLEMENTARY HANDICAPS AND INDICES

Hcp	Index	Нср	Index	Нср	Index
13	1125	17	1025	21	925
15	1075	19	975	23	875

#### TABLE 2. LEVEL PLAY HANDICAP STEPS

Difference	Index	Change
55	Higher H'cap Wins	Lower H'cap Wins
0	10	10
1	11	9
2	12	8
3	13	7
4	14	6
5	15	5
6	16	4
7 or 8	17	3
9 or 10	18	2
11 or more	19	1

## TABLE 3. NOTIONAL STEPS FOR MINUS PLAYERS

Handicap	No. of steps
O to -1/2	2
-1/2 to -1	3
-1 to -1 1/2	3
-1 1/2 to -2	4

Bill Lamb, HCC Chairman

#### CONCLUSION

There has naturally been a great deal of interest and perhaps controversy about the AHS, which is radically different from the old system of handicapping. I am grateful to the many players who have commented on the AHS and apologize that I have not always had the time to reply to letters when a specific response was not required. Instead, I hope to deal with some of the major points within this article.

It has often been said that the AHS does not solve the problems of a club which has no members playing in tournaments and whose contact with the larger world of croquet is restricted to a few league matches. That is indeed true, for the club members often merely swap points amongst themselves. But the AHS was never intended to solve every problem; if it could, there would be no need of handicappers. The AHS is intended to organize better the handicaps of those players who do play competitive croquet and thereby to set the standards of comparison for other players.

It should be understood that there have been two guiding principles which have governed the thinking of the HCC during the introduction of the AHS, particularly with reference to the inclusion of level play results: (a) the system should be simple enough to

The system should be simple enough to understand and use....

The system should be fair to all players....

Handicappers have complete freedom to adjust handicaps above 12 outside the AHS....

The AHS is neither intended to encourage nor to discourage players....

understand and use; (b) within the constraints of (a) the system should be fair to all players.

The Computer Grading System (CGS), which has been in operation for a number of years, both ranks players and gives a statistical prediction of the likely result of a game between two players of different ability. However, the CGS itself employs a formula which is too complicated for direct use in handicapping, and so for level play results a simplified table of index changes was constructed from CGS data.

The principle of fairness rules out any suggestions of the type (which still occur) that when the weaker player wins he should have an increase in his index but should suffer no decrease when he loses on the grounds that he is expected to lose. The unfairness of this proposal can easily be shown by considering what would happen if two players of different ability were to play a very large number of games: their indices would gradually merge as the weaker player would occasionally win a game.

Several people have pointed out over the last two years that new players start at a high handicap and low index, and gradually increase their indices at the expense of other players, leading to a general increase of handicaps. However, handicappers have complete freedom to adjust handicaps above 12 outside the AHS, and most club players do not get below 12 in any case. The point that handicaps are not free-floating and are firmly anchored by the standards set for scratch and minus players must not be overlooked. For example, the dilution effect of new players would not be permitted to raise the handicaps of our best players and this would have a knock-on effect on all other handicaps.

That does not mean to say that minus players are unfairly protected, as some people assume, because the gap between their trigger points is greater. It takes longer and becomes increasingly difficult to reduce one's handicap at the minus level because of this. Minus players are also subject to an annual review, and far more have had their handicaps increased than decreased over the last two years. This review of minus handicaps has an important part to play in smoothing out existing regional differences in handicap standards, for these handicaps are adjusted in line with national and not regional standards.

Finally, the AHS is neither intended to encourage nor to discourage players. I can understand that some players may be disappointed at a handicap increase, but that should not be a valid reason for not playing. A handicap increase will lead to a better chance of winning games and in the long term that should give more satisfaction. If any handicapping system is to have integrity, the handicaps must be fairly related to ability. It is also disappointing to learn that some players feel that it is putting additional pressure on playing competitive croquet. I have heard of examples of players who, on reaching a trigger point for a handicap decrease, have decided not to play further games in a Hands tournament, in order to protect that position. I can only say to such players that if the handicap becomes more important than playing, then the priorities are wrong. Croquet is a game that is meant to be played and enjoyed for its own sake. It is not serious, and the sun will still rise tomorrow whether you win or lose, whether your handicap goes up or down.

A run-down of what the CA Federations have been up to over months.

THE EAST ANGLIAN CROQUET **FEDERATION** 

**Judy Anderson** Once again we have had a hectic year with Croquet for all seasons.

We were able to make good use of the CA Indoor Carpet at SOHAM last Christmas (won by Soham themselves), and at Kings Lynn. We are indebted beyond measure to Chris for Transport, the Carpet Layers, the Sports Hall Team and... not forgetting Claire for Festive management. The Event at Kings Lynn in February was won by Colworth. This included a feast of a Competition between World Ranked players - Robert Fulford, Chris Clarke, David Maugham and John Walters. More thanks due to Jonathan Toye, Downham and the carpet laying competitors, and to Derek Vigrass for trans-

We again ran the

National Trust Tourna-

ment with 16 Clubs

competing at Short Croquet Doubles at 5 different "Stately Homes". This event is always excellent publicity for Croquet and a good way of getting the newer Clubs to venture into competition and mix with the established Clubs. The Final at ICKWORTH was won by Meldreth, with Bury St. Edmunds, the past twelve Norwich and Cromer also in the Final. This was shown on BBC TV "Look East Sport" on the Monday evening. Grateful thanks indeed to all who helped lay out Lawns, erect the Tent and run the "C & TI"..especially BSE, Cambridge, Letchworth, Downham, and the Trevor Adrian Partner-

ship. Our Coaching Officer Claire Heritage was unstinting in her efforts to spread the word and coach new clubs spending time at Chelmsford and Burnham-on-Crouch. Claire also helped particularly at

Hinchingbrooke School (Huntingdon) and at the Royal Hospital School at Holbrook near Ipswich...this culminated in a match between the two schools at Holbrook with Chris Clarke and

John Walters kindly going along to provide inspiration and help to each team. Nigel Gray has helped the players of the year 2000 with cut-down mallets and Walker Balls at National Trust Childrens Activity Days at Wimple Hall -

MacRobertson Shield our future is assured! Our Equipment is

loaned to Clubs to help

them get started and for special events - this year it was out at Hinchingbrooke School, Meldreth, Burnham-on-

Crouch and Wrest Park. The W.I. have been given Golf Croquet events at Wrest Park and Colchester - this is a good way of raising money to augment Club Funds - the W.I. enjoy themselves as

Our Leagues have continued, and because of the size of East Anglia we have 3 Area Leagues. The Beds/Herts League was won by Letchworth The Essex/Suffolk was won by Ipswich The Cambs/Norfolk was won by Cromer. The play-off between Letchworth and Ipswich to be our Secretarys Shield rep. was won 5-2 by Letchworth.

The coming Winter Programme with the C.A. Indoor Carpet is the annual event at Soham in November for the Albert Lawrence Memorial Shield (14 Teams). In February we shall again be playing for the Lynnsport Shield (12 Teams). It is all very hectic with Electronic Timers and doublebanked doubles...but people keep asking for more! We should like to especially thank INTER COUNTY FURNITURE (Duncan Hector) and DEREK VIGRASS REMOV-ALS (Kings Lynn). Without the goodwill and

generosity of these firms

in giving the Transport for the Carpet we could not afford to run these

We continue to publish "Face East" the Federation Newsletter in spring and autumn, and update our Green Leaflet each spring giving details of all the Clubs and Croquet Groups in the Federation. If any reader would like a copy please contact me.

THE **FEDERATION OF** EAST MIDLANDS **CROQUET CLUBS Gary Norman** 

REGIONAL FORWARD PLAN 1992 - 1994

The Federation produced a Forward Plan for 1992 to 1994 which has been distributed to the five East Midlands County Councils, the East

Midlands Sports Council and the CA for submission to The Foundation For Sport and The Arts when applying for funding of Regional Development Officers.

The key element of the Forward Plan is seen as the employment of a parttime, salaried, Regional Development Officer who will be responsible for implementing the Plan and for providing an administrative service to the Federation. The Plan places the initial emphasis on stimulating action to make more effective use of existing facilities. Other, possibly long-term, objectives such as the formation of more new clubs and the development of a second Regional Competition Venue (in addition to Nottingham) will probably need a much more significant







Postman Pat charity fund-raising at Ashby; S Derbyshire (League winners) left, & Northampton; Lawrence Whitaker, Short Croquet winner

input and will be actioned as opportunities

During the initial period of the RDO's employment the primary task will be to concentrate on the continued development and even to try to maintain the existence of some of the present clubs. Croquet in the East Midlands has not yet developed to the stage where every club has become a wellestablished entity, certain of its continued existence, as has been proven with the Ashby and South Derbyshire clubs, see later in this report.

The main intention of the Forward Plan is to provide a framework for the promotion and development of croquet to increase participation in the East Midlands primarily by increasing recruitment at existing clubs.

Amongst the approaches the Federation will adopt in order to increase participation are the following:

(a) To employ a Regional Development Officer.

(b) To plan a publicity campaign to increase awareness.

(c) To help clubs to increase their effectiveness in recruiting new members.

(d) To acquire new and replacement equipment to enable greater participation.

(e) To undertake development work in schools, with young people and with organizations such as the Womens Institute and Townswomens Guild.

(f) To expand current development work with the disabled.

The response to requests for financing the RDO has been varied, but some councils appear quite positive towards certain aspects of the Plan, particularly if the emphasis can be placed on increasing participation by youngsters. The best response has come

from the Leicestershire County Council who are willing to consider partial funding of a RDO and have suggested a joint meeting with the Regional Sports Council to discuss the matter further.

REGIONAL NEWS

Sapcote Croquet Club was born of WI origins and is now looking to progress with a purposemade court for next season. Club members are continuing to impress with their fund-raising and are well on target for the new court. The East Midlands Federation has assisted with a grant and an application has been sent to the CA.

Leicester are making

progress with improvements to the playing area at their new ground at Mowmacre Sports & Community Centre and in the meantime continuing to dominate the East Midlands Association Croquet League. They almost made a clean sweep of EM League trophies but were pipped at the post by the Nomads in the Short Croquet League. Leicester continued their tradition of winning at least one national team event per year, this time the Secretary's Shield. Individual players from the club were also prominent amongst the winners of other regional and national competitions. Richard White won the Federation Handicap Weekend at Nottingham and Richard Whiting was successful in the National Short Croquet Competition. Chris Wood of Leicester and Ashby finished runner-up in the All England Handicap. The Jim Kirby Short

Croquet Cup is now an annual event and is gaining in popularity and prestige. Short croquet is probably much more popular in the East Midlands than many parts of the country since, due to lack of playing area, the majority of clubs are restricted to short lawns.

This second running of the JK Cup at Loughborough was again won by an undefeated Lawrence Whittaker, with Marjorie Boyd runner-up.

Nottingham won the Mary Rose by beating Bowdon in the final at Cheltenham.

For the first time the East Midlands Federation was represented in the Inter Counties when we teamed up with West Midlands to put out a combined team. Hopefully this will be the start of bigger and better things to come.

SUMMARY OF FEDERATION ACTIVITIES Regional League -Association Croquet and Short Croquet.

Jim Kirby Cup - Short Croquet Singles Tournament.

**Association Croquet** Handicap Weekend at Nottingham

Assistance and grant aid to Ashby and Sapcote. Regional High Bisquers Coaching and Competi-

tion at Ashby. National Croquet Day no Federation events but Clubs encouraged to participate. Assistance

Free use of two sets of equipment to Loughborough Grammar School.

"The key

element

**Midlands** 

**Forward** 

Plan is

the

seen as

employ-

ment of a

part-time,

salaried,

Regional

**Develop-**

Officer "

ment

of the

East

given to Ashby.

Assistance to a Nottingham school introducing croquet for the first time. Use of equipment at two events at Newlands House Cheshire Home.

Club coaching sessions run by RCO and others.

**Enquiries from Spalding** & Greetham (Lincs) and Bakewell & Ilkeston (Derbyshire). Advice and assistance

given to Greetham Valley Golf Club re introducing croquet on purpose made croquet court (for 1993). Published Regional Forward Plan 1992 - 1994. Copies sent to five

County Councils, East Midlands Sports Council and CA. Forward Plan updated at end of 1992 season.

Regional Newsletter reintroduced.

Invited new club at Woodhall Spa to join Federation.

Additional Federation Officers elected: Development, Publicity, Events and Schools.

#### CROQUET NORTH **Bruce M Rannie**

**EVENTS** 

Croquet North has completed a full and satisfactory season of varied events.

The Croquet North League consists of seven clubs, Belsay Hall, Boustead Hill, Crake Valley, Norton Elall, Ormesby Hall, Tyneside and, by invitation, York. In 1992 it was won by Tyneside Croquet Club. Three Croquet North clubs, Belsay Hall, Ormsby Hall and Tyneside, participated in the Northern Confederation League. Tyneside, as highest-placed team, qualify to apply to be invited to represent the Federation in the Secretary's Shield in 1993.

The Federation, with

the kind cooperation of Crake Valley and Tyneside Croquet Clubs, staged two Progressive Doubles one-day tournaments, in Brockhole, Windermere in July, and in Newcastle upon Tyne, in September. Both were fully subscribed, and highly successful in their joint aims of providing six hours of competitive croquet for high bisquers and beginners, and coaching and guidance during the day from low bisquers whilst maintaining the competitive friendly spirit.

Croquet North, with the kind cooperation of Tyneside Croquet Club, hosted the second annual representative match against Scottish Croquet Association 'B' for the Newcastle Breweries Challenge Trophy in July. The match was won by the Scots 16-2, making the series score 1-1.

The Federation, with the cooperation of Crake Valley, Hartforth Hall and

Belsay Hall Croquet Clubs, and Middlesbrough Council, organized four heats of the Golden Mallet Golf Croquet competition. It staged, with the cooperation of Tyneside Croquet Club, the Regional Final on behalf of the Croquet Association, and the winner and two other representatives attended the National Final.

Croquet North fully supported 1992 Bulmer's Giardini National Croquet Day, by assisting clubs with publicity material and staging a taster day in Washington, Sunderland.

#### DEVELOPMENT

Because of the distances involved in covering the geographical area of Croquet North, pressure of other activities, and financial constraints on the Federation which limited payment of expenses for most of 1992 to reimbursement of petrol for major journeys, no Development Officer is formally in place in Croquet North (the Secretary is acting as contact for the Croquet Association). However, development activities, including provision of equipment, and running of taster days, have been carried out throughout 1992 all over the Region.

Correct use of the Sports Council revenue grant for 1991 / 1992 is proving difficult to justify to their officials, and no grant for 1992 / 1993 was obtained.

The plans for 1993 / 1994 are to focus development into north Cumbria, based probably on Carlisle, and application has been made for a Sports Council revenue grant on that basis. The Federation is following up sites for clubs that may have the potential for four courts, as in the CA Forward Plan. In the meantime, efforts will he made to help clubs consolidate in their current locations, avoiding where possible

having more than one club attempting to attract new players from the same catchment area.

#### COACHING

The Coaching Officer has concentrated efforts in ensuring that all clubs have, or have access to, at least one Grade 1 or equivalent coach. Plans to hold Federation Courses for middle or lower bisquers were not taken up by players from the Northern Clubs.

Gail Curry, meanwhile, retained both the Barlow Bowl and the Ladies' Championship in 1992.

#### NORTH WEST FEDERATION OF **CROQUET CLUBS**

1 NEW CLUBS

Bury Grammar School has established a croquet club with two short lawns and a small group of very enthusiastic boys under the leadership of a croquet playing teacher who is a member of the Bury Croquet Club. There is close liaison with the Bury Croquet Club and we are hopeful that this development will provide a breeding ground for top class players. Upton Croquet Club in

the Wirral has been

established and extremely active for over 70 years, but has recently joined the Croquet Association and this Federation. We welcome this club into the official croquet world and we are encouraged that it continues to be the centre of excellence for golf croquet in the north west and possibly in the British Isles? The lawns are full all day and every day and there is a waiting list for membership which is rare in this Federation's Region. A small group of Upton members are attempting to introduce short croquet with the assistance of the Federation, but we think it will need to be a gentle development process. We look forward to Upton becoming part of the north west inter-club

croquet scene as soon as

possible.

2. RECENTLY FORMED CLUBS

Bury, Fylde, Lancaster and Pendle have all been formed during the last five years. Bury and Pendle are now established clubs with a firm membership base and are very active in competition croquet in the region. Bury, however, are having extreme difficulties in terms of lawn quality on Borough Council ground and Pendle are facing the challenge of moving from a two to a four lawn club, but lack of resources is frustrating their intentions. Fylde and Lancaster show encouraging signs of growth. Fylde's lawn situation has improved, but still has limitations imposed by the Borough Council and Lancaster play on the outfield of the Lancaster University cricket field which is a magnificent setting, but again is limited by availability and lack of resources to improve the

#### 3. BIRKDALE AND SOUTHPORT

in the coming year.

Birkdale & Southport have developed to a nine lawn club. Congratulations, we look forward to seeing many more prestigious regional and national competitions at Southport in the future.

quality of the lawns. The

address the latter problem

Federation will need to

#### 4. GENERAL

There are now 10 clubs in the Region, including two school clubs, and the Federation will need to address the issues of:-

- a) A Regional Development Plan
- b) Strengthening support for existing clubs lacking prosperity, and
- c) Addressing the potential four lawn development issue at Pendle.
- The Federation is in good heart. It runs a Regional Association Croquet League and a

Short Croquet League, the winners being Bury and Radbroke Hall respectively for the 1992 season.

Congratulations to Birkdale & Southport on winning the Longman Cup and to Pendle on winning the National Short Knockout Cup and to Bowdon who were runners up in the Mary Rose.

North West Clubs also compete in the Northern Croquet League which is run by the Confederation of Northern Croquet Clubs. Congratulations to Bowdon for winning this League Championship in

#### **SOUTH EAST FEDERATION**

One new club has been established at Wadhurst in East Sussex on a temporary site of two small lawns.

Two regular groups of players have agreed to constitute new clubs for 1993 in Enfield and Merton, both under the aegis of the borough Sports Development Officers. Enfield has two full size lawns, but Merton only one of excellent quality.

#### PROSPECTS

- i. London Borough of Sutton is proposing a croquet programme for 1993.
- ii. A privately owned croquet development (four lawns) near Headcorn in Kent, delayed by recession, is still likely to mature in 1993/94.
- iii. Play on the public facility at Addlestone in Surrey is continuing, but as yet there is not sufficient interest to form a club.
- iv. There is possible interest in the Ashford, Kent area for a village club.
- v. The Director of the National Maritime Museum has banned further use of the lawns, ending the chance of a new club in Greenwich.

**DEMONSTRATIONS** 

Oaks Park in Sutton. Ashford in Kent, Mersham in Kent, Welling in London Borough of Bexley Capel Manor and Town Fair in Enfield Chertsey and Addlestone Fairs in Runnymede.

#### OTHER EVENTS

The second Federation Doubles Event attracted thirteen teams, compared with six in 1991, to Southwick. More events to attract, especially, new clubs and long bisquers are planned for 1993.

Worthing Club used plastic hockey pitch to attract beginners, using full size lawns and indoor hoops very successfully.

#### SOUTH WEST **FEDERATION OF CROQUET CLUBS**

This year has again been a period of consolidation, as clubs have maintained their positions in difficult times for recruitment and growth. At Federation level there have been changes which should result in area Federations having greater influence in the national scene. At national level, there have been changes in administration and changes proposed in subscription policy which, if implemented, will have far

reaching consequences. In the 1992 issue of SWAN we summarized the current position on our development plan "Building for the Future" and asked for suggestions as to what aid was needed and also for volunteers to help with our activities. Unfortunately, the general response has been poor. On the positive side, Peter Dyke has kindly offered to accept the post of Schools Officer and we look forward to his ideas in this important area. Hamish Hall is playing an active role in the S.W. Region of the Sports Council and Federation of Sports and the Arts. This can only do good for publicity of the game and

increases the possibility of financial support in the area. We are continuing to maintain registers of qualified coaches and referees active in the Federation. We are also supporting the production of a Club Handbook, in conjunction with the C.A.

Successful coaching courses have been run this season at Budleigh Salterton at the Grade 1 and Grade 2 levels. The Federation is becoming well supplied with qualified coaches but we need to develop a coaching strategy for the region so that this resource can be used to the best advantage. In December 1991 the

C.A. Council accepted the

view of the 1991 Federa-

tion Conference that

Federations be repre-

sented on Council. We look forward to the implementation of the scheme which would help to achieve a regional contribution to the governing body. The question of subscription policy, however, presents difficult issues which remain to be resolved. It is possible to accept the need for increased finance for the central administration, paid for by all who play in the organized game at club level, and in this respect the Federation broadly supports recent proposals by Council along these lines. Nonetheless, it is vital that any scheme introduced takes into account fully the needs and wishes of all clubs, old and new, large and small, competitive and social. Enough time must be given for clubs to consult with their members over a time scale such that their opinions can be adequately formed and expressed. Current developments present a challenge to the Federation which will seek to ensure that the interests of all its clubs are considered and protected in the forth-coming debates, and that it is able

to respond fully and appropriately to local concerns and requirements

Congratulations are due

to clubs and players for

successes at all levels of

national front, Chelten-

ham were runners-up in

competition. On the

the Secretary's Shield and the Longman Cup, while a Cheltenham member, David Bradley, was runner-up in the National Short Croquet Competition. Congratulations are also due to the winners of the Federation Leagues; Bristol, Kington Langley and Plymouth. In the C.A. Selection events Frances Ransom was runner-up in the Barlow Bowl while Strat Liddiard made his debut in Eights Week, finishing joint third in the Spencer Ell with Francis Landor, a previous winner. David Goacher is to be congratulated on his first appearance in the President's Cup after winning the Chairman's Salver in successive years and also being runner-up in the Men's Championship. Finally, David Maugham has been selected for the G.B. Test Team to play in the MacRobertson Shield next year. We wish him and the team good fortune in their endeavours.

"The

the

little

ous.

adminis-

Founda-

tion for

short of

scandal-

After 15

they have

decided if

"athletic"

**Although** 

this does

depend

on who

to!"

you speak

months

still not

Croquet

is an

sport.

Sport and

the Arts is

tration of

#### WEST MIDLANDS **FEDERATION**

1992 has been marked by frustration on one hand and satisfaction on

the other. The frustration arises from the long drawn out negotiations with the Foundation for Sport and Art and the Sports Council in connection with the Rowheath project. Both bodies greedily consume hundreds of hours of volunteer time, both make it totally impossible to work within even a quasi-commercial time frame and both find it impossible to respond to the pressures that inevitably build up when projects involving third

parties are delayed for months or even years. At least the Sports Council try to be helpful. The administration of the F.S.A. is little short of scandalous. After 15 months they have still not decided if Croquet is an "athletic" sport. Although this does depend on who you speak to in their office. It is impossible to get any constructive information on the progress of an application. Now to the satisfaction.

The Solihull Croquet Club is up and flourishing after a text book start up. It began in 1990 with a group of friends playing garden croquet. Contact was established with Chris Hudson and via him with the Federation. Edgbaston welcomed them as guests on several occasions and a search for a ground was begun. The search was continued throughout 1991 without success but the group played at Rowheath on a weekly basis and received coaching. A home was formed early in 1991. Two full sized lawns within the grounds of Solihull Old Boys Sports Complex. They now have 25 fully paid-up members and have equipped themselves with a full set of equipment without any recourse to grants or loans. They hold monthly social meetings and have acquired a further lawn which can be used throughout the winter. They also entered the leagues and recorded their first wins. Altogether a dynamic group who are expanding fast.

Elsewhere, Edgbaston have been able to install flush toilets and plan to follow with heating and lighting in 1993.

There has been no dramatic increase or decrease in membership during the year.

We finish however on a sad note. Unless there is a re-think we are going to lose one of our leading clubs in protest at the subscription proposals.

## ampionship Rankings

they have something to hate! Most sports have a system that can impose some kind of "order" upon the players in it.

Croquet's first ranking systems were the handicap system and the selection order for top events. The gazette also instituted "readers polls" for some years! In the early eighties Stephen Mulliner began operating a ranking system based on ones used in other sports with similar problems to croquet, in particular chess. This has undergone various changes since, but remains a "probabalistic" system. The numbers sports. It is not the case in croquet, where even used for ranking each individual represent the inferred probability of beating any other player in the system at one particular point in time. The numbers go up and down as players win or lose each game, so a list produced one week could be violently different from one produced the next. To even out this volatility one of a number ones who played best! of schemes is used to "slow down" changes, even so the time period represented by any ranking list is subject to debate and criticism. Also the system is "game hungry" - it needs to sample lots of games to maintain a mathematically sound basis, so games in minor events are included and matches (eg best of three) are treated as separate games - hence one can win a match but experience a net loss of points (losing more for dropping a game than for winning two)! The Automatic Handicapping Scheme for Level Play games is based on the same system.

#### The Croquet Grand Prix

"Grand Prix" systems are often favoured in sport because of their transparent functionality and basis in hard fact and result. If you talk to non-croquet friends about ranking this is the

eople like rankings - even if it's so kind of system they assume you are talking 5 points for each single game match won. about. These work by having a list of Championship events: if you win you get some points; run-up you get a few less; semi-finalist you get a few less still etc. Thus success is directly and obviously rewarded, with little room for dissension over the "theoretical basis" behind the system. Snooker and tennis are amongst the sports that use Grand Prix rankings.

Grand Prix systems can only work properly when all the players one is trying to rank play in all the events one is using. This is the case in snooker and tennis - they are professional at the top it is unreasonable to expect players to compete every year in every Championship. The USCA have nevertheless used a Grand Prix system for their rankings, with the predictable result that the higher ranked players tended to be the ones who played most rather than the

The Croquet Grand Prix gets over the problems highlighted earlier by expecting players not to compete in all eight Championships, but in just four from those eight. The events are split into major (gp A) and minor (gp B) Championships, and a player's best two performances in each group are taken to generate their Grand Prix total for the year. In common with snooker, the ranking list is generated by totalling points from the past two years - to give indication of performance over a reasonable period of time and enlarge the "sample size" to eight events per player.

Points are awarded in each event according the following system: winner - x pts; runner-up - x/2 pts; semi-finalists - x/4 pts; quarter-finalists - x/8 pts PLUS every player is awarded 10 points for each best-of-three or more match won,

Group A	win pts
World Championship	1200
UK Open Championship	800
Masters Championship	800
Chairmans Salver	100
Spencer El	13
Selector's Weekend	0
Mens Championship	400
Womens Championship	0
Group B	win pts
North Eng Championship	400
South Eng Championship	400
East Eng Championship	400
West Eng Championship	400

Chairmans Salver, Spencer El, Selectors weekend and Womens Championship are not Championship events of the same type as others and so receive reduced points, although all attract the usual points for winning games/matches. The Mens Championship is classified as Group A but receives the points allocation of a Group B event, to which it is currently closer. In common with snooker, the World Championship receives a greater points allocation (and this is more appropriate in the case of croquet, where the event actually contains more "Top" players) but not the 2 times bonus of that sport just 1.5 times.

The list also indicates the position of each player just on 1991 results and just on 1992 results. Also how many events were used in the calculation of each players' points total; to get the full benefit this would be 8; players whose total is based on less than 4 events appear in lighter type, less than 2 events are not shown.

**John Walters** 

#### 1992 Grand Prix Rankings

po	s	pts	ents	91	92	pos		pts	ents	91	92	pos		pts	ents	91	92
1	FULFORD, R	4415	8	1	1	24	SAURIN, M	140	5	-	16	46	RANSOM, R	32	4	43	50
2	WALTERS, J	2525	8	3	4	25	COMISH, S	123	8	22	32	46	L-WILLIAMS, M	32	3	-	35
3	MAUGHAM, D	2175	8	5	2	26	SMITH, P	120	5	29	23	48	TUKE, S	30	4	49	41
4	OPENSHAW, D	2100	6	2	8	26	AVERY, M	120	2	-	17	48	HASLAM, J	30	4	49	41
5	MULLINER, S	1790	8	6	3	28	LIDDIARD, S	119	6	25	30	48	RANSOM, F	30	4	49	41
6	CLARKE, C	1735	8	4	7	29	HEAP, M	105	3	19	-	48	VINCENT, I	30	5	35	-
7	GOACHER, D	1150	8	11	5	30	SUTCLIFFE, A	98	6	20	-	48	SAURIN, ADRIAN	30	3	49	41
8	IRWIN, C	1085	8	8	6	30	FOULSER, D	98	4	20	-	53	JENKINS, R	27	2	44	65
9	BURRIDGE, I	735	8	7	10	32	GODDARD, J	87	4	35	28	53	DARBY, P	27	2	-	38
10	CORNELIUS, D	610	7	9	12	33	LAMB, W	80	4	44	23	55	DORKE, P	25	5	39	-
11	DAWSON, J	380	5	25	9	33	CURRY, G	80	4	35	29	55	MAGEE, D	25	2	-	39
12	FRENCH, M	315	7	12	20	35	SHAW, D	75	3	23	-	57	HARRIS, B	20	2	49	50
13	HASLAM, C	310	3	10	_	36	DAY, P	73	4	24	-	57	MAUGHAM, I	20	6	49	50
14	COLES, T	308	4	34	11	37	HECTOR, D	68	2	-	22	57	GUEST, J	20	6	49	50
15	ASPINALL, N	250	3	15	17	38	HILDITCH, R	67	7	28	-	57	MILLER, A	20	3	44	-
16	HOPE, A	233	4	14	20	39	WILLIAMS, C	62	7	39	33	61	RUDDOCK, J	15	2	-	47
17	WIGGINS, D	230	4	25	14	40	NEAL, B	60	4	29	-	62	GREENWOOD, J	10	2	49	-
18	PALMER, L	206	7	18	19	40	MCDIARMID, A	60	4	-	23	62	AITON, K	10	3	49	-
19	NOBLE, G	205	2	13	41	42	PLUMMER, I	55	2	39	36	62	MURRAY, M	10	3	49	-
20	GAUNT, D	173	7	17	23	43	MROZINSKI, A	53	3	31	-	62	TAYLOR-WEBB, E	10	2	49	-
20	GREGORY, A	173	6	49	13	44	BOND, I	40	2	32	-	62	GUGAN, R	10	2	49	
22	LANDOR, F	169	5	16	30	45	STOREY, B	37	3	33	-	62	SOLOMON, E	10	2	-	50

#### **Championship Rankings**

his ranking list uses an algorithm very similar to that used by CGS, however it analyses different data. It only analyses best of three (or five) data and gives an equal rating to all best of three matches played. As relatively few best of three matches are played this produces a longer term ranking list. Such a ranking system is of use in establishing the No. 1 ranked player in the country and allowing that player to consolidate his position. This is common in other sports' ranking systems and is preferable to the top player changing with every tournament, when little credibility can be given to the statement "ranked number one in the

The system does however have several draw-

Only the top few players are graded accurately. The ranking of players outside this range is likely to be inaccurate as players do not play a sufficient number of best of three matches, this will of course subsequently cause top players playing them to be penalised by their incorrect ranking however such effects are fairly small. Some fairly active players do not even feature on the list due to an insufficient number of matches.

Grading only best of three matches means that some important events are not graded ie Eights and World Championship blocks.

The list is of no use whatsoever for day to day use, such as tournament cut-offs and seeding, as it is too long term based and does not account for a player's current form.

Finally it is possibly too difficult for players to move down the list, as it is only possible to lose one best of three match per tournament. However this does cause the list to be more long term in nature.

Despite these significant drawbacks the list attempts to address a need for a longer term ranking list to run alongside the current list, which is, arguably, influenced far too much by the results of the preceding tournament.

2 Maugham D.	50	172
3 Irwin C.	33	171
4 Mulliner S.	36	171
5 Openshaw D.	30	170
6 Walters J.	36	167
7 Clarke C.	41	164
8 Saurin M.	12	149
9 Cornelius D.	15	142
10 Burridge I.	36	136
11 Goacher D.	27	136
12 Murray M.	10	132
13 Reeve D.	7	132
14 French M.	18	131
15 Noble G.	7	131
16 Dawson J.	6	130
17 Foulser D.	8	130
18 Gunasekera D	. 9	129
19 Williams S.	7	127
20 Symons A.	14	125
21 Comish S.	10	123
22 Saurin A.T.	11	122
23 Gaunt D.	11	119
24 Guest J.	10	117
25 Gregory A.	11	116
26 Solomon E.	5	116
27 Palmer L.	14	114
28 Coles T.	5	112
29 Curry G.	10	111
30 Smith P.	7	109
31 Hilditch R.	7	104
32 Browne T.	6	103
33 Williams C.	10	102
34 Tuke S.	7	101
35 Appleton D.	5	100
36 Ransom R.	5	100
37 Liddiard S.	8	99
38 Haslam J.	7	98
39 Maugham I.	8	98
40 Dorke P.	8	97
41 Surgenor J.	6	97
42 Mcdiarmid A.	5	93
43 Bogle A.	8	87
44 Ransom F.	7	83

Matches Grade

52 192

1 Fulford R.

Qualification: 5 Matches total in both 1991 & 1992 with at least 3 in 1992.

#### **lan Burridge**

#### CA COACHING COMMITTEE MERIT AWARDS 1992

From Bill Lamb (Chairman). Congratulations to the following who achieved

Gold: 7	D.C. Powell	Mrs. A. Howell
Alan Bogle	Paul Sharrock	John Lansdown
J.H. Haslam	Walter Thornhill	Sheila Meadows
Guy Willard	Bronze: 44	Mrs. G.E. Pellegrini
Ben Green	Norman Allenach	Martin Pitt
P.M.G. Hort	Edith Bailey	Mrs. M. Regan
Nick Harris	Graham Bond	Linda Sheraton-Davis
Dr. Llewellyn-Williams	J.A. Burgin	Mrs. C. Storey
Silver: 18	Antony Fathers	Mary Wainman
R.J. Benson	L.A.D. Hawkins	Mrs. J. Weir
R.R. Edwards	David Kibble	Cliff Bailey
Barbara Haslam	Susan Loughlin	M.C. Belcham
Alan Linton	Miss J.M. Norman	J.D. Bradley
David Prescott	Ryan Peters	Maureen Evans
Ian Storey	Jean Powell	Anne Haussherr
Ken Bright	Roger Scholfield	Millicent James
Faith Fewtrell	Kay Singleton	Margaret Leach
Claire Heritage	Jonathon Toye	Arthur Nelson
C.F. Moon	Mitch Watts	M.C. Percival
John Robinette	Fernando de Ansorena	Mrs. R. Pitt
B.T. Teague	Peter Bailey	Ann Rimmer
G. Edgeler	John Bourn	Mrs. P. Simmonds
Nigel Gray	John Dacam	Lionel Tibble
Brian Hewitt	Joanna Geddes	Joan Walker

The Award Scheme will continue unchanged for the 1993 season, but players are reminded that they must enclose an SAE with their claim in order to receive a badge

#### Latest CGS ('Mulliner') List

1 Fulford RI

Not a Championship list, but including ALL eligible single games and giving some indication of very recent form. Most useful for players outside the top 20-30, and therefore for tournament cut-offs.

177 110 81 Surgeonor J [S]

1	Fullord RI	1//	110	81 Surgeonor J [S]	102	8
2	Mulliner SN	175	75	82 Carter KJ	102	50
3	Maugham DB	174	101	83 Conyngham VL [I]	102	8
4	Openshaw DK	167	32	84 Hyne NG	101	8
5	Irwin CJ	164	87	85 Magee DJ	101	81
6	Clarke CD	162	89	86 Neal BG	101	17
7	Walters JO	159	66	87 Ransom RW	101	19
8	Goacher DJ	154	93	88 Thompson BE	100	11
9	Aspinall GN	149	25	89 Collin AJ	99	16
10	Dawson JP	149	65	90 Torrington PG	99	11
11	Cornelius DA Miss	148	47	91 McClelland IR	99	22
	Reeve DC	137	28	92 Jones C	99	67
	Noble GW	132	62	93 White DM	99	19
	Bond ID	131	18	94 Mann JR	99	7
			86			35
100	Wiggins DCD	131		95 Pidcock A	98	
	Avery MN	131	7	96 Dorke PJ	97	55
	Tuke SM	131	58	97 Bottomley HJ	96	23
	Burridge IJ [W]	131	86	98 Stevens MJ	96	19
	Prichard WdeB	129	9	99 Miller ARK	96	65
20	Heap MEW	128	12	100 Bogle AJ	96	40
21	French MR	127	42	101 Ransom FE Mrs	96	34
22	Williams S [I]	127	26	102 Ames JP	95	48
23	Palmer LJ	127	83	103 Watson JPG	95	14
	Toye JS	127	9	104 Chapman LJ	95	15
	Symons AJ	126	55	105 Darby PA	95	68
	Saurin Adrian T <j></j>	126	41	106 Ruddock JC	94	59
	Aldridge WO	126	23	107 Brand IB	92	9
					1000	
	Coles WT	125	41	108 Williams RaW [S]	92	22
300	Lamb WE	124	41	109 Williamson JD	90	20
	Hector JD	124	48	110 Reed AA	90	11
	Saurin MA	123	48	111 Shaw DW	90	29
32	Brown RJ	122	40	112 Beech J	89	9
33	Hope AB	122	26	113 Best R	89	38
34	Day P	122	12	114 Audsley E	89	11
35	Rogerson F [I]	122	18	115 Kimmerling R	89	27
	Lewis SE	121	6	116 Davis R	89	11
226	Gunasekera D	121	14	117 Hayes MR	89	6
200	Goddard JP	121	48	118 Willis JH	89	22
	Curry GM Miss	119	79	119 Thatcher D	89	33
	Comish S		82	120 Alvey PL	89	8
		119				
	Harrison TD	118	22	121 Stephens RT	88	53
	Hallam BG	118	29	122 Ross JE	88	10
	Saurin Andrew J <j></j>		12	123 Anderson TW	88	18
	Haslam JH	117	66	124 Wild CH	88	23
	Llewellyn-Will'ms MJ		74	125 Hilditch JR	88	103
	Liddiard GS	116	60	126 Smith RJ	88	6
47	Prichard CHL	116	11	127 Hopewell CG	88	26
48	Foulser DR	116	13	128 Death PJ	88	22
49	Lendrum DG	115	17	129 Moorcraft DH	87	11
50	Storey BJ	115	43	130 O'Shaugnessy M [I]	87	6
51	Gregory AK	114	98	131 McMordie JA	86	5
52	Healy GPN [I]	113	7	132 Latham LV	85	15
	Solomon EW	113	39	133 Willard G	85	51
	Gaunt DL	113	68	134 White RK	85	15
	Guest JE	112	31	135 Fewtrell R	84	48
300	Harrison-Wood D	112	58	136 Whittaker FL	84	19
	Haggerston MJB	111	56	137 Sutcliffe AF	84	59
		111	46	138 Jenkins RS	84	34
		110	18	139 Weitz BGF	84	33
		110	58	140 Schmieder C von [I]		7
		110	36	141 Parry A	84	16
62	Prichard RDC	109	21	142 Dyer J	83	8
63	Evans MJ	109	10	143 Gale NFC	83	6
64	Williams CN [W]	109	99	144 Burge TR	83	40
		109	16	145 Healy PV Mrs	82	20
		108	46	146 Green BG <j></j>	82	9
		108	13	147 Pratt S	82	10
	Greenwood JD	108	42	148 Linton AM	82	10
		108	26	149 Sheraton-Davis J	82	11
			7			
	Solomon JW	107		150 Ranshaw MJ [S]	82	12
71	Carlisle JWH	106	9	151 Wood R	82	19
	Wood TI	106	13	152 Cunningham E [I]	82	12
	Browne TN	106	55	153 Trimmer P	81	8
74		106	12	154 Collin GK	81	23
75	Appleton DR [S]	105	29	155 Wainman B	81	5
76	Smith PL	105	44	156 Redford B	81	6
77	Jones KE	105	17	157 Brand RS	81	17
78		104	21	158 Evenett MJ	80	15
		103	27	159 Grimshaw JE [W]	80	7
	Bailey RF	103	9			77
			M.			10
						19

23 SYMONS, A



## NATIONAL SCHOOLS CROQUET CHAMPIONSHIP

Sponsored by The Royal Bank of Scotland

Over 200 schools play croquet as part of their sports curriculum, and ten more have taken up the game this year.

Fifty seven of these schools have played in the National Championship over the years, their strengths varying as sixth formers come and go.

Teams consist of three players, and the competition is a handicap event, in which schools of differing abilities can compete on level terms. The format comprises four Regional finals, followed by a National final between the Regional winners.

As well as the handicap event, the Croquet Association invites the four strongest schools (those with the lowest handicaps) to compete on level terms. This year, the four invited schools were Wolverhampton Grammar School, Ardingly College, Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School, Blackburn, and Nottingham High School.

In the semi-finals of the invitation event, Wolverhampton proved too strong for Ardingly, winning all three of their matches fairly easily. Queen Elizabeth's had a much harder struggle against Nottingham, who were competing for the first time.

In the final, Wolverhampton's Mark Elwell had a relatively easy game against Queen Elizabeth's Gavin Lambert, but the other two games could have gone either way. In the end, Robert Owen (Wolverhampton) played well to beat James Coleman, and Richard Williams won a very close game against Findlay Colquhoun to give Wolverhampton a 3-0 win after an exciting match. Nottingham beat Ardingly to take third place.

The Wolverhampton team play in the West Midlands Schools Croquet League, and beat both King Edward's School Birmingham and Bishop Vesey's Grammar School to win this year's League title. Robert Owen, Wolverhampton's No 1, has already played in several open club tournaments in the Midlands, and his handicap is down to 5. He and Mark Elwell both played in the Croquet Association's National Junior Championship this year, coming 3rd and 6th respectively.

David Iddon, Wolverhampton's Master in charge of Croquet, is hoping to create a "first" by entering an all-girl team in next year's competition, so keep your eyes skinned for a lady world champion from Wolverhampton. 24-year old Robert Fulford, who won this year's World Croquet Championship in the United States, first played croquet for Colchester Grammar School!

C. Hudson.

#### SCHOOLS HANDICAP FINAL

Edgbaston: Wednesday 23rd September, 1992
The four regional winners who met in the schools final were Ardingly, Nailsea, Queen Elizabeth's and Stowe.

Queen Elizabeth's fielded the promising Coleman brothers, handicaps 7 and 9 respectively, backed up by Findlay Colquhoun, playing off 20. In their semi-final, they proved too strong for Stowe, a team of promising players who would come on in leaps and bounds if they had more match practice.

With the score one game all in the other semifinal, Nailsea's second-string Iain Leggate (brother of Alex) just beat Ardingly's Angus Johnston +l(T) to take his team into the final, where a similar close result ensued - perhaps the closest schools' final we have ever had.

After the semi-final Findlay Colquhoun's handicap was reduced to 18, but he still found enough to beat Nailsea's Paul Bristow +21. In the top game between James Coleman (QEGS) and Roy Hawkins (Nailsea), Hawkins eventually won +6.

This left the result depending on the last game between William Coleman and Iain Leggate. William, the more experienced player, was a long way behind after Iain had used his bisques, but he kept his nerve and gradually caught up as time approached, to such effect that all four balls were on rover.

Iain eventually went to peg out, missed with the first ball, and looked to have given the game away. After a nerve-wracking ten minutes, he eventually hit the peg from 7 yards with his second ball to win the match for Nailsea.

Nailsea have played many times in this competition, and have often made the final stages, but until this year success has eluded them. A well-deserved victory, therefore, for Peter Dyke and his team. Third place went to Stowe, who beat Ardingly 2-1 in the play-off, and two more handicap reductions at the end of play; Findlay Colquhoun from 18 to 16, and Iain Leggate from 20 to 18.

This is the last Schools event that will be sponsored by the Royal Bank of Scotland, who have now decided to concentrate their sponsorship on "siblings of their customers". Their support has enabled the CA to make considerable strides in developing croquet in schools and has been most welcome.

#### BRITISH STUDENT CHAMPIONSHIPS

Oxford 19-21 June

Oxford was once again the venue, with the same (reluctant?) Manager, Ian Plummer. Last year's Champion Andrew Grimbaldeston failed to arrive, leaving a fuming Plummer with a carefully planned tournament in disarray. His frustration was vented by proclaiming the villain (a victim of end of term celebrations) to be disqualified. Eight players were left in an American block.

The tournament started in traditional manner: heavy rain combined with a strong wind, which by the end of the first day left only three visitors, David Reekie (Cambridge), Edward Duckworth

(Durham) and David Lilley (Brighton) on 2 wins.

Saturday saw both the sun come out, and Oxford's Chris Farthing and Phil Rees come into contention through determined and consistent play. Andrew Byford (9) played well to take games off Patmore (6) and Reekie (5). Dominic Wreford, a recent starter showed great potential with fine play being let down by the occasional lapse of concentration.

The use of byes early on, given to four players left a confused situation after the penultimate round. The Manager was left in an awkward situation, with only one man able to resolve the situation satisfactorily .... Saturday night found David Lilley with two goals; a victory on Sunday to take the title and a pretty waitress at Pizza Hut discovered the night before!

Well, success was found on the croquet lawn, with a victory over Farthing giving Lilley the Championship and Hamilton-Miller trophy. Many thanks to Ian Plummer for his time and hospitality, and organising an enjoyable weekend.

#### RESILTS

David Lilley (4.5) 5 wins; Phil Rees (6) 4 wins; Chris Farthing (5) 4 wins; Edward Duckworth (3.5) 4 wins; Andrew Byford (9) 3 wins; David Reekie (4) 3 wins; Dominic Wreford (6) 2 wins; Chris Patmore (6) 1 win

**Ed Duckworth** 

#### SENIORS CHAMPIONSHIP

The second Senior's Championship took place at Roehampton in mostly dry, pleasant conditions. Eight players had 5 games each, and by about 5 o'clock on the second day three players had lost one game each: Bill Lamb, Arthur Reed, Eric Solomon. Lamb decided that a meeting at Hurlingham was more important, so excused himself from a one-ball play-off. Reed won this interesting and closely-contested game by 2 points. Now some moments deserving at least a double eyebrow-raise: Bernard Neal (in corner I) forgot a 4-back lift and hit a 25-yard ball near hoop II; Duncan Hector approached hoop 3 poorly, so drifted back to partner (still alive on) near corner II, cursed when it hit thus destroying next turn's rush and put both balls back on the vard-line and walked away; Edward Dymock (rover and peg) croqueted his peg-ball to become frozen to the peg when going to make rover, then made the hoop, took off back to partner carelessly so lining the two balls and the peg straight, scratched his head and disappeared to an empty corner (time had just been called). Questions 1: what should he have done? 2: if he had been diametrically opposite, could he hit the peg firmly causing partner to be shunted away and claim a win?

#### RESULTS

A Reed 4/5; E Solomon 4/5; W Lamb 4/5; D Hector 3/5; E Dymock 3/5; B Neal 1/5; R Pennant-Jones 1/5; G Cuttle 0/5 Photos: Eric Solomon, Bernard Neal, Chris Farthing (Left)

# report features

#### CHAMPIONSHIP OF IRELAND by Simon Williams

This was a tournament of incident that I shall remember for many years. Golf Croquet is dangerous! I injured my ankle by striking it with my mallet while playing Golf Croquet on Sunday, and Joe Cunningham pulled a Calf muscle in leaping up the bank from the lawns. I shall probably never forget the shot with which Vere Conyngham beat me +1 by hitting the partly-wired peg from the north boundary, with my ball (fully wired) just 6 inches south of the peg, or the leap of triumph which accompanied the feat. The unfortunate scratching of seven visiting players (for reasons too the reporter, whose midweek attempted ammany and varied to record) made this year's Championship week a more relaxed affair than that of 1991, but it was a pity that 3 of the visitors had been 'minus' players, so lowering the standard of the main event, which had promised to be high. Despite this, there was a distinctly cosmopolitan air, with players from Australia, England, Scotland, Switzerland and the U.S.A.

It seems that the Tukes will push croquet precocity to the limit. Harry (7 months) played the piano, offered advice to his parents on the lawn, and when asked to comment on Daddy's play, promptly threw up. Nearly everyone at the tournament had a word with Harry during the diesel oil that accompanied the Manager the week - a charming companion with a quiet everywhere.

assurance of command that should be an example to his contemporaries. The Tukes, with Harry's help, reached several finals, but the blessing was then withdrawn -possibly the water in one of Harry's endless series of bottles had been allowed to get cold - and they ended up with a collection of runners-up glassware.

Handicaps were widely disliked, and discussion of them dominated the conversation over the "formidables" of "diesel oil". Norman disliked 'beginner' Barbara Murphy's handicap; Barbara disliked Ray Flood's (and so did putation of two of Ray's bisques was overruled by the bigger half of the Handicap Committee); the Tukes disliked Ray and Gerry Reynolds's respective and combined handicaps, and everybody disliked Ronan's. At the other extreme, Nick Healy so fancied his own handicap that he was able to produce written evidence to confirm it in the teeth of desperate opposition.

Management was effected by Robin Hobbs with such efficiency that the casual observers could not believe that a tournament was in progress. Despite this, 157 games were completed, with only finals escaping the dreaded double-banking. Everything was as smooth as

The Championship Singles was well subscribed, but what with cancellations the draw was somewhat lopsided. Simons Tuke and Williams met in the first round, and it seemed that neither was quite ready for sustained opposition at such an early stage. Play was slow and strewn with errors, and there was a true catastrophe when Williams admitted a fault in a roll shot, he having completed all the peels of what should have been a winning Triple in the third game. All further references to Simon mean Tuke! Teddy Prentis was betrayed by his laudable habit of always attempting super-control at hoops - despite improvements in the lawns, they do not always reward this refinement, and Teddy found himself facing long match-saving shots against Alan Pidcock and Simon (Tuke). He hit both, but had too much control at hoop 5 against Simon, and eventually lost. Simon played Edward Cunningham in one semi-final, a match which raised the standard of play a bit. In the first game, Simon hit a last shot against 4-back and peg, went round, and then did all three peels but overrolled Rover and had to run away to



Edward managed to miss his short roquet, and ended beside the grateful Simon's ball. Simon then took the second game +26TP. Fred beat Jane Shorten in the other semi-final. I started to make detailed notes of the final.

the boundary.

but the first game proved to be longer than my attention span. The freshly-set brand new, heavy and narrow hoops - which had been expected all week, but were only delivered on Thursday - took their toll. After both players had broken down a couple of times and got away with it, they became defensive and laved up, but to no purpose as the other always hit! Fred made 9 consecutive hits of over 20 yards. but still lost the game after being pegged out. But it was he who first recovered enough nerve to pull ahead, and he won the next two games by greater margins after a total of 7 hours of bitter struggle. Plucky Tuke continues the tradition of the Leslie Webb Salver's being held by Simons.

In doubles, the winning strategy is first to choose an excellent partner, and then to play properly onesself. The strongest pair in the

Doubles Championship were Prentis and Mahoney, and they duly reached the final of both lives. In their match against Simon and Veronica Tuke, Simon TPO'd Dan, and later pegged himself off with Veronica 4 hoops ahead of Teddy, but Ted caught up and won the game. Edward Cunningham survived the merciless abuse of his partner Williams and his play improved as the week progressed. They beat the Americans in a sweaty Draw final, but Fred Rogerson and Alan McInemey had an even closer squeek in the Process, winning by +1 (not on time). The late start of the play-off, following the marathon Singles final, was causing some worries to both Manager and players, but in the event, Williams and Cunningham made no error and whitewashed Fred and Alan in under 40 minutes.

Fred managed the former but not the latter in the Handicap Doubles, his son Barry playing immaculately but Fred himself faltering to let the Manager and Jane Shorten snatch a +4 win. These in turn fell to the Tukes, who stormed on to the final where they hit the impassible barrier of Reynolds and Flood's

bisques and bisqueless all-round breaks, this game being only slightly longer than the Open Doubles play-off. The holders Eatough and Payne from Switzerland were beaten +1 by Prentis and Murphy, who then held the invincibles to 2 points. Unlucky to lose to the Swiss by a single point were Dan Mahoney and

Scanning the draw sheet of the Handicap Singles I find only two +26 wins, both Ray's with bisques standing. The inevitable clash of Shorten and Ronan McInerney occurred in one semi-final, and this time Jane won and went on to beat Peter Payne in the final.

Among those fancied to win the Green Cup. played this year under Advanced Play conditions, were Vere Conyngham, Norman Eatough, Jane and Ronan, all with the minimum permitted handicap. Not so many lifts were forgotten. It was Ronan's turn to beat Jane in this competition, but he lost to his brother Alan, and Vere was defeated by Norman, who beat Alan in the final. None of these five will be able to enter this event next year - they were noticed, as was Sue Loughlin, who snatched the U.S.C.A. Salver from Ray Flood by a definitive +1 on time. Corla van Griethuysen won the Steel Cup (plate event), which went through many changes of format during the week, from her fellow Scot, Malcolm O Connell.

The sideline Table Tennis event was won by Alan Pidcock, who also did some useful business in custom-built mallets. In the final, Ronan "could not control" Alan's canny, spinny services. Norman Eatough, last year's winner, took this event so seriously that he brought with him not only his own bat, but balls also.

Prizes were presented after dinner on Saturday by the Club President, Finbar Costello, and Fred celebrated his second championship by opening (with much assistance) a gigantic bottle of sparkling wine which he won in California some years ago.

Illustrations by Roy Weaver





#### THE EDINBURGH TOURNAMENT by A.H.L.

As usual six events were played on Fettes Charles sadly only got two unproductive shots. College Sports Field. Ian Wright was Manager, Malcolm Smith Handicapper and George Anderson Referee. Thirty-six players took part. Of these 17 were members of the Edinburgh Clubs, 5 came from other Scottish Clubs, 9 from English Clubs, 2 from Jersey, 1 from Australia and 2 from France. The Tournament operated under the S.C.A. Automatic Handicapping System which is identical to that of the C.A., EXCEPT that handicaps were adjusted at the end of each day's play. This was appreciated by players because rapid improvers were not such complete bandits in the last day or two of the Tournament.

The Cramond Cup was handsomely won by four Open Singles opponents in double figthe more than twenty annual Edinburgh Tournaments. Apart from putting his balls into play

France was unusually represented by the Dourthe brothers who had played in the S.C.A. v. France International Match over the previous week-end. The two, Rodolphe and Boris, carried all before them in the three events which they had entered. Thus they departed with a maximum number of trophies. In the Advanced Level Singles - handicaps 4 and over - each block was won by one of them, and it was the older Rodolphe who beat his brother in the final. It was much the same in the Unrestricted Handicap Singles in which Rodolphe reached the Final after swamping Charles Waterfield and then easily disposed of Boris who had reached that stage through John Greenwood who not only beat his other narrow wins in the first two rounds. Charles had had, however, the satisfaction of winning ures but, in his 26-0 three-quarter hour game - by 26-0 - in the third round. His opponent, against Charles Waterfield, he produced what surprisingly, was John Greenwood. In the is believed to be the first Triple Peel in any of Handicap Doubles Final the Dourthe brothers won comfortably, outclassing Donald Lamont and Ruth Goudie after the latter had made a

promising start. The runners-up, who had reached the Final with smallish wins, were fortunate in their first round tie when in danger of being overtaken. John Greenwood had reached the peg and now placed his partner Ronald Parkins's ball (yellow) in easy position for hoop 5 with his own alongside. Donald, shooting at the red from near hoop 6, was off the mark but hit the yellow by peeling its hoop

Nor in the first match of those Doubles was the element of surprise lacking, with Charlotte Townsend and Anne Rutter (the 1991 champions) playing against Terry Burge and Chris Robertson. Chris had stuck in a hoop, then time was called. Charlotte attacked carefully to avoid peeling Chris's ball. She took croquet but was penalised due to her ball not having been in contact. Not realising that his ball had become 'in hand' Chris peeled it (instead of first retreating to position) and so lost his oportunity to clinch the match. However another chance followed shortly when Anne

unluckily afforded Chris a lift. Chris struck, got his hoop and a sudden-death win. The irony for Charlotte was that, as she discovered later, although it was a handicap game she could have won by pegging out her own ball after pegging out Terry's.

The unexpected was not lacking in other games which contained incidents causing surprise, amusement or annovance depending upon whose viewpoint was considered. In the Handicap 4-plus Singles Malcolm Smith shot from the boundary straight at Fred Mann's ball in nearby 2-back. On reaching the hoop Malcolm's ball leapt over Fred's, leaving it untouched, and passed clean through the hoop. Also, with Alasdair Adam playing against George Anderson in that same event, Alasdair's inaccurate shot aimed at blue in the 4th corner from near hoop 5 glanced off that hoop and thus deflected actually hit the blue. The game between Alasdair and lan Wright produced an exciting finish. The former had reached Penult and Peg with lan at hoops 3 had their handicaps suitably lowered.

and 4. Nevertheless Ian seized the initiative, and although Alasdair hit in with a lift after 4back Ian replied in kind and pegged out Alasdair's ball. lan was now in control and, in spite of Alasdair's resistance, he won by 3.

Although Stuart McKendrick won each of his games in the Handicap 8-plus Singles by a small margin and Peter Smith won his easily in the other block the final result was another cliff-hanging win, for Stuart.

There was a close contest in the Handicap 11-plus Singles with Ruth Goudie winning all her six games, two very narrowly. Rodney Parkins was a good runner-up with only one defeat, of minus 1-on-time, against Ruth and with nearly as many points as Ruth collected.

Thanks to the Swiss Event, provided for those who had been eliminated in the first three rounds of the Unrestricted Singles Handicap, winners and losers got plenty of games. Peter Smith emerged as the winner of all four rounds of the Swiss and was one of those who

The Lauder Bowl given for the player who got the furthest without winning any prize was awarded to Terry Burge.

We were much indebted to Mrs Ythe Murdoch for her outstanding labours in providing on each of the six days lunches of high quality with food in great variety. We are grateful also to all the helpers whose various efforts on our behalf ensured that morning coffee, lunches and teas were served, and likewise we thank those who contributed the tea-bread. Not least, of course, our thanks are due to the Manager, Handicapper and Referees, and to Stella Summers the Tournament Secretary and Bar Manager for their valued services. These all contributed so significantly to the undoubted success of the Tournament, and the weather happily obliged.

The Tournament was concluded with the presentation of the various trophies and prizes by Mrs Mona Wright. Thankfully we noted that she had been making a good recovery from the recent ailment which had prevented her from playing.