

THROUGH THE HOOP

..back from the dead .. burgled and bereft ... atmosphere ... and philosophy.

If Secretaryship is the art of running the circus from the monkey cage yours truly qualifies!

First I was torpedoed by a virus that must have come first class post from Porton Down Chemical Warfare Centre. Following a week on the sick list, with kind friends searching desperately for something nice to put in the obituary, I arrived back to find that some "person or persons unknown" had used a size 10 'Belfast Doorknocker' on the CA Office door and made off with, among other things, the main computer, the one containing the membership data base, and the fax machine.

A replacement computer has been installed and the membership data-base reinstated - to a point! Let me explain. We were

backed up to the Wednesday before the striped jersey and black mask gang turned us over on the following Sunday. However (isn't there always a "However"?) ominous gaps in the membership fabric very soon made themselves apparent. Step forward local hero Roger Jackman, our two-days a week part-timer. He took the whole pile of membership returns received since January and, with the help of wife Nora, sorted them into alphabetical order before painstakingly checking every entry on the DB!

Based on the DB reincarnate I sent off some 300+ letters to **apparent** non-payers. The replies are coming in by 'phone and letter. As ever, those who have paid have been (mostly) unfailingly polite, patient and courteous in helping to plug the gaps.

The late payers are of contrite heart and sweet disposition (mostly)!

Once we have tightened the screws on the membership DB I will be writing to those club secretaries for whom I can find no trace of registration fees being paid for this year. The prayer wheels in the CA Office will be turning and mantras intoned for a peaceful deliverance for the Secretary as he navigates through shark infested seas!

On a lighter note, I spent an enjoyable day at Surbiton on 'Friends of Members Day' reflecting, as I returned home, on the relaxed, happy atmosphere that prevailed. But then, in my experience, that's universal throughout the CA. Reminds me of another lifetime when I took my two small sons to an Army Transportation Day down in

Borden. We spent a deliciously grimy day in, on, under and around various steam locomotives and our final purchase of the day was a can of steam which, so far as I know, is still whole. Point is that croquet clubs promote an atmosphere that you can't package and is difficult to describe. But it is a fragile thing and needs looking after. Think about that the next time Old So-and-so parks himself in your favourite chair or Whatsername doesn't get the tea properly organised. **You** are the club, the club is **you**. Think on it.

Finally, the answer to one of the oldest and most perplexing of all philosophical questions. Do you know what God would most like for his birthday?

A surprise!
Tony Antenen

AGONY

Further cries for help to "Croquet's" agony column. Further contributions are welcome.

Ques. I was hoping to be seeded in the Ladies' Field last season, but I was turfed out. As a last ditch effort I even offered to cut the grass, or even the rushes. The CA answer is to hedge, so it looks like I have been put out to grass for the mow-ment. Is this common?

Savannah Moor,
The Meadows, Sportsfield

Dear Gail,

Don't be so green. It's plain your not pasture best yet, so lawn a bit of patience.

Ques. I missed a lift last week when I went for a leek.

J R Holditch, Wales

Dear J R,

To improve your lifts you should take steroids like everyone else.

Ques. In view of the new government laws on sports spectators, I am worried about the crowd at Harrow Oak. Where do we stand?

Chief Steward HACC

Dear Stewart,

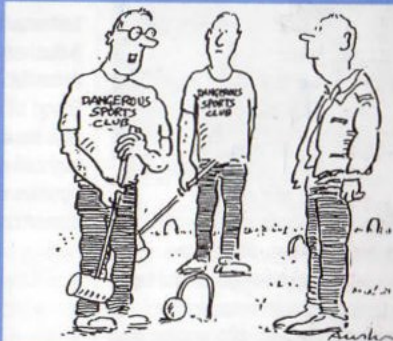
You are right to be concerned. Why not buy a new deck chair? But you may need to move the fence.

Ques. I have never been able to complete more than 2 hoop breaks at Wrest Park because of the distance to the toilets.

Desperate, Bedford

Dear Desperate,

What you are playing is called caught short croquet. Try sucking wine gums instead of drinking beer, if you really want to make more than 2 hoop breaks.



'We drive home down the M1.'

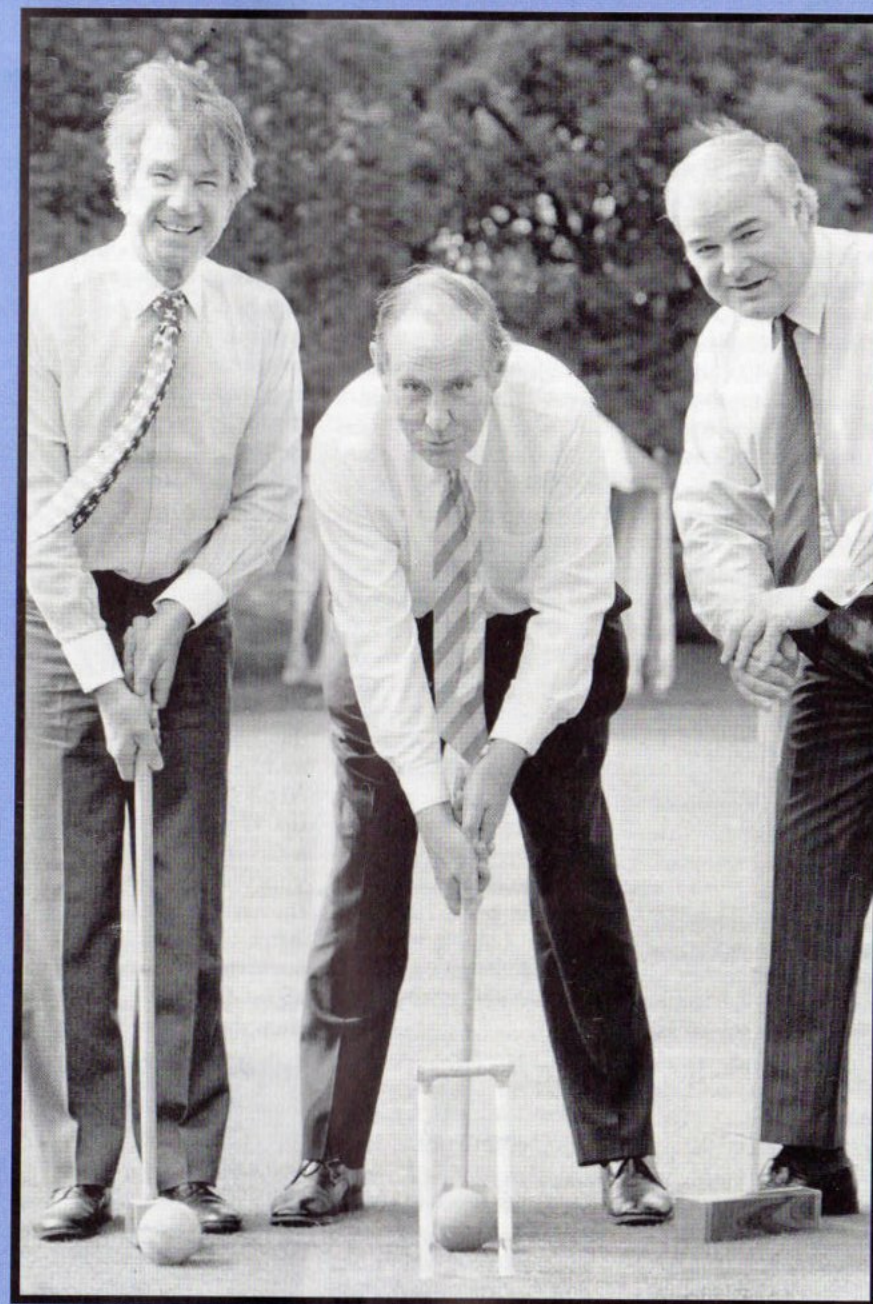
Poets Corner

A corrected version of an early work by William Shakespeare, a provider of plays some time ago. Two back, or not two back: that is the question; Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer The slices and angles of outrageous breaks, Or take to the corners against a chance of troubles, And by doing so end the turn? a shot; No more; and leave the court, to watch; To watch; perchance to dream; ay there's the roquets; For in that dream of games what breaks may come When we have shuffled off this mortal court, Alas poor Robert! I knew him; a fellow of Aunt Emma class, of most excellent play, he hath borne Chris on his back a thousand times at Hurlingham; Stay give him the cup, but no he'll play this game first; set it by a while.

But then a hit, a very palpable hit. Another hit; what say you Robert? So now the drink, the poisoned Coke can. No, no the drink, the drink, -O my dear Robert.
Syd Jones

croquet

MAGAZINE AUGUST



Yes, Minister!

Secretary of State for Heritage Peter Brooke visits Hurlingham

S E E L C

National Croquet Day was held this year on Saturday, 15th May. Nationwide, it proved to be cold and rainy, and not conducive to a vast turn-out of people eager to learn about the game. However, many clubs reported some success. Here are a few examples.

Ealing

The club actually ran three open days, and had over 50 visitors on both the 15th and 16th May, plus a plug and photo in the local "Gazette".

Fylde

The club has just 14 members, and approached the Blackpool Sports Council regarding arrangements for the Day. As a result, they were granted the use of a prestigious site with well-mown tennis lawns right in the centre of Blackpool's Stanley Park. The posters were widely displayed around the sporting facilities of the park, and an advertisement placed in the "Evening Gazette". The big snag was a bitterly cold drizzle on the day itself with a driving wind - most unseasonal for mid-May. The number of visitors ran into double figures, just, and they were delighted to find that after a bit of practice, they could get round the court counting their strokes in the mid-20s.

Lym Valley

We duly distributed posters and handbills, notified the local press, radio and television, and received a write-up in the local press. We put on a demonstration match with club members available to explain what was going on. A second court was used to allow visitors to have a go themselves, and an area was set aside for half a dozen gymkhana type tests. Some 20 visitors attended and showed an interest, but as yet, there have been no specific enquires for membership.

Taunton, Deane

The posters were placed in sport shops, health and fitness clubs, local football clubs, and local sport centres, and

sent to local radio, TV and newspapers. Somerset County Gazette printed an article, and HTV sent a film crew to film and interview members at the club. This was put on the local sports news. Response on the day itself was disappointing, but some useful contacts were made which we hope to develop.

Worcester

We achieved a good distribution of posters and handbills round the district, with a mail shot to our two local papers and our two local radio stations. The day before the event, our evening paper carried a good report, and David Coates had a live interview on one of our radio stations. The other radio station included us in their "What's On" spot. We offered a discount on a course of beginners' lessons for anyone who paid on the day, and sold four courses. Two more turned up at the first lesson, and we have hopes of two more. As there were only 30 visitors, we had a good success rate. About half those who came had heard of the event on the radio; the other half through the paper. The clash with the Cup Final was probably not helpful, but nevertheless we had a successful day.

Solihull

The Solihull Croquet Club began in 1990 with a group of friends playing garden croquet. Contact was established with Chris Hudson and Edgbaston Croquet Club welcomed us as guests on several occasions. The search for a ground was begun, with a home found early in 1992. Two full sized lawns within the grounds of The Old Silhillians Association complex, Warwick Road, Knowle.

We now have 31 fully

paid up members and have equipped ourselves with a full set of equipment without any resource to grants or loans. We hold monthly social meetings - playing indoor croquet out of season - and have acquired a further lawn which can be used throughout the winter. We also entered the league and recorded our first wins.

Solihull Croquet Club will have four playing lawns and two demonstration lawns this season. Special thanks are due to GRAHAM MAPP, Head Groundsman of the 25 acre Old Silhillians sporting complex, advisor to the Football Association on lawn care, and a very experienced professional groundsman. How often do tennis, bowls, cricket, hockey and, of course, croquet players appreciate the debt they owe to their groundsman?

On National Croquet Day 53 people turned up and we took names, addresses and telephone numbers to follow up. We have had training nights on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday now for two weeks and reckon that at least 30 people have turned up. We gave everybody a "freebie" first lesson voucher and thereafter they pay £2 a lesson. After 10 lessons, if they survive, and pay another £5 (ie. £25 annual subs) then they are members.



Since then we have had Lapworth Tangent Club (7) and on another evening Solihull Business Mens Club (11) so we took in another £36. We have Solihull 41 club, Rotary Club of St Alpha, the Lancastrian Society and my own Pensioners coming for afternoon tea and croquet soon, so we can get £2 a head and keep our costs down - and we hope to get new members as well.

Pendle

Due to hail storms, wind, torrential rain and the Cup Final, the Open Day was not a resounding success from the public appeal angle but for those who did attend it was good fun. The croquet games were good sport, the sunny intervals were worth waiting for, the press photographers were out in force and Croquet in Pendle hit the headlines.

In consequence of the publicity and promotion eight new recruits have taken advantage of the CA Coaching Sessions undertaken by Chairman John Beech and four of these registered as new members - with prospect of four more in a creditably wide age range of men and women. Betty Brierly (Photo: Sydney Roe, Roger Coleman, Kathryn Schofield. Betty Brierly, John Beech - prostrate.)

croquet

'Croquet' No. 228 (August 1993) PRICE £2.50 Cover "Yes Minister" Design John Walters Photograph provided by English Tourist Board Published every other month throughout the year on behalf of the Croquet Association by Eastern Rose Publishing Written 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 the magazine should also be addressed to the CA Secretary Advertising details (rates etc.) are available from Eastern Rose Publishing with whom advertising should be booked. Editor John Walters Development Chris Hudson Coaching Bill Lamb Photos/Illustrations J O Walters, C Hudson, D Parkin Design Typesetting Eastern Rose Publishing Film Imagesetting via Eastern Rose Printing & binding The Echo Press Eastern Rose Publishing (Copy/Cat Print Shop), 15 Norwich Road, Ipswich, Suffolk IP1 2ET (tel/fax 0473 230010) 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	2
CLUBS	4
LETTERS	6
CROQUET QUIZ	9
TALKING GOLF CROQUET	10
1993 BRITISH OPEN PREVIEW	12
30 YEARS OF CROQUET	13
SIMON WILLIAMS	14
HUMPHREY HICKS	15
BILL LAMB	15
STEPHEN MULLINER	16
JERRY GUEST	16
CHAMPIONSHIP CROQUET GLOSSARY	17
MAY / JUNE '93 TOURNAMENT REPORTS	18
ANGOSTURA THIRST QUENCHERS	23
LAST WORD	24

WEDDINGS

On Saturday 5th June 1993 Lewis Palmer and Annabel McDiarmid were married at St John's Church, Woking. Cleverly planned to coincide with the Home Internationals taking place in Budleigh Salterton, loyal Welshman Lewis' plans to spike the English team were successful - with three of the erstwhile English team deserting to celebrate their friends' wedding (though the Welsh team itself was less successful!).

The croquet influence was much in evidence as Lewis (now a constant 'top 20' British player) and Annabel (Britain's number 3 woman player) took their vows. Bridesmaid Fiona McCoig (another of Britain's top women

players) and best man Danny Palmer (who preceded his elder brother into the 'top 20' list in the late '80s) later joined a host of croquet players for the party at Woking Croquet Club. Ian and Jill McDiarmid sparkled for their daughter's 'Big Day'; both are stalwarts of croquet and also tennis at the Woking club.

OBITUARIES

John Wood

John Wood died on 25 April 1993 at the age of 71, during his second term as Chairman of the Hunstanton Croquet Club. He had a natural eye for a ball and had played golf for Northhamptonshire with a handicap of scratch. He took up croquet after retiring to Hunstanton

and rapidly became a force in the C class. In 1981 he was joint winner of the inaugural centenary Candlelight Golf Croquet (himself playing on 5 and partnered with a certain John Walters on 8) and in the following year he had one of his most successful seasons, winning the Roehampton Cup in the Challenge and Gilbey Tournament, held at Hunstanton, and also the Handicap Doubles. His impact on all aspects of Club life was considerable, and in 1982 he became chairman. Under his supervision continued improvements enabled the Club to be chosen as a venue for the Spencer Eil and subsequently to host a Test Match in 1986, when Hunstanton was at its very best: its condition was recognised by all as a tribute to John's own industry and his splendid relationship with the grounds staff. John resigned as Chairman in 1987 and thereafter ill health caused his interest to decline. He had reached a handicap of 2 but the limits of being a late starter and of restricted local competition prevented further reduction, although he was always difficult to beat on his own lawns.

It is perhaps a comment about John's game that he was completely mystified by the first

TPO he witnessed (performed by Keith Aiton) and never accepted that it could provide an advantage. John's play was of the more dogged type, with each hoop being an achievement and not to be given away. Always immaculately turned out and a welcoming presence at the Club, John was a great encouragement to young players. He visited it daily as part of the constant war against vandalism and personally spent many hours in husbandry, particularly mowing with a specially bought machine. He was one of that small band which keeps Hunstanton going and he will be much missed. Atherlie has our sympathies and thoughts and we hope to continue to see her at the Club, albeit in a non-playing role. Hugh Carlisle

Dr C.J. Chandler

Visitors to Southwick will be sorry to learn of the death, after a long illness, of Colin Chandler. After many years in the theatre, in 1950 he became the Director of the School of Drama at the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama in Glasgow, a post which he held until 1973. For his work there he was awarded the O.B.E., and he also

received an honorary LL.D. from the University of Glasgow. He was one of the founder members of the Glasgow Croquet Club, which opened at Pollock House in 1960. His interest in croquet was continued after retirement when he and his wife Jean moved to Hove. After a year at the Hove Lawns Club, they joined the Sussex County Club, of which they were to become stalwart and valued members. After a lifetime of committee work Colin resolutely refused to join the Club committee, but his contribution to the Club was immeasurable: renovation of club buildings and shelters; coaching beginners; repair of mallets; for several years he ran the bar when no one else would do it; and when the more physical activities become too demanding he edited the best newsletters the Club has had. All these tasks accomplished with unflinching cheerfulness and good humour, and an infectious enthusiasm which inspired others. Coaching was performed with a charm and tact which always made the newest members feel welcome and at ease. Colin will be sorely missed. We extend our deepest sympathy to his widow Jean, and to their family. J.H.B.



NEWS

The end for the World Championship and the beginning for the European

A winning team: tourism & sport

The world-famous Hurlingham Club, London, was the venue for a major new initiative linking two of Britain's most popular industries - tourism and sport - last week. Sebastian Coe, Duncan Goodhew, Roger Uttley and David Broome were among the sporting personalities who joined the Secretary of State for National Heritage, Peter Brooke, at a special "Tourism and Sport" seminar organised by the English Tourist Board.

The seminar - attended by governing bodies of 29 sports, together with sports and recreation officers from every part of the country - highlighted the existing links between tourism and sport and pinpointed areas for future joint action. Topics debated included the contribution which sporting events can make to tourism strategies, based on a case study of Portsmouth which has recently secured a stage of the Tour de France Cycle Race; and the economic importance of sport to tourism.

Pictured on our front cover getting the seminar off to a swing-

ing start on one of the Hurlingham Club's world-famous croquet lawns are (left to right): English Tourist Board member Sir Basil Feldman, Peter Brooke, and Ken Robinson, Managing Director of Ventures Consultancy.

Are you Welsh?

If so the Welsh CA would like to hear from you. Players of all abilities (especially middle bisquers) are required to increase the pool of players from which National representatives can be drawn for various events and matches.

The qualifications for membership are:

- i) birth in Wales
- ii) birth of a parent or grandparent in Wales
- iii) current residence in Wales of 5 years standing
- iv) previous residence in Wales of 7 years

For further details contact John Grimshaw (Secretary):- 0222 709266

Sunglasses fit over spectacles

The first polarised sunglasses designed to fit over spectacles are being introduced onto the UK market by SolarShield (UK) Limited.

Known as SolarShield, the sunglasses have excellent optical qualities and exceed FDA and ANSI highest standards for 'special purpose' use.

SolarShield fit comfortably over most prescription eyewear without the need to 'clip-on' and the fact that they are virtually unbreakable makes them ideally suited for a wide range of use other than general purpose wear.

Anyone participating in or viewing outdoor sporting or leisure activities will find them beneficial. In addition to

providing the advantages of eliminating glare, they have top and side shields which provide up to 40 percent more sun protection than conventional polarised sunglasses. SolarShield amber tint are also suitable for day and night motoring and will bring relief from bright and flashing lights. Price £15.99 plus £1.98 P&P, telephone SolarShield on 0823 680040

The Whisky Connoisseur

Arthur J A Bell's The Whisky Connoisseur is a new club which is announcing its launch by offering CROQUET readers 25% discounts on membership.

Based in the Scottish Borders, The Whisky Connoisseur is family run and offers a unique personal service to Whisky buyers. Services to members include a regular newsletter, a free dram of Largsie meanoch (a cask strength, single Islay malt guaranteed to be over 15 years old) and background briefing notes on the tasting of Scotch Whisky. Phone 0899 21001

World Event falters in 1993

Organisers have admitted defeat in the battle to find a sponsor that would have permitted the World Croquet Championship to take place in the UK during 1993. As the June 1st deadline approached hopes were maintained by discussions with potential sponsors, but sadly none bore fruit. The event was scheduled for Budleigh Salterton in September.

This will mean that for the first time since 1989 there is no "World Croquet Champion". The next World Championship is scheduled for 1994 in the USA.

New European Event is born

The European Croquet Federation has mandated the Italian Croquet Association to organise the first "European Open" (singles), which will be held from the 24th to the 26th September at the Golf Club "Le Robinie", Solbiate Olona, north of Milan.

The 9 founder members of the ECF will each have the right to designate one representative. A further 4 players will be admitted from the qualifying tournament to be held at Lesigny, east of Paris, over the weekend of the 17/18 July. Finally, 3 wild cards have been given by the organising committee to the English, Scottish and Irish Associations, since they will not be able to send any players to Lesigny.

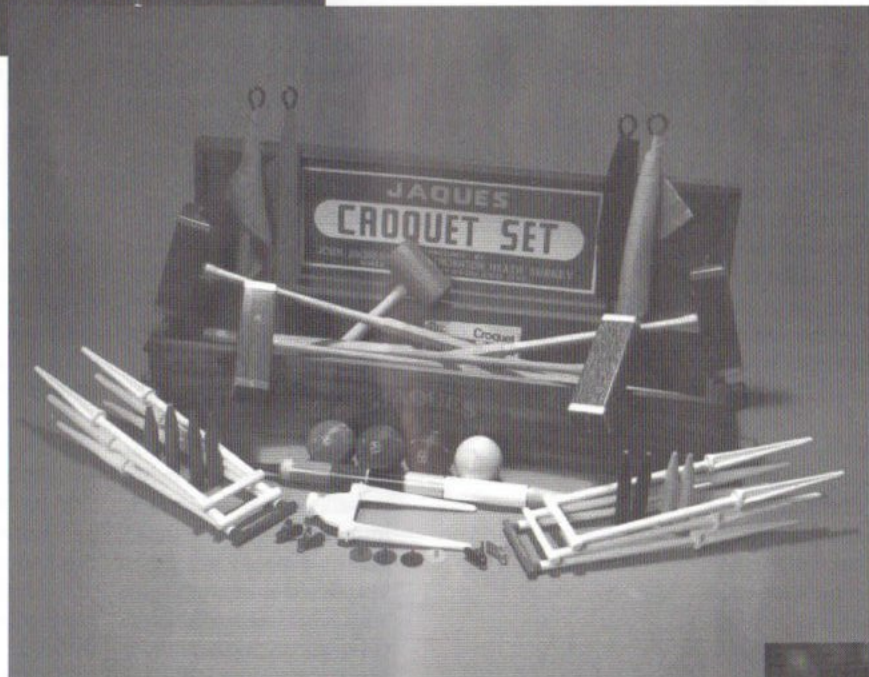
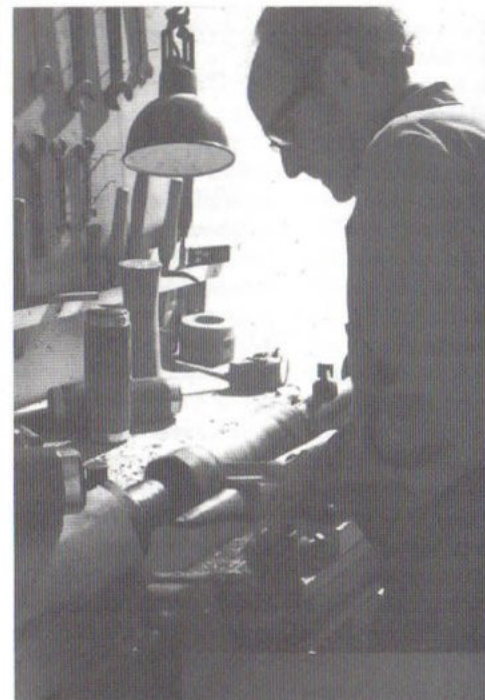
International Referees

The World Croquet Federation has set up a Working Party to suggest ways in which the training and examination of International Referees might be co-ordinated to ensure that all International Referees interpret the Laws consistently, regardless of country of origin.

Members of the group are: Graeme Roberts NZ, Jerry Stark US, Ian Reid Aus, Shirley de Beer SA, Keith Aiton GB.

Essex Garden Croquet Champ'

Essex Countryside Magazine are publicising the first Essex Garden Croquet Championship, the finals of which will take place at St Osyth Priory on Sunday 8th August. The Champion will automatically qualify for a place in the final of the 1993 Garden Croquet Classic.



JACQUES 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:-

Jaques

LEADERS IN SPORT

361 WHITEHORSE ROAD,
THORNTON HEATH,
SURREY, CR4 8XP

PHONE: 081-684 4242

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

Still
leading
the way



LETTERS

Thankyou & goodnight from the WCF; Inflexibility in the Automatic Handicapping System; Bisque problems in Advanced Handicap Play

The 1993 World Championships

Dear Sir
As you know, we had intended to hold the 5th World Croquet Championship at Budleigh Salterton from 8th to 15th September this year.

Unfortunately, it has not proved possible to find a sponsor for the event, and most reluctantly we are therefore unable to proceed with our plans.

However, through your pages, I would like to thank the members of the Budleigh club for all their support throughout the search for a sponsor, and for their patience in holding open their offer of the club's facilities throughout all the uncertainties.

It would have been a delight to hold the Championship in the South West as there must be very few World class events held in that Region. The East Devon County Council and the local Chamber of Commerce both offered their full support for the event, and it is unfortunately a sign of the times that we are unable to take advantage of their kind offers.

Chris Hudson
Secretary-General,
World Croquet Federation.

All England Handicap

Dear John
Having taken part in the All England Finals in 1991 it was with great interest that I read Derek Caporn's reply to Len Hawkins' letter in the February copy of Croquet, and the report on last year's final.

I am sure many of us mere mortals that do not belong to the top 50 club were not aware that the croquet association had no control over the lawns at Hurlingham, and therefore accept Surbiton as the Regional



Club. This however does not totally answer the problem. For your average Handicap player this tournament stands on a par with your better players participating in the British Open and I am sure that you and the other top players would not be too happy if that event were held at another venue. Lets face it we are only talking about a two day event.

The suggestion that the letter was sarcastic was unnecessary as I am sure after discussing the letter with Len both before and after publication that it was a true reflection on how he felt. It should be remembered by Mr Caporn and his Colleagues on the C.A. Council that one of the ways to help higher handicap players is by encouraging them to participate in tournaments and when they do take part make them feel as important as our top players.

As a member of the committee of Ramsgate Croquet Club and also the South East Federation the comment 'we are all volunteers' is laughable. Every club is run by a steady band of very hard working VOLUNTEERS who in a time of recession and high unemployment battle local Councils to keep and improve the running of their clubs.

My final point is on the thorny subject of handicaps. The description of Stephen Harbron's play in last year's Final off a 14 handicap appears to place some doubt as to the effectiveness of the new card system. It should be born in mind that the card system only takes into account the result of a game and not the player's ability to play. It is also leading to some very dubious handicaps in both the league matches and tournaments.

Roy Ware
Ramsgate Croquet Club

Handicapping System

Dear Editor
As a regular tournament player, am I alone in thinking that the handicapping system, welcome as it is in many respects, needs some adjustment?

Surely it would be better if one gained 10 points for a win and had 5 points deducted for a loss. It seems particularly harsh on losing games by narrow margins (say -1 or 2 on time) to then have ten points deducted. Someone has to win and someone has to lose. It does not necessarily mean that the loser's handicap is wrong.

Many tournaments are now under-subscribed, some even cancelled through lack of support. If players are staying away from handicap events because of the system then changes should be made.

Surely the official tournament handicapper should have a completely free rein to adjust handicaps as he/she thinks fit. The system fails when a 14-handicapper bandit goes through 1 and proceeds to rover without taking a single bisque(!) and leaves the tournament still at 14 because he/she lost another game -1 on time.

Let us hope the handicapping committee has a re-think.

Finally, may I say a word of praise for those players with handicaps say 3 and less who have continued to enter handicap events since the system was introduced and been 'clobbered' as a result.

Yours truly,
Audrey Howell (11)
Royal Tunbridge Wells

Chairman, Handicap Co-ordination Committee replies:

Handicaps will find their level over an extended

period of time and not just on a result of a single tournament or, even worse, a single game.

Handicappers have complete freedom to adjust handicaps above handicap 12. The present system is a balanced system: to introduce an imbalance as suggested by Audrey Howell, would lead to far more anomalies than occur at present.

The suggestion that players are not entering tournaments because of the automatic handicapping system would need some evidence to support it; I do not believe it is true.

Bill Lamb

First Name Terms

Dear John
This is a plea to all tournament managers from someone who cannot remember the first names of all the people he met a year ago. Wherever possible could one of the notices displayed at the start of a tournament show not only people's surname but also their first name, since that is the one which will be used. A necessary condition for this to be possible is that entrants to tournaments put their first name on the entry form as well as, or instead of just initials.

Yours sincerely
John A Hobbs
Ex Newport,
now Turnbridge Wells.

Advanced Handicap Play

Dear Sir
I read with interest the article on Advanced Handicap play (Croquet Issue 227 p18). However, the statement that no contact is given if a bisque is taken between 1-back and 4-back can, if taken to a logical conclusion, imply that a bisque (or indeed a half-bisque) taken after 4-

back means no lift either, as 4-back no longer run in preceding turn. Law 38(c) already makes an exception to use the word "turn", and it could well be advisable to extend this to meet the apparent intention of this variation of play.

I have enjoyed several games in this format, but feel that it is not clear that a bisque is worth the same as in the standard handicap game. Given the comparative study of full-bisque play (Calendar page 'x'), it could be extended to cover this, if a decent sample size could be obtained.

As the Gilbey is being played Advanced Handicap, clarification of the first point above is desirable fairly quickly.

Yours faithfully
Martin Burger
Vine Rd and Surbiton
Croquet Club

Dear Sir,
I can reply to the first part of Martin's Burger's letter. Law 38a makes it clear that a bisque is an extra turn; therefore if a bisque is used after 1-back and 4-back is run in that turn, then no contact is given under 36b as both hoops were not run in the preceding turn.

Similarly running 4-back and then taking a bisque or half-bisque deprives the adversary of the lift as the adversary is unable to claim that the hoop was run in the preceding turn.

Both of these provide the holder of bisques with interesting ways of using them. I cannot see any disadvantages in this. These examples plus the ability to use a bisque at the last lift shot, simply mean that the receiver of bisques in an advanced handicap game has some slight advantage over playing the same adversary in normal handicap play, that is one of the reasons I hope that the higher bisquer when given a



choice will opt for the advanced game. I am personally opposed to any special additions to the laws of advanced play to provide for an "advanced handicap game". As my article implied I am very much in favour of trying out the laws as they stand before rushing into any amendments.

Lionel Wharrad
18th June 1993.

Dear Sir
I am delighted that Lionel Wharrad's article on the Advanced Handicap game was included in the June issue but warn managers that there are further questions that need to be resolved and explained to participants before an Advanced Handicap event is run. I would also join with Lionel in urging the Laws Committee to devise and publish proper regulations for this variant of the game as soon as possible.

We have at Woking run a number of Advanced Handicap Club events over the last two years with our own interpretations of the Laws concerned and these have been very successful and encouraged us to support Lionel's proposal. On the strength of this, I introduced Advanced Handicap as an option (at the higher bisquer's request) in the handicap part of our CA Triples tournament last week. Though a number of players took and enjoyed this option it did bring to light a variety of different interpretations between players from different clubs and in the subsequent discussions between the referees and experienced players a consensus emerged that more clarification was needed and that Lionel's guidance in his article was not necessarily the last word.

The most serious

questions arise from the interpretation of "turn" in Law 36. Two years ago when we first attempted this variant, it was perceived as the standard Advanced game but with bisques available to the higher bisquer to enable him to establish and continue a break with an ability comparable to that enjoyed by his opponent. On this basis we allowed him to use a bisque on his lift shots, but we required him to concede lifts and contacts as though he had played continuously even though he may have used intermediate bisques. This worked very well.

However, it was later observed that Law 38(a) defines a bisque as an extra turn, and when this was raised with Lionel he ruled (as he does in his article) that if a bisque is taken between 1-back and 4-back then no contact is conceded. This is a valid interpretation of the rules as they stand, but is a pity because it no longer provides the stimulus for the higher bisquer to keep a bisque or two in hand to attempt a triple which, as Lionel points out, is one of the attractions of the variant to the middle bisquer.

More serious however is the consequent interpretation, not referred to in the article, that a bisque may also be used to effectively cancel a lift since Law 36 refers to "preceding turn". The consensus of the referees at our tournament was that this was invalid, and a lift could not be avoided with a bisque, but I suspect that was more because the game would become a nonsense otherwise than because of a rigorous interpretation. It is very close (but opposite) to the contact ruling.

I strongly recommend that the definition of Advanced Handicap Play (in Regulation 19(b)

"the statement that no contact is given if a bisque is taken between 1-back and 4-back can, if taken to a logical conclusion, imply that a bisque (or indeed a half-bisque) taken after 4-back means no lift either"

PEELS

or wherever it ends up) be further refined with the words: "For the purposes of determining Lifts and Contacts under Law 36, extra turns taken by means of bisques shall be regarded as a continuation of the players preceding turn." This would re-establish what experience suggests is the most satisfactory of the trial versions we have attempted. The fact that it implies different interpretations of "turn" in laws 36 and 38 should not cause concern because, when those laws were written, they referred to alternative variants that could coexist.

The alternative, allowing bisques to be used to avoid lifts and contacts, becomes so one sided that few A or B class players would wish to play it against high bisquers and also raises a whole new raft of problems for referees when they have to try to establish from a confused high bisquer and indignant low bisquer precisely when the last few bisques were taken.

Finally, any manager of a tournament allowing Advanced Play should, as well as clarifying the above, ensure that players are aware that Law 39 does not apply and (if applicable) of Law 36 regarding modified games. They (and the Laws Committee) might also consider whether Law 43 (c) (limiting the number of peels in a handicap doubles game) is appropriate to Advanced Handicap Doubles. I would suggest not but it needs to be stated.

Yours sincerely
Geoffrey Cuttle

Bouncing Balls

Dear Sir
I was interested to note the bounce results



"The following questions are appropriate at this point: What other sport allows a 20% variation in ball elasticity? Could tennis players survive if the balls had to be individually graded and the opponent informed? In croquet, since four balls are in use, would not tighter specifications be preferable to 'matched' sets?"

by John Beech in a recent edition of 'Croquet'. I would like to comment that the results of a bounce test should include maximum and minimum values before a ball can be graded, or compared. For instance, if a ball bounces an average of e.g. 31 inches, but the height varies by 3 inches above or below that average, the ball can hardly be recommended. It is for this reason that a test apparatus was designed some year ago that allows that ball to fall vertically without any spin. This in turn means that a ball can be dropped onto any one of several chosen spots which can be chalk marked as proof of impact within ± 2 mm. It is thus possible to repeatedly test a ball on any spot. This apparatus is used locally to test tournament balls. The balls are bounced on each of six spots. Temperature tests were also made within the range of 5°C to 50°C, using great haste at the extremes. A good ball will give closely comparable results on any position, although variations will occur due to milling.

A rust-proof bond must also be made between the one-inch steel plate and at least 200mm of quality concrete. The concrete area should be a minimum of 350mm across, and the plate set into the concrete while wet with a hard cement. Anything less will give up to two inches less bounce, based on personal experience with a plate set in only 100mm of concrete.

On page 8 of the same issue of 'Croquet', col 4. par. 1 lines 2 to 9 inclusive, you state that the paint on a Jaques Eclipse ball affects the bounce. Bounce will indeed increase as the paint wears off, but the two effects are not connected in any way.

The real reason for the increase in bounce, which may not be well known, is the wear of the milling on the ball. For example a newly-cast ball with milling will bounce a surprising 25 to 30% less than when it is manufactured smooth. Few players will have had the chance to do such tests, but they are very revealing. I even have an old moulded ball, made by the method of covering a core of compressed chips of various materials with a tin bonding layer to which a casing is applied (construction is revealed by sectioning a ball with a band-saw). The ball has some small patches about half-an-inch across which are smooth where the casting has been chipped away by attrition, exposing a shiny, intact, pigmented bonding layer. The rest of the surface is milled, but worn. The bounce on the shiny patches averages 36 inches, some 18% more. Any ball of whatever manufacture will show less bounce on places where the milling is very close, compared to spots where the surface is less cut-up by milling.

The present solid-moulded ball has a casing surrounding a core. External 'paint' only affects the appearance as in the case of the American ball, where the new technology of moulded colouring should overcome this. The increase in bounce results from the fact that the milling of certain balls deforms on hard impact: slowly, with use, it becomes flattened. Bounce increases, and size decreases correspondingly. The ball becomes easier to play with (roquet strokes softer). Because the milling flattens, the wall angle changes, and the 'pull' on the peeled ball decreases, making a peel easier. The game also moves out of the tourna-

ment status, since the hoops remain the same but the balls gets smaller. Apart from American balls, spun-cast balls are homogeneously made with the same resin and pigmentation throughout. There is no casing to split or chip, and the wear rate is so low that the bounce does not vary detectably over long periods, given other conditions constant. This means that peeling is just as difficult when the balls are old as when new.

The following questions are appropriate at this point: What other sport allows a 20% variation in ball elasticity? Could tennis players survive if the balls had to be individually graded and the opponent informed? In croquet, since four balls are in use, would not tighter specifications be preferable to 'matched' sets? The only ways to overcome present problems, compounded as they are by the milling effects, is with modern technology. Modern resins can be modified by additives to change elasticity and make them resist change due to temperature. Other properties, density, hardness etc. can all be accommodated. What we need to do is to produce the specification.

In many other sports an old ball is discarded

because the game becomes progressively more difficult after wear and tear. For example, in cricket the new ball is taken: the balls are changed during tennis tournaments, and so on. For croquet to gain respect, and because of the long life of the croquet ball, we must ensure that its statistics when used in competitions remain acceptable, as is the case of a wood in bowls.

It is fitting that we should pay tribute to the fantastic efforts which have been made in the last ten years by all the manufacturers, and I apologise for seeming to be so critical. It is just that there is too little knowledge of the performance statistics of the various makes of ball on the market today. The technology of modern resins has made tighter specifications very possible as well as desirable.

In conclusion, I have just issued another report on croquet balls, this time about bias. I hope that you will get a copy and enjoy it. I think the subject of equipment will continue to harass us until your 'Holy Grail' is properly specified within the wide bounds of possibility, ball, hoop, mallet, the lot.

Yours sincerely,
R. Le Maitre

CROQUET TOUR OF NEW ZEALAND

Air New Zealand, Nelson are pleased to offer a unique sporting tour to New Zealand. Discover the scenic splendour of the North and South Islands, and enjoy relaxed games with New Zealand Croquet Clubs.

Fully Escorted* ABTA Bonded
Optional Australian Tour

For Brochure + Further Details:

Air York International Travel.

Tel: (0904) 622196 / 7

Fax (0904) 651991

croquet QUIZ

by Chris Hudson

- In Golf Croquet, which ball plays after the red ball?
- What weight is a championship croquet ball?
- What are the colours of the alternate balls in croquet?
- What is the maximum possible number of strokes in a turn in Association croquet?
- What are the dimensions of a full-size croquet court?
- Name one of the 4 ladies who have won the Croquet Association's top invitation event, now called the British Masters or President's Cup.
- In which year was the first World Championship held?
- Which is the largest croquet club in the World?
- What colour is the top of the first hoop?
- Can you change your mallet during a turn in Association Croquet?
- Which croquet player lived at Peckforton Castle?
- What is the height of a standard hoop, measured to the top of its crown?
- Who is the current World Croquet Champion?
- Nowadays, a croquet court is laid out with one centre peg. In what year was the 2-peg setting officially discarded in England?
- The first known croquet tournament took place in England in 1867. Where was it played?
- What is the highest handicap allowed in tournament play today?
- Which player had the lowest ever handicap?
- The first MacRobertson Shield match was played in 1925. Which two countries took part?
- The latest MacRobertson Shield series was played this year in Australia between New Zealand, Australia, the United States and Great Britain. Which country won and who did they beat in the final?
- What is the average clearance between the ball and the hoop in tournament play?
- Name one of the four organisations that preceded today's Croquet Association.
- In 1874 Major Wingfield invented a game called "Sphairistike" which took advantage of existing croquet lawns to sweep the country. What is this game called today?
- W.H. Peel was the Croquet Association's first Secretary, and gave his name to the term "peeling" in croquet. What was his first name?
- Name one of the three "Irish Terrors" who excelled in English tournaments between 1905 and 1925.
- Which manufacturing company, still in existence, was the first to make croquet equipment commercially?
- What colour flag is placed in the second corner of a croquet court?
- What is the last hoop on a croquet court called?
- In Golf Croquet, what happens if the striker plays with the wrong ball?
- How many hoops are there on a croquet court?
- What expression, originally used at the end of a game of croquet, has now passed into general use?

1. The black ball. 2. 16ozs. 3. Brown, Pink, Green, and White. 4. 91.5. 5. 35yds by 28yds. 6. Miss L. Gower (1904), Miss D.D. Steel (6 times between 1922 and 1937), Mrs H de la Mothe (formerly Miss N.S.L. Gilchrist (1924), and Mrs L.C. Apps (1936)). 7. 1989. 8. The Sussex County Croquet Club, at Southwick, near Brighton. The club has 1 full size croquet courts. 9. Blue. 10. Yes, but only if your mallet has suffered damage affecting its use during that turn. 11. Lord Tolemache. 12. 12 inches. 13. Robert Fullford, aged 25, from Colchester, Essex. 14. 1922. 15. At Evesham. 16. 20. 17. Humphrey Hicks (minus 5). 18. England and Australia. The matches were played in England, and England won the series. 19. England beat New Zealand in the final. Australia beat the United States in the play-off for third place. 20. An eighth of an inch. 21. The AECOC was formed in 1868. A faction split from the AECOC in 1869 to form a rival body, the NCC. An attempt to merge the AECOC and the NCC in 1871 resulted in the GNCC being set up by a group of dissident former members of the NCC in competition with the AECOC. The GNCC and the AECOC finally merged successfully in 1896 to become the UAECOC, which was renamed the Croquet Association in 1900. 22. Lawn Tennis. 23. Walter. 24. Cyril Corbally, Duff Matthews, and C.L. O'Callaghan. 25. John Jaques & Sons Ltd, of Thornton Heath, Surrey. The company recognised the commercial opportunities provided by the new game of croquet, and published one of the first books on the Laws and Regulations of the game in 1864. The company, first established in 1795, was responsible for other things, for introducing into England both 'Ping Pong' (later Table Tennis) and the card game 'Happy Families'. 26. A red flag. 27. The rover hoop. 28. The balls are replaced, and the striker plays with the correct ball. 29. Six. 30. To 'peg out' (i.e. to finish, to die).

ANSWERS

talking GOLF CROQUET

With Chris Hudson

Part 1: The Strokes

In 1989, "Croquet" published a re-print of a little 20-page pamphlet on "The Art of Golf Croquet" by H.F. Crowther-Smith. The Rules in force then were different to those current today. This series of articles is an attempt to update the pamphlet for today's players.

1. Playing for position.

It is essential for the first and third players for the next hoop to play with particular accuracy and to concentrate on getting a really good position in front of the hoop. Their order of play gives them an immediate advantage to score the hoop first, and any loose shots will provide opportunity for their opponents to regain the initiative. It is advisable, however, not to try for position too close to the hoop, which often results in no position at all.

2. Running the hoop.

If you have a reasonable chance of running the hoop, then go for it. If the current hoop is an odd one (ie 1,3, or 5, etc.) and your position is such that you can not only run the hoop but get down to the next one, then play the stroke accurately and with sufficient strength to reach the next hoop. Be sure, however, not to hit so hard that you go beyond the next hoop and this nullify your advantage in effectively becoming the 1st player for the next hoop.

3. The Stun Shot.

If your opponent is right in front of the next hoop and your ball is 2 to 3 feet away, then a stun shot will enable you to send your opponent's ball away for some considerable distance, whilst at the same time leaving your ball more or less where the opponent's ball was standing in front of the hoop.

To play this shot, stand back about six inches further than usual before playing the ball. This will ensure that your mallet will strike the ball after the mallet shaft was gone past the vertical, causing the toe of the mallet head to be up and heel down. Ground the heel of the mallet head as your strike the ball, this stopping your follow through.

4. Removing the opponent.

The stun shot gives you a chance to remove your opponent's ball from its position in front of the next hoop in a rather spectacular manner. However, it only works when you are 3 feet or less away. If your opponent is in front of the hoop, and you are much further away than this, then all you can hope to do is to dislodge your opponent, with little control over the final position of either ball.

For accurate shots at long range, always remember to stalk the ball before you play the shot. This is walk back from your ball for some 3 to 4 yards, position yourself on the line between your ball and the target ball, walk up slowly to your ball, take up your stance and, when comfortable, swing your mallet along the line between the balls. Keep your body still, and keep your head down until you hear the balls hit. If you carry out this procedure, you should find your accuracy will be much improved.

5. The Rush Stroke.

The rush stroke is used to hit your partner ball with your ball, and thus send your partner into position at the next hoop. By doing this, you can gain the order of play advantage by effectively giving your partner ball two shots to its opponent's one.

To give yourself an easy rush shot, your ball needs to be within 18 inches of your partner ball. The shot is easiest to do when the line between the balls is pointing in the direction you want to rush the partner ball but, as in snooker, it is possible to play cut rushes, where you hit your partner ball on its side with your ball, so sending your partner ball off at an angle.

To play a rush stroke, stand back six inches further than usual, as in the stun shot, but instead of checking your stroke as soon as the mallet hits the ball, follow through with a nice leisurely swing. If your ball jumps up behind the front ball, then try moving your feet a little further back. Bear in mind that it is the swing and follow through that produces a good rush - it does not need a more powerful shot than usual, as the natural bounce of the balls is sufficient to produce the power required.

6. The Stymie.

This form of obstruction comes into Golf Croquet in a variety of forms. The most straight forward case is where you hit your ball so it lies in the path between your opponent's ball and your partner ball, thus shielding your partner from any attempt to remove it. A more sophisticated version of this is where you place your ball between your opponent and the next hoop, so that your opponent is in danger of knocking your ball through the hoop and thus scoring the hoop for you.

A second form of obstruction arises when you place your ball close to the opponent's ball. It is a foul if a player touches any other ball with his mallet whilst attempting to play his own ball, and careful placing of your ball in such cases can prevent an opponent playing in a particular direction.

The value of the stymie is considerable; to protect a partner ball that is on position for a hoop from being removed, or to get between an opponent and a hoop to prevent his running it.

7. The Jump Shot.

This shot, where you play to jump your ball over a ball in its path, is not allowed in Golf Croquet. Should such a shot be played deliberately, then the balls are replaced where they were when the shot was played, and the player concerned loses his turn.

Part 2 of this series, which deals with "Tactics", will be published in a later issue of "Croquet". Meanwhile, here are some questions on the Rules of Golf Croquet.

1. If you play a stroke and miss your ball altogether, does it count or not?
2. If a ball goes through two hoops in order on the same stroke, how many points are scored?
3. If you play a stroke that hits another ball so that your ball goes towards the next hoop but one, is your stroke a foul?
4. If you play the wrong ball when it is your turn, do you lose your turn?
5. If your opponent knocks your ball half way through the next hoop, can your partner ball hit your ball through the hoop and thus score the point?

(Answers next issue)



Mike Lambourne

A FEW THOUGHTS ON GOLF (CROQUET OF COURSE!)

When I started playing croquet proper about ten years ago, (some people might say that I'm still not playing 'properly'), there seemed to be just 'Croquet' but in the years since I've been introduced to both 'Short' and 'Golf' versions.

Funny how there isn't a croquet shot in Golf Croquet, but I've found plenty of other things.

We started running a golf croquet evening a few years ago with not enough people, just a few coming along, but it can't have been too bad as our difficulty now is not having enough courts.

The Northern Echo said in 1991, "Basically, there are two types of game - golf



1980 Golf Croquet Doubles Championship at Harrow Oak; Holders (Martin Murray & Andrew Hope) look on in despair as the outsiders (Eric Solomon & Jean Wraith) score another hoop on their way to defeating them in the first round.

croquet, which is fun, friendly and uncomplicated, and association croquet which isn't", not completely true but it was the way they saw us. In croquet missing a hoop is a disaster, but in golf croquet a failure is of less consequence as often a ball sticking in the hoop blocks a shot by the opponents. Hence golf croquet is a more venturesome game rewarding enterprise and with plenty of scope for more ingenious tactics. Incidentally looking back to Croquet in a Pears Cyclopaedia of the early thirties, we played against an 'antagonist', now we seem to have an 'adversary' to battle with, sounds to me slightly more friendly, but maybe your worst enemy in a doubles game can still be called a 'partner'.

Incidentally the bit about golf croquet being friendly only seems to apply between shots and the friendly smile looks different as your adversary knocks your ball from in front of the hoop to the far corner of the court, but most of us do try to smile back.

The answer is the advice in that famous book 'Tyneside Art of Croquet', "Whatever things may be done by one of the players to the other, the same should be returned by the other, i.e. if she strikes him he should also strike her in return."

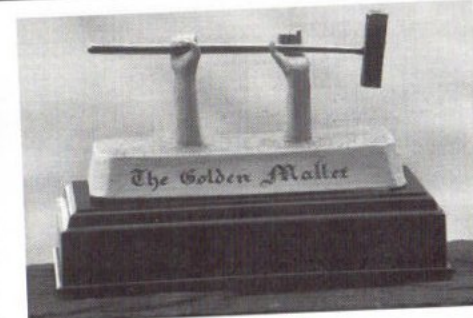
Syd Jones
Tyneside Croquet Club

PROGRESSIVE GOLF CROQUET

Rules are as for Golf Croquet with the following differences:-

1. All four players have to run every hoop.
2. Clips are used and moved on to the appropriate hoop.
3. Players don't have to move immediately to their next hoop, they may remain or play back to a previous hoop to help their partner or interfere with opponents. N.B. Their clip must be on the correct hoop.
4. Players don't have to start again if they begin to run a hoop without completing it. They can complete the hoop run on their next turn.
5. Players score one point for ever hoop run. The game finishes when one player hits the peg. That player will score seven points, which are added to the partner's score of hoop run at the time. The other pair add their points together and in the event of a tie, the side which pegged out wins.
6. For Doubles, the balls are played in order. For Singles, they can be played as for croquet but this changes the nature of the game.

John Hansen



The Golden Mallet

Entries increase for 1993 competition

Fifteen groups have entered so far for this year's Golden Mallet competition. They are:

Test Valley CC, Ashby CC, Colchester CC, Winslow CC, Woodhall Spa CC, Thames Valley CC, Spcote CC, Plymouth CC, Medway CC, Isle of Man CC, Sussex County CC, Worthing CC, Zeneca CC, Pennine Group, Mount Rayleigh WI

In addition, Croquet North are organising four Golden Mallet competitions in their region, with a regional final run by the Federation.

Groups consist of up to 32 players. Each competitor plays an individual in a progressive doubles format, with a change of partner after each game. Last year's winner was Roger Bearark, of the Chelmsford Club, who beat Janet Hobson (Woodhall Spa) in the final.

1993 British Open

PREVIEW

The Hurlingham Club

The House

The core of the present Hurlingham House was built in 1760 by Dr William Cadogan, a notable physician. In 1803, Dr Cadogan's house was incorporated into a neo-classic mansion by his successor, John Ellis, thus creating the main part of the Club House as it stands today. Humphrey Repton, the famous landscape gardener, advised Ellis on the grounds.

The Club

In 1867 the House and part of the estate was leased to Mr Frank Heathcote who was interested in promoting pigeon shooting matches. In 1869 Heathcote founded The Hurlingham Club (with himself as manager) for the principal object of pigeon shooting (hence the Club's crest to this day). Clouds of live pigeons were released and shot in the summer season in an enclosure near the present tennis pavilion. The Prince of Wales (later King Edward VII) was an early patron and Honorary member and this, from the beginning, assured the club's status and notability.

Polo

Polo was brought to this country in 1869, and Hurlingham became, and until 1939

remained, the headquarters of polo in England. Pigeon shooting became less popular and was discontinued in 1905. In its polo heyday Hurlingham had stabling for fifty coach horses and two hundred polo ponies.

Spacious Ages

The estate was extended during the polo era with the acquisitions of adjoining property. Ladies were much on the scene, and it was said that 'Hurlingham was for sweet frivolity and not for sport'. The summer season was enlivened with car rallies, balloon ascents and bicycle competitions. Tennis began in 1877 with a 'lawn racquet ground' and croquet about 1900. Golf was played (and the Club first opened in the winter) from 1894 and the fine putting course (since shortened) was laid out in 1925.

The annual Eton and Harrow Ball (now called the Hurlingham Ball) took place in July accompanied by fireworks and the illumination of the whole Club grounds including the lake. It is recorded that boatmen were hired to row gate-crashers over from the Surrey side. In January 1928 there was a disastrous Thames flood with the water reaching heights of six feet in the grounds and nine inches in the reception rooms (boards with H.W.M. 7/1/28', to be seen in different parts of the grounds, record the flood levels).

The first squash courts were built in 1934 and bowls began a year later.

War and Survival

After the Second World War, the polo grounds were compulsorily purchased by the Borough Council and became, respectively, a recreation ground (Hurlingham Park) and a housing area (on the other side of Broomhouse Lane). The Club was left with the residue of the estate (about 40 acres) as it is today.

Modern Times

The end of polo at Hurlingham stimulated other activities. Tennis has flourished since the war and the first round of the annual I.L.T.C. (eve of Wimbledon) tennis receptions was held in 1946. The cricket ground was opened in 1951 and the present 9 hole winter gold course laid out about the same time. The Croquet Association have had their headquarters here, by invitation, since 1959 and the lawns are the scene of the annual contests for, among other trophies, the Presidents Cup for which the best eight players in the country are invited to compete.

Today the Club has over 6,000 members, many from overseas. Essentially it has a family and social character in keeping with its stated (and only) object which is 'to maintain a Club House and grounds for the use of members and their families and friends.'

30 years of CROQUET

By Peter Hallett



It was thirty years ago, in August 1963, that I played my first croquet tournament. I started with many advantages. I had played garden croquet on a full-sized lawn for some years, and I lived within walking distance of the Colchester Club, where my grandmother, Elsie Clark, and my great aunt, Mable Cork, were active members. I learned a great deal from playing doubles with David Miller and Rupert Thorp, not long before they wrote their book on croquet. I had to stay in dormitory accommodation in the Wimbledon YMCA, and catch the bus to the Roehampton Club. I started the tournament with a handicap of 12, which was reduced to 6 during play - such was the reaction of older members to someone who in those days had no trouble in running hoops from a distance of 3 yards or so. I had to learn croquet etiquette rapidly from the hard school of Daisy Lintern and the somewhat different experience of watching Maurice Reckitt. I was honoured to lunch with William and Kay Longman. I must have been very green, for in the final of the Big Handicap, known as the Gilbey Cup (a large gold piece which I have not seen to this day) I attempted to peg out and remove Dudley Hamilton-Miller's forward ball when it had not yet run over. I played Golf Croquet Doubles with success with Mrs Carrington, the sister of Cyril Corbally.

There were few young men playing croquet in those days. It was hard to afford to play in tournaments, and to mix socially with 'the good and the great' who dominated the scene in those days. Full week tournaments were considered the only proper tournaments. No moves had yet been made to popularise the game. Over the course of a generation the wheel spun full circle. The game is largely dominated by younger men, and the older people can feel out of it at times.

Quite a number of us started competitive croquet at Cambridge under the tutelage of the much-loved Dorothy Heley. She extended the hospitality of her private lawn till all hours, and was known on more than one occasion to drive from Cambridge to the Varsity match at Hurlingham with her car in the middle of the road the whole way, quite oblivious to the welfare of all around. I remember Jack Rivington, with his wonderfully well-trained dog who knew exactly when to stop for a shot to be taken, as a great

supporter of the varsity match. The fact that the Cambridge team beat Oxford for the first nine or so years contributed to the long delay in the award of a Half Blue. For three years the Cambridge team toured the major clubs of the south of England (including Budleigh, Parkstone, Southwick, Cheltenham and Compton) after the end of the summer term. We enjoyed some magnificent hospitality, and met many of the key people. The Heley Club, for ex-Cambridge players, continued playing matches until well into the seventies.

I had a long-handled mallet with a whippy shaft, and a brass plate under a half round head. I was grateful to Bryan Lloyd-Pratt who described my squatting centre style as ugly in the account of one of my early tournaments. I quickly switched to side-style,


I was grateful to Bryan Lloyd-Pratt who described my squatting centre style as ugly in the account of one of my early tournaments. I quickly switched to side-style, and learned a great deal from Bryan and from Humphrey Hicks

and learned a great deal from Bryan and from Humphrey Hicks. I remember Bryan calling unexpectedly at my Cambridgeshire home shortly after I was ordained to discuss the forthcoming Counties competition. I was a member of the Eastern Counties team that won that competition that year in the late sixties somewhat against the odds. I helped introduce Roger Bray to the game of croquet. One year we won the final of the Doubles at Budleigh in just under half-an-hour - a record that stood for many years. With Dudley Hamilton-Miller I won the Open Doubles in 1967 against Solomon and Cotter, as a result of my hitting the peg from second corner at about the sixth attempt. I played in the Surrey or Spencer-Ell Cup on a number of occasions, but never did better than coming a close second to David Prichard at my first attempt. (Spencer-Ell was an amazing and effective player. He had lost an arm in the War, and screwed a special mallet

into a device on the remains of his upper arm.) For some reason I have always enjoyed a greater success at Doubles, with a variety of partners. It is always a challenge to know and build on your partner's strengths and maintain good motivation. I continue to believe that playing in Doubles, as well as practising the accuracy needed in Golf Croquet, is a very good way of learning the game once the basics have been learned.

Croquet is not just about playing the game well, or winning. It is also about talking and listening to many interesting people who play the game. Many players have considerable expertise in other fields, and there is a great deal of interest to be learned from them. Many of them have qualifications or experience in mathematics, science or engineering, but there are also many splendid eccentrics - not so many, alas, as there were. I remember Captain Stoker, who had a considerable career in acting as well as the Navy, learning the game and reaching the President's Cup at the age of over 80. Alan and Stefanya Ross were great companions, not least because we had a common background in Anglo-Saxon and Philology. Cyril Ratcliff of Colchester stands out in the mind for achieving a handicap reduction at the age of over 90 (he missed his century by about six weeks), as well as for the sense of schoolboy fun he retained to the end. 'Tiny' Tyrwhitt-Drake was a very tall man who played with a very short mallet. He had learned croquet from Lord Tollemache before the War, and took it up again on retirement from stockbroking. Maurice Reckitt was a considerable character of many parts. I remember discussing at a CA Annual Meeting whether central events of the croquet Calendar should be in or out of phase with Wimbledon - largely to suit Maurice's lifestyle. He was a considerable poet and literary man as well as a well-known Churchman and writer of modern church history. There was never a dull moment when Maurice was around. He did not get angry when a long shot was missed. Instead he exclaimed with due and deliberate emphasis, "But it was a good shot!" I remember him at an advanced age lying full length to line up for the peg-out, and a concerned lady exclaiming, "Don't do that Mr Reckitt - you'll never get up again."

I enjoyed editing the Croquet Gazette 1971-7, initially with Keith Wylie. Expectations of the magazine were rather different

 Robert Fulford (1 seed): Holder, 1992 World Champion & No.1 World Ranked Player; has just returned from coaching & playing in the States - firm favourite to keep his title.	 David Maugham (1 seed): Scooped several regional Championships in 1992 and won a brilliant match for GB in the World Team Event in Australia this March with a 12 hoop 2-ball break.	 Stephen Mulliner (3 seed): Current Masters Champion & a previous winner. Disappointing results so far this season, but always capable of going the distance here.	 Chris Clarke (3 seed): An unusual and apparently 'casual' style is belied by bursts of brilliance. With Fulford, a racing certainty for the Doubles crown again this year.	 Reg Bamford (5 seed): Is in a class of his own in native S. Africa, and has already secured the British Mens Championship during his year here, with a near flawless performance.	 John Walters (5 seed): World Championship winner '91 & finalist '92, short of match play since March, but could produce a surprise again given the chance to play himself in.	 David Openshaw (5 seed): GB Captain; famed for ruthlessly punishing opponent's errors, can struggle in an age when often none are made! But if anyone can adapt it is he.	 Aaron Westerby (5 seed): 18 year-old visiting from New Zealand this year. Powerful hitter of the ball has carried his NZ success through to an impressive run in local GB events.
--	--	---	--	---	---	---	---

1993 British Open Singles Championship

TOP HALF	BOTTOM HALF
R I Fulford	C D Clarke
J P Dawson / J E Guest	R W Ransom
G W Noble / I G Vincent	P E Day / R B C Le Maitre
D L Gunasekera / A B Hope	R Lowe / W E Lamb
A J Mrozinski / M N Avery	D C D Wiggins / K E Jones
C Williams / P Tavender	W Louw / G N Aspinall
A J Gregory	W T Coles / M J L-Williams
R L Bamford	A Westerby
D J Goacher	J O Walters
S M Tuke / D K Openshaw	Mrs F Ransom
B G Neal / M J Haggerston	A J Symons / M Murray
M E W Heap / D L Gaunt	G S Liddiard / A T Saurin
J D Hector / T R Burge	S Comish / D J Magee
P L Smith / T N Browne	K M H Aiton / I J Burridge
J P Goddard	R J Brown / Miss D A Cornelius
S N Mulliner	D B Maugham

1993 Doubles Championship

Clarke & Fulford	---
Aiton & Maugham	---
R J Brown & Lowe	---
Hope & Murray / Lamb & Tavender	---
Day & Goddard / Guest & Neal	---
T N Browne & Hector / Heap & Goacher	---
Coles & Gunasekera	---
Saurin & Walters	---
Bamford & Westerby	---
Ransom & Ransom	---
Gregory & Jones / Dawson & Wiggins	---
Noble & Vincent / Hilditch & Mrozinski	---
Liddiard & Williams / Burridge & Comish	---
Le Maitre & Louw / L-Williams & Tuke	---
Avery & Cornelius	---
Aspinall & Mulliner	---
SEEDS IN ITALICS	

Come to Hurlingham to watch the Open Championship: 18th to 25th July. Phone 071 736 3148



For many long-standing croquet players Ian Baillieu was synonymous with the croquet Law. Above he adjudicates for Keith Wylie and Andrew Hope at the Hurlingham Club, watched by Jim Townsend and Edward Duffield. What would he had thought of Leslie Riggall's interpretation of "advice", countered right by Simon Williams?

"30 years of croquet"

(... continued from previous page)

in those days. People constantly affirmed that detailed results were the most important thing, because people liked seeing their names in print. Much attention was devoted to the accounts of tournaments, and it was necessary to write, "The account should be mainly

I have seen several get to the top, and then drop out. Is it a kind of burn-out for some?

devoted to play". The rest consisted of letters, poems of varying standard, and articles devoted to law, training and other matters. It was important to maintain a balance of interest for the top players, ordinary tournament players and middle bisquers, and beginners. That principle perhaps needs to be re-affirmed. The presentation of newspapers and magazines has made great strides since those days, but perhaps there have been some losses with the newer more popular approaches. It seemed to me that the job of the editor involved a measure of going round the country, meeting people, and encouraging people to write. It was good to be involved in the early days of popular expansion, and to keep in touch with the international spread of croquet. It was something I could find time for as a Curate, but not when clergy responsibilities increased.

In the late sixties and early seventies many clubs were content with small, dark club houses, and rather primitive facilities. There has been a gradual change to posher premises, with bars, showers, better chairs and tables etc. Sometimes this is made possible through joint tennis and croquet clubs, or other forms of shared facilities. It seems to me neither better nor worse, but worthy of observation.

I can think of no real reason why I should play worse as I get older, but co-ordination and confidence do seem to diminish a little. The average age of the top players has come down considerably over the last generation. What happens as top players grow older? I have seen several get to the top, and then drop out. Is it a kind of burn-out for some? Most seem to lose some consistency along the way.

Croquet has given me a lot of pleasure. I introduced my father to it, and now my teenage son. There is something missing in winter, and I expect I shall go on playing as well as I can as long as my health and strength permit. I feel greatly enriched from the people I have met playing croquet. Thank you for your company - and for reading this to the end.

Photographs shown at top of previous page (left to right): Humphrey Hicks, Dudley Hamilton-Miller, Maurice Reckitt



SIMON WILLIAMS

LEGAL QUERIES
Part 1 in a series

"WHICH BALL WAS I PLAYING WITH?"

A couple of years ago, Mr Leslie Riggall suggested, in the pages of 'Croquet' magazine, that it is improper for the striker (after, say, a lengthy interruption caused by double banking) to ask his adversary which ball he is playing, and (still more?) improper for the adversary to tell him. Mr Riggall said that this would be giving advice and forbidden by Law 49(b): "The adversary must not warn the striker...that he is about to play a wrong ball." I maintained that such information, if requested by the striker, could hardly be termed a warning, and that it was not "advice" but "information concerning the state of the game" as covered by Law 45(b). No ruling was ever handed down, and the question on hand is, whether Mr Riggall can be forced to divulge the information under the laws. I now wish to follow the track onwards, as it leads us to some very deep waters indeed.

From Mr Riggall's last letter on the subject (Croquet No 207) I gather that he construes "advice" in the legal, but not idiomatic, sense of of "advertisement" - in fact, as information. When one reads the Laws, one can understand that this meaning could be taken. But I would contend that, while "advise" can mean either "inform" or "recommend", it clearly has the second meaning in the Laws.

Information and advice are distinguished in Law 49(a): "A player is not entitled to receive advice from anyone...and should not take advantage of unsolicited information or advice." There are three interesting things about this tiny bit of Law:

- of information (not advice) received, only the unsolicited sort is interdicted (all advice, except from partner, is 'forbidden', though not very vigorously);
- "not entitled" is a singular phrase in the Laws, and this part of the law is a bald statement of fact with no admonitory overtones (Other examples are where one becomes entitled to play extra strokes [Law 4(d) (3)], where one may or may not be entitled to play [Law 27] and where one is entitled to ask one's adversary about the state of the game [Law 44]);
- "should not" is used rather than the unequivocal "may not".

Mr Riggall may have thought this law read, "may not", I certainly did until I examined it closely! The Laws are very clear when distinguishing degrees of duty. Note the contrast of emphasis in, "He (the striker) must consult the adversary before playing...but if he fails to do so the adversary should forestall play" [from Law 45(c)]. "Must" here signifies a clear obligation, while the less binding "should" recognises the fact that the circumstances may not allow the recommended procedure. In case you doubt that this is intended, study the text of the Customs of the Games, and note how often "must" is used where you may have thought it read, "should" and vice versa.

So it seems that the whole debate has nothing to do with advice, or with unsolicited information or advice (because the striker is soliciting the information) but concerns what is "information relating to the state of the game". Law 44 mentions "the correct positions of balls or clips, whether an error has been committed, which player is responsible for the position of a ball, whether a ball has been hit or has run a hoop in order or is in a position to do so and any similar matters...". To these we may surely add, how many bisques remain, how much time remains, whose turn it is, what the score is in points, etc.. What would Mr Riggall say if the striker, obviously about to run the wrong hoop with red, turned and said, "What is the correct position of the red clip?", or words to the effect? He must tell him, and to do so is not warning him that he is about to run the wrong hoop. I would argue that the question "Which ball is the striker's ball?" (or words to that effect) similarly relates to the state of the game. The striker does not seek any advice about what he should do next, or which ball he should see fit to play. Naturally, once he has the information, his course is obvious, but that is not the point.



HUMPHREY HICKS

Winner of the Open Championship
1932, 1939, 1947-50, 1952

HOW TO FINISH A BREAK

One of the most important things in Croquet is to leave the balls well at the end of a break.

Too many players are content to lay up for their partner-ball by leaving a short rush near the partner- ball's hoop, having separated each of the opponents' balls as far as possible. This may be all right; or it may be all wrong. It will be wrong if your opponent is left a "double" shot with either ball. It is not safe to assume that your adversary will necessarily play with the ball you have so carefully sent to your partner-ball's next hoop. If there is a "double", or even a tempting target for the other ball, it is quite likely that this shot will be taken—and, worse still, that it will be hit. (And if it is it will be your own fault.)

Forewarned is forearmed, and if the player realizes that it really is all-important NOT to leave any sort of a "double" for either of the opponents' balls—then— unless a ball "rolls right round," "runs down a hill," or "comes in a yard" (any or all of which contingencies seem always to be happening to some players), surely there will be no "double" left.

Special care should be taken in this respect when the opponent has a "lift." The reason is surely clear; nevertheless it is extraordinary how often a "Double" can be obtained from a lift shot.

Having got a four-ball break going perfectly, it is advisable to start thinking early on—say after you have made the 4th hoop, about how you are going to leave the balls at the end of your turn. Let us assume you are in play with Yellow (with a 4-baller) and that you intend to put the Yellow clip on the rover hoop. You should say to yourself, "I don't want to make penultimate off Red"—it is never a good thing to make the last hoop of a break off your partner-ball—"therefore, I don't want to make 3-back off Red—and therefore I don't want to make 1-back off Red." After making the 4th hoop, is an excellent time to see to it that you don't make 1-back off Red. It should, at this point, be comparatively simple to arrange matters accordingly—but, one word of warning here. Don't—whatever you do— risk sacrificing your break by attempting some sort of split-shot you don't perhaps feel very happy about.

It is, of course, also necessary to think where the opponents' balls are to be left. We all know that Black should not be left near Blue's hoop (yet how often one sees this done), and we all know that, generally speaking, it is a good thing to leave Blue near to Blue's hoop.

If the opponent already has one ball round, it is very important that he should be made to play with this ball—it is never quite so serious if the long shot is hit with the forward ball, for you know you are bound to have at least one more chance. Provided that this point is thought of in reasonable time, it should always be possible to force the opponent to play with his forward ball, or to make him "pay" very heavily should he decide to shoot with his backward ball—and miss.

Four-ball breaks—fortunately for the opponent—sometimes go awry. Unless one has failed at a hoop—or sent a ball off—or missed a short roquet) there may yet be time to make some sort of a leave. At any rate, don't play your last shot in a despairing fashion. A ball may hit the wire of a hoop on its way to a corner, if there has been a careless mis-cue.

Sometimes it is a good idea to "guard" the boundary, by going say four or five yards away from your partner-ball. Again, it may be possible to "scatter" two balls successfully, but this shot should not be undertaken just for the fun of it. It is very likely that more harm than good will be achieved.

At the end of the game, when you are laying for your partner-ball to go out, it is possible to err on the side of over-caution. You are so anxious—naturally—to leave very little for your opponent if he hits in, that you find— after he has missed—that you yourself cannot finish the game after all. In most cases it is wiser to leave something comparatively easy for yourself, and to bank on the opponent's long shot being missed. But, please, no "Double".



BILL LAMB

Chairman of the CA Handicap & Coaching Committees

ADVANCED HANDICAP PLAY

Lionel Wharrad's plea for more players to be given the opportunity to play advanced handicap games raises the question of what tactics should be employed in such games. It is important, therefore, that everyone should understand what is and what is not permitted under the laws and regulations for this form of play.

Lionel has already clarified that when a bisque is taken between 1-back and 4-back the latter may be run without conceding a contact, on the grounds that the hoops would not be scored in the same turn. This is indeed true, although not quite accurate, as Law 36 makes no reference to the same turn: instead it refers to hoops being scored in the preceding turn, i.e. the turn which precedes the start of the adversary's play. (in effect this means the final turn of a player's break.) A bisque is an extra turn permitted in handicap play and in the situation described above only 4-back would be scored in the preceding or final turn; 1-back would have been scored in the penultimate turn, which is irrelevant under Law 36. Therefore, the adversary is not entitled to a contact but is entitled to a lift.

However, if the player continues and takes a further bisque after running 4-back, then a lift is not conceded either, as likewise 4-back would not have been scored in the preceding or final turn. In general, conceding a lift or contact can be avoided by taking a bisque at some time after running 1-back or 4-back.

This gives rise to some interesting possibilities for the player receiving bisques. If a bisque is required to continue the break, for example after sticking in penult or rover, there should be no hesita-

None of the normal lift leaves is suitable for advanced handicap play

tion in taking it in order to avoid conceding a damaging lift or contact. Even if a bisque is not required to continue the break after running 4-back, it may pay to take a bisque to construct a tight leave. The use of a bisque in this way has a double advantage; it avoids conceding a lift or contact and makes the leave easier to construct with the extra turn. You might consider using a bisque to cross-wire the opponent balls at hoop one and lay up in corner three. Ironically, this is the leave that the laws of advanced play were designed to prevent, but which is still available to the player receiving bisques in advanced handicap play but not, of course, to his opponent.

The player conceding bisques should play normally as for a handicap game but must naturally bear in mind the lift. None of the normal lift leaves, which are designed to allow a break to be picked up after a missed lift, is suitable for advanced handicap play. They all leave far too easy position for the opponent to construct a break by taking a bisque after missing the lift. In general it is not sensible to concede a contact, as this is equivalent to giving your opponent an extra bisque, but players who are confident of their ability to hit in and play a three-ball break should consider taking an early break to the peg pegging the ball out. This is allowed in advanced handicap play and will devalue the opponent's bisques.

It is clear that one player can avoid the consequences of Law 36 whereas his opponent cannot, and that this could confer a considerable advantage to the weaker player. This is something that the Handicap Co-ordination Committee will bear in mind in considering whether games played under advanced handicap regulations should be eligible games under the automatic handicapping system.

Finally, whilst I appreciate Lionel's concern to have this form of the game introduced quickly, I think it is quite wrong that the advertised conditions of a tournament should be changed on demand of one player, particularly if that player is likely to gain advantage under the new conditions. Surely both players must agree if the conditions are to be changed.



STEPHEN MULLINER

GRADING SYSTEMS
A 2 part series by CA Grading Officer

1. BASIS OF GRADINGS SYSTEMS

The recent 'Championship Rankings' article ('Croquet' 226, page 18) is a welcome sign of continuing interest in this subject. However, the article contained several statements that deserve comment.

1. The Croquet Grand Prix (John Walters)

(1) A primary goal of any ranking system is objectivity and John Walters argues that a virtue of Grand Prix systems is their "transparent functionality and basis in hard fact and result". In reality, Grand Prix systems are highly subjective because human beings decide how many points should be awarded to different events and to different rounds in an event. The points system suggested by John is quite arbitrary and a different but equally reasonable points system could produce a different final ranking order.

(2) The author admits that Grand Prix systems are fundamentally biased in favour of active players. His concept of an "eclectic" Grand Prix (the best four events from eight in two years) is a step in the right direction but does not amount to a cure. Any statistician knows that choosing the best four results from eight events carries a significant advantage over choosing four from six and a huge advantage over "choosing" four from four.

(3) The Grand Prix system suggested is based on performance in the strongest events and thus restricts its relevance to a comparatively small number of players.

(4) The differences between player's scores have no significance. Robert Fulford (4415) is very good but he is not twice as strong as David Maugham (2175) or David Openshaw (2100).

2. The Championship Ranking System (Ian Burrige)

(1) This system is based the same probabilistic principles as the CGS but confines itself to analysing best-of-three ("Bo3") or best-of-five ("Bo5") matches. Ian rightly points out various drawbacks, most notably its inability to use first class events that are not Bo3, the lack of relevance of the system to all but the best players and the difficulty of moving down the list.

(2) However, there is another defect, albeit one that could be easily rectified. Ian does not distinguish between 2-0 and 2-1 wins in Bo3, let alone between 3-0, 3-1 and 3-2 in Bo5. This is an approach rejected in chess grading, which treats draws as significant results and uses the scores in a chess match (e.g. in the World Championship series) for grading purposes instead of the overall result of the match.

3. The Croquet Grading System (as approved by the C.A.)

(1) Every player has an index which is a number lying between 0 and 200 and is changed after every game a player plays. The index can be a volatile number and is exponentially smoothed to produce the grade which is much less volatile and is used to produce ranking lists. The CGS uses the results of all level single games in C.A. Calendar events and some overseas events.

(2) The CGS algorithm has a strong theoretical foundation supported by empirical research. The rating of competitive performance has been extensively studied (see the bibliography in The Rating of Chessplayers, Elo A.E., Batsford 1978) and supports the basic tenet of both the CGS and the Elo Rating System, namely that "the many performances of an individual will be normally distributed when evaluated on an appropriate scale". In practice, accuracy is improved by using the closely related Verhulst distribution which is represented by the logistic function. This function requires that the increment added to the winner's index (and subtracted from the loser's index) be calculated as follows:

$$INC = K / (1 + 10^{-(IW - IL)/50}) \quad [1]$$

IW and IL are the winner's and loser's indices immediately before the game. K is set at 4 for low significance events, 5 for normal events and 6 for high significance events.



JERRY GUEST

British Croquet's Great Globetrotter

RICH RIVER REWARD

Arriving soon after commencement of the second week of The MacRobertson Shield Test match GB and New Zealand had come through to contest the final, alternating now between the three excellent established lawns of Australia's Rich River Club and somewhat rougher additional four lawns which had been recently prepared to accommodate the test.

It was on one of these rougher lawns that David Maugham was due to play Bob Jackson and so we settled down in anticipation of a match of high calibre.

The start of the first game was missed, but it seems that Bob Jackson had the innings and was unlucky with two bouncing rushes, the first riding up on the ball and sending it half the intended distance, the second bouncing right over and so giving away the innings. David Maugham went to 4-back with a good leave, a long lift shot was missed and he finished with a triple peel.

In the second game Bob Jackson was first to 4-back leaving David Maugham's two balls near the west boundary and his own two wide apart on the east boundary. David Maugham hit the ball in fourth corner and completed a T.P.O. (see glossary) which was the more interesting for not being entirely under control, involving some angled hoop shots. Bob Jackson was now left with one ball, for hoop 1, one of his opponent's balls being half way up the east boundary and the other in corner 2. He did a split shot from the contact at the east boundary, the croqueted ball going across as far as hoop 5 and the other close to the ball in corner 2. He took off from there and got a reasonable position four or five yards in front of hoop 1 on a slight angle; a good croquet shot indeed with the Dawson balls which are sometimes more difficult to use in making accurate take-offs. The first long hoop was then run almost cleanly, going easily to the north boundary, a four yard roquet being required to pick up the ball near corner 2. Hoop 2 was made with a good split shot and good hoop, then a rush to hoop 3 and a rush to hoop 4 after which the ball still at hoop 5 came back into play and a controlled three-ball break gave Bob Jackson the equaliser.

In the final game David Maugham was the first to 4-back, laying a 'New standard leave' (the opponent's balls close to hoops 2 and 4). Bob Jackson shot from part way along A-baulk at almost a double and hit. He went as far as 1-back, twice not being satisfied on the certainty of getting a good cross-wire of his opponent's balls at hoop 1, ending up with one of these between hoop 2 and corner 2, the other near hoop 1 and his own near corner 3. David Maugham shot down at his own ball near hoop 1 and it just missed, upon which Bob Jackson embarked on a T.P.O. (see glossary) which he completed after being forced to execute a difficult half jump at rover. He pegged both balls out, leaving himself for 1-back against his opponent being for hoop 1. David Maugham took contact on the east boundary, doing a split shot but not getting position for hoop 1. After a bit of cagey play by both players Bob Jackson made 1-back but was unable to consolidate. David Maugham now had a long position for hoop 1 but elected instead to shoot for his opponent's ball near the east boundary. Some spectators may have been wondering why he did this! He hit, did a second split shot, this time getting an angled position about four yards from hoop 1. He ran this with an excellent hoop shot ending several yards south of the other ball near hoop 2, hit this and made hoop 2, cut-rush to 3, rush to 4, rush towards 5. But he became hampered after 5 and had to carry out a difficult fairly long sweeping shot to continue. A roll to 6 got it back under control, made 1-back but only got a cut-rush half way down to 2-back. A good roll made 2-back, then a rush to 3-back but after 3-back he had no forward rush. However, a superb roll gave him a relatively easy 4-back, then a rush near penultimate and a roll to rover. After rover had been made there was a smile of jubilation at the knowledge that his excellent two-ball all round break marked the winning of the 1993 MacRobertson Shield. *Our long trip had been rewarded.*

CHAMPIONSHIP CROQUET GLOSSARY

A guide to help beginners and improvers understand those tricky top class tournament reports, even the ones by Chris Clarke. [Will it help me understand Chris' reports too? Ed]

Introduction

It's not long after one first starts learning our great game, a little while after starting to remember the sequence of strokes reliably and acquiring some of the skills to play them, that the clever idea of constructing breaks either occurs or is drummed in by coach. The idea of doing as much as possible in as few turns as possible is after all the very basis of croquet. Equally, soon after the delight of stringing together one's first few consecutive hoops the expectation develops of running several hoops off a 4-ball break (where all the balls are under control), of having a good old bash at building a 4-ball break from a 3-ball break (where one of the blighters refuses at first to be coaxed out of a corner or somewhere) and even of scrambling something off a 2-ball break (which isn't really a break at all!).

Of course before there is the remotest chance of becoming cocky coach comes up with a new wheeze, "it's no good making lots of hoops on a break if at the end of it all you leave opponent a short shot and an easy break - not once you're up against the big boys! You've got to leave them a long shot, with no easy break for them if they hit but a good chance of a break for you if they miss."

Just as you might be about to sarcastically think "Oh, is that all", coach is likely to pipe up with "and if they'd rather play with one of their balls than the other, if they've got one ball on the peg for instance, try to make them play with the ball they don't want to play with by making it really, really, really easy for you otherwise." We're talking "leaves" here.

Leaves are the step beyond worrying about if you can do something "hit that rush over their, croquet these balls to those places, run that blasted hoop I've already stuck in four times." They're for when you think you can play the shots and you're worrying instead about what your opponent can, or might, do.

That's the kind of thinking at the heart of understanding top class play. These people know they can play a break - as far as they want to. They can pick up breaks from tricky situations and hit long shots as well, but so can their opponents. Often it comes down to percentages. There is a lot of enjoyment to be had by thoughtful croquet players of all classes: A, B, C and D, from the perplexities at the top. Tactics is one of the main draws of our game, and perhaps it is found in its purest form where the random element is minimised. But to enjoy the tactical tussles one has to know what the hell the players are talking about.

ADVANCED: Advanced laws are the special extra laws played at the top. These were devised to stop play being too one-sided - previously people were winning in two turns with the opponent just missing a 30 yard shot in between! Put simply: when a player runs either 1-back or 4-back, the opponent can play either of his balls from anywhere on either of the baulk (start) lines at the start of his next go (called a "lift". That makes leaves more difficult and shortens the longest shot a player can leave after a break. In addition if a player runs 1-back and 4-back in the same turn before his partner ball has gone through 1-back at all, then the opponent can take croquet ("gets a contact"/"can take contact") from any of the other balls at the start of his next turn. That encourages players not to go to the peg when they first get a break, but to stop at 4-back - which also makes it more difficult for them to win in 2 turns.

LIFT: The entitlement to pick up one of your balls and play the first shot of your turn from one of the baulk (start) lines (see **ADVANCED**).

CONTACT: The entitlement to pick up one of your balls and take croquet from one of the other balls at the start of your turn (see **ADVANCED**).

OSL (OLD STANDARD LEAVE): Really the most obvious leave when you know your opponent has a lift. Involving leaving your two balls near corner 4, one opponent ball between hoop 2 and the west boundary, the other opponent ball near the middle of the lawn.

HOOP LEAVES: Are leaves where a hoop is used to hide a ball from a baulk, and often to stimey a ball from shooting in certain directions.

NSL (NEW STANDARD LEAVE): A Hoop Leave. Developed to make a longer shot for the opponent when he has a lift. Involving leaving your two balls about 10 yards north of corner 4, with one opponent ball 'hidden' from A baulk behind hoop 4 and the other opponent ball 'hidden' from B baulk behind hoop 2. The opponent ball near hoop 4 is also so close to it that the opponent can't get his mallet behind it to hit at your balls.

DIAGONAL SPREAD: Again developed to make a longer shot for the opponent than he has with an OSL. Your balls left as with the NSL, one opponent ball is placed between hoop 2 and the West boundary, the other opponent ball is left very close to the peg - so that the peg blocks any shot at the other opponent ball and stops the opponent from getting his mallet behind the ball for a shot at your balls.

PEEL: A ball is peeled if it is caused to score its hoop when it is not the striker's ball; eg playing with red, yellow is croqueted through its next hoop - red has peeled yellow.

TP (TRIPLE PEEL): Is a turn in which a player not only completes a break to the peg, but also peels partner ball through 4-back, penultimate and rover, then pegs out both balls to win the game. The introduction of advanced laws has made this a common and necessary tactic.

TPO (TRIPLE PEEL ON OPPONENT): The same as a triple peel, but it is an opponent ball that is peeled and pegged out (usually the ball doing the peeling does not peg itself out). The pros and cons of pegging out an opponent are debated fiercely by players of handicaps ranging from 24 to -2!

SEXTUPLE PEEL: Is a turn in which a player not only completes a break to the peg, but also peels partner ball through 1-back, 2-back, 3-back, 4-back, penultimate and rover, then pegs out both balls to win the game. If you can do this you can win without conceding a lift.

1-BACK TACTICS: A player may look like he is going to attempt a sextuple peel by stopping at 1-back on his first break when this is not his real intention. He just wants to avoid giving the opponent a lift for the time being. In his next turn, instead of attempting a sextuple, he may instead TPO his opponent if his opponent has reached 4-back or attempt some other esoteric manoeuvre. This multitude of sins can be covered by the general heading of 1-back tactics.

RIGGALL: Not a technical A-class term, but a common one in reports. It is connected with any pegging out of an opponent ball. To Riggall is to peg out an opponent ball.

MAY/JUNE '93

tournament reports

Harrow Open w/e 12/13 May by Richard Hilditch

Australian eliminates only seed

The first weekend at Harrow of the year saw a very tight final between Jeremy Ames and Peter Tavender (visiting from Australia). The match went to the fifth game in which a close cut ending eventually fell to Ames by only 2. Peter can feel pleased with his British Debut, having knocked out the only seed David Wiggins in the semi-final. Make sure you want plenty of games if you come to

Harrow. The players averaged nearly 9 games each during the two days.

From quarter-finals

J Ames bt Tavender -11 -14 +26 +15 +2; Hilditch +11 +25;
Roger Jackman +24 -11 +10
P Tavender bt Wiggins -23TP +15 +10; Kolbuszewski +5 +10
R Hilditch bt Willard -24 +4 +1
D Wiggins bt Miller +17 +9TP

Parkstone Open w/e 15/16 May by Ian Burridge

The return of Keith Aiton

Despite clashing with Sonoma this event in its 4th year of existence managed to attract its strongest entry yet with its new K/O format. The event saw the return of Keith Aiton to competitive croquet after his marriage last year. Sadly his otherwise good play let him down at crucial times in his semi-final with David Goacher losing in two straight games -3 -11OTP. In the other semi-final New Zealander Aaron Westerby easily beat Francis Landor +25TP +15. The final was equally one sided Aaron winning +16TP +24TP to record his second consecutive tournament victory since arriving in the country. In the swiss there were many sextuple attempts the best coming from Strat Liddard but no-one really got close. The overall swiss winner was David Harrison-Wood who continued his good early season form with a score of 7/8. He was also responsible for the precision hoop setting which along with the well kept lawns and excellent facilities at the club make this one of the best Open W/Es in the croquet calendar.

1993 Sonoma-Cutrer International by Stephen Mulliner

Maugham in the Underworld & 'the lads' in sextuple heaven

Imagine 1,250 people in whites and gaily decorated marquees surrounding an immaculate croquet court under a flawless Californian sky. This is Sonoma-Cutrer, the premier international singles tournament and without doubt the most impressive social spectacle any croquet player can currently expect to attend. It should also be recorded that the recent surge in interest in international croquet activity, including the foundation of the WCF and this year's participation of the USA in the MacRobertson Shield, owes much to Brice Jones' initiative in 1986.

The format is unique, a double elimina-

tion variant known as the Patmor Draw. 28 players from Australia, Canada, Great Britain, Ireland, New Zealand, South Africa and the United States were divided into four American blocks. The winners proceed to another American, the Medallists' round, the winner of which proceeds directly to the Final as the 'Holder'. The Medallist losers join the later stages of a second life knockout populated by the second to fourth block placers and almost always provide the 'Challenger' to confront the Holder in the Final.

The Blue block was dominated by an unbeaten John Prince and by Chris Clarke who completed two sextuples out of four at-

tempted. Robert Fulford, the defending champion, was also unbeaten in Red, with Debbie Cornelius a worthy second place with four wins. Reg Bamford defeated Stephen Mulliner to decide first and second place in the Black block and David Maugham was a comfortable winner in Yellow.

Fulford moved into top gear to win the Medallist block unbeaten, including the third sextuple of the tournament. Maugham descended to the underworld to beat Mulliner narrowly and Prince by the skin of his teeth, including a two-ball break from 1-back with time rapidly running out. Bamford played well to beat Tony Stephens from New Zea-

land, who had already accounted for Chris Clarke and Debbie Cornelius. Bamford and Maugham now met to decide who should challenge Fulford. Maugham, fresh from his recovery against Prince, could make only one hoop in the fifth turn but retired leaving Bamford in a highly uncomfortable position. However, the South African champion hit from 20 yards and won in two turns with a routine triple.

Proceedings were then interrupted by a sumptuous lunch and a Wine Auction which raised the staggering sum of USD 150,000 for Make-A-Wish, a children's charity devoted to making wishes come true for children not expected to live beyond their 18th birthdays. As usual, the players not involved in the final played a part as bearers for some of the more exotic lots.

The final threatened at first to be as excit-

From quarter-finals

J Dawson bt Mulliner -17TP +6 +8 -17 +5;
Bamford +14 -20OTP +3; Coles +17 +25
S Mulliner bt Noble +2 +25TP; Guest +23 -21 +12
R Bamford bt Goddard -17TP +13TPO +11TPO
G Noble bt Bond -3 +11 +2

Consolation Swiss Event

1. **M Haggerston** (6/9); 2. **G Noble** (8/14)

Cheltenham Open Weekend, "Coles Cup" 1-3 May by David Maugham

NOT the Western Championship!

The tournament opened with only 26 entries. The manager complained that this made the swiss more difficult to run as he would not have powers of two players dropping in each round, however he found an unusual method of getting a reporter - by bribing him with a telescopic yardstick (originally a device for measuring the height of tennis nets).

The earliest match that aroused any interest was between Burridge and Curry. Burridge lost the first after pegging out Curry's ball and then being "unlucky" in the three ball game. In the second Curry surprised the spectators by not pegging out Burridge's ball when her partner ball was for 4-back and his was 1-back, instead leaving Burridge a twelve yarder for his peg ball. He duly hit this and pegged Curry's ball out. Burridge failed to finish from Curry's errors and was on rover and peg versus penult when he laid a thin wire across hoop 1 with Curry's ball twenty yards away. She hit the fraction of a ball, but cannoned the other ball off the lawn, so she could not get a rush to penult, and had to leave the lawn having position at penult with Burridge's rover ball near rover. He chose to shoot at partner, but missed. Curry then ran penult and hit one of Burridge's balls, rushed to three yards from rover, approached and ran an angled hoop, and finished. Ian later claimed that this was the unluckiest match he had ever had - an interesting statistic from the unluckiest player in the world.

In the quarter-finals the only excitement come in the match between Maugham and Comish where the third saw Maugham miss his 'last' shot, having had Comish peg one of his balls out, giving Comish an easy finish but when Comish had an 18" straight rover Maugham took his Platinum Riggalled Game Stopping Bisque (see match vs Bryant in the Mac) and Comish bounced off. Maugham hit his ten yarder and finished.

Meanwhile in the swiss the World's Unluckiest Player lost to David Harrison-Wood after he missed his lift and Harrison-Wood finished with a TP. Worthy of note was the game between Alan Bogle and Ian Maugham, in which Bogle hit his last shot when Maugham was for peg and peg, to score his first point, unremarkable in itself unless you consider that this occurred two and a half hours after the game had started! (The crowd were disappointed not to see a +26 after this length of time.)

Monday started with the big grudge Women's match - Cornelius v Curry - at the top of the swiss. The game started creditably enough with Curry going to 4-back and Cornelius hitting the lift and going round herself, but the game degenerated after this and Cornelius finally won after scrappy attempts by both players to get their second ball round. Lower down the swiss Mark Avery was challenging for the title of the World's Unluckiest Players, after having lost by 1 to Gail Curry on Sunday he got to peg and peg against David Harrison-Wood, who had not started, before losing -2TP.

In the first game of the final Clarke clanged 3-back having done two peels, so Maugham completed them for him. Maugham later won with a three ball break. In the second Maugham TPO'd Clarke, who finished from the contact. In the third Clarke missed after rover on a Triple Peel, allowing Maugham to finish in two turns. Chris got to 4-back first in the fourth, but left a double on his 'diagonal spread' leave, which David hit. This time David turned down the TPO, deciding to make Clarke hit a lift if he wanted to get back in. David's leave was not perfect, but left no balls near baulk, Clarke hit anyway and finished with a Triple Peel. The fifth saw Clarke make the same mistake at 3-back that he made in the first, but this time instead of having the single peel, Maugham opted to



Bernard Neal, Chris Clarke, Bo Harris

have a delayed sextuple leave, allowing him to have a go at this difficult feat, but still have the option of falling back on the single peel if things did not go perfectly. In the end he missed a simple four yarder after 2-back, leaving two balls near 3-back to give Clarke and easy finishing turn to retain the trophy - if not the title of Western Champion.

Credit must go to the hoop setters who did a fine job again this year and thanks also to Bernard who managed well - despite having to keep playing in accordance with the conditions! It was felt by many of the players that the consolation event should be an Egyptian, as a strict swiss allows little flexibility and also does not take account of the difference in speed of games in the same round (one player had two consecutive game of 35 minutes each leaving him free for over five hours.) Also under review was the condition that all players had to play at all times, which seemed a little silly given the example above. Despite these quirks however this tournament was still a good opener for the season and was generally enjoyed by all.

From quarter-finals

C Clarke bt Maugham -5 +14OTP -1TP +17TP +10;
Bamford -6QP +13 +13TPO; Curry +12 +25TP
D Maugham bt Irwin +17TP +26TP; Comish +17TP -25 +3
R Bamford bt Avery +24+26TP; C Irwin bt Cornelius -25TP+9TP+19TP

Consolation Swiss Event

1st: **Miss D A Cornelius** 0 losses; 2nd: **D Harrison-Wood** 1 loss

excitements including a pass-roll to gain excellent position for hoop 3 from near hoop 4. Fulford lifted the ball by hoop 2 to A-baulk, but his shot at the balls on the East boundary fizzed past just to the right. Bamford strode onto the court with "only" a triple between him and the title. However, he overran ideal position on the ball by the peg and his rush to hoop 1 ended six feet East. The approach was a fraction underweight and left a nasty but makeable hoop. The hoop-stroke was a smooth as ever but was perhaps not firm enough and his ball only just struggled through. After prolonged thought, Bamford turned down a hampered shot at the pilot ball and took careful aim at partner on the East boundary. He missed by nothing but Fulford took full advantage by hitting partner from 15 yards and retained his title in that turn via an emphatic split peg-out.

Ryde Tournament 7-12 June by Deborah Latham

Broken Mallet shafts, ankles and broomsticks

At the outset of the Ryde week tournament this year it was not so much a case of advanced play as advanced enervation; two games a day were about as much as most of us could cope with before heat debilitation set in. The extremely hot weather wasn't cramping some of the visitor's styles though; Cliff Jones (who was camping in the ironically named 'igloo' beside court 3) achieved the first triple peel which manager Roy Newnham remembered being performed at Ryde since Miles Holford in 1985. (NB I should perhaps clarify that my construction of the previous sentence is not intended to indicate that Cliff was in the 'igloo' when he did the triple...) Not to be outdone, David Harrison-Wood got five peels of his sextuple before the court outfoxed him, he caused much mirth with a 'delayed triple' "dammit" after a missed roquet.

Cliff was appointed deputy manager, as Roy was only playing in the class event and the day job kept getting in the way most mornings. However, we could always tell when he was arriving to supervise the next round of games - his car's cooling fan does a very passable imitation of a hovercraft (which Roy himself does not hear, I'm told, since he's busy bopping away to Radio 3 while he drives), so we had plenty of warning to assume our poses of immaculately behaved tournament players...

Following a thunderstorm west of the island on Wednesday evening, humidity settled heavily on Thursday, swiftly succeeded by rain on Friday and a veritable deluge in the early hours of Saturday morning. Bill Platt broke a broom handle in his enthusiastic efforts to clear the lying water on court 2 (with most impressive results), which just proves these things happen in threes - not only had John Bourn suffered a broken mallet shaft earlier in the week, but even before that one of the entrants (John Beech, I believe) had to withdraw from the tournament because of a broken ankle!

Due to the small (though select!) entry there were only three rounds of doubles, but by the third round it was a straight contest of David Harrison-Wood and John Corrie versus Laurence and myself. To my personal disconcertion, we never took croquet after the fifth turn and lost -26 due to our opposition cannily keeping us on opposite sides of the totally sodden court, thus nullifying our chances of being able to hit in, while everything went absolutely swimmingly for them - I use the adjective advisedly! So the Birch Cups are now resident in Parkstone and Littleton until next year.

Only three entrants in the 'C' class meant that the event was organised into two series of games. Doris Cox fought a valiant rear-guard action, but the destination of the Hutton Cup was dependent on the outcome of the final game between Mary Robinson and John Bourn. The eventual result was that they were even on number of wins, but John emerged ahead on points.

In the 'B' class Faith Fewtrell, Bill and Roy tied on wins, but Faith had accrued the greatest number of points, she accrued the Chapman Cup, too (despite the distraction of concluding the sale of her and Bob's 'second' house all within the week of the tournament - they met the purchaser on the Sunday before and were moving out on the Monday after! Faith said, in amazement, "I didn't know it could happen this fast!" Live and learn, eh...?). However, back to croquet!

Among the 'A's, neither Phil Kennerley nor Cliff were playing to reach the standards of which they are capable (which is why I didn't come bottom of the block, much to my surprise!). Mind you, Phil's partner Christine Bourn ascribed his sub-standard play on the Wednesday to nagging sixth sense desperately trying to convey to him that he was

wearing one of her Marks & Spencer shirts (well, it's a mistake anyone could've made, isn't it...?) and thereby imparting a subconsciously felt unease to his play. Christine remains confident he would have noticed if it had been the broderie anglaise one, though... While Cliff, as mentioned before, executed an historic triple on the first day (though he apparently refused to run any hoop without jumping on it first - made his breaks look a bit staccato, that), he committed what subsequently proved to be a slight tactical error by kindly coaching one or two of the rest with a smoking revolver and limping on both feet... This meant that Laurence (who, as on his last visit, kept beating his wife) came the closest to catching David in the race for the Championship of the Isle of Wight, but David proved uncatchable with the maximum number of wins.

Bill Platt won the Dibley Cup for the handicap singles by the clever tactic of equalling Bob Fewtrell's number of wins but craftily beating him in the very first game, so Bob had to settle for the Benest Cup as runner-up.

After his closing speech Roy was recriminating with himself for omitting, among all the other thanks he had been dispensing, to publicly thank Cliff for imparting "a touch of sartorial elegance" to the tournament - ie trousers tucked into socks and promptly dubbed "plus-three-and-a-halves"; a navy blue blazer (due to the fact he got his white cardigan soaked by lying down on Saturday morning to line up a shot); and what's more, especially to please Christine Bourn, a bow tie, no less! (NB: He gives coaching in bow tie-tying, too, you know!)

By the way of farewell at the end of the tournament, Arthur Rowlands came up to me and said, "Are you writing the report?" "Yes, I am!" I said. "Well, leave me out of it!" he said - so I have.

Cheltenham Bank Holiday w/e 29-31 May

'Bray' shortening and 'Wharrad' turns keep competitors on their toes

Although more than 100 croquet players gathered on the South Coast for the annual Counties Doubles Championship, 56 players, with handicaps ranging from -0.5 to 18, played at Cheltenham in a handicap weekend.

The tournament was run as 3 separate Swiss competitions. 6 rounds were played giving everyone exactly 2 games a day at predetermined times. The Bray system was adopted to eliminate the need for time limits but, if morning games appeared to be going on for more than 3 1/2 hours, Wharrad turns were operated. Only TWO games went to time, and these were shortened ones, so perhaps the 'Bray' used was not severe enough.

[the 'Bray' used:-

Sum of Handicaps 16 or less, full 26 point game.

Sum of Handicaps more than 16 and less than 22, a 22 point game.

Sum of Handicaps 22 or more, 18 points, the 1 and 3-back version.]

The visitors took most of the prizes. Don Gagan of Bristol won Block A, Roger Schofield of Pendle, Block B and Doug Taylor of Kenilworth, Block C. Cheltenham did have two of the runners-up in Derek Bradley and Dennis Regan, who also plays at Kington Langley. The other second place was taken by Nailsea schoolboy, Roy Hawkins.

Most importantly, in spite of some inclement weather on Sunday, an enjoyable weekend was had by all.

Block A (16 players)

1. Dr D Gagan (7) 5 wins (beat D Bradley)
2. D Bradley (9) 5 wins
- 3= D Foulser (-0.5), Dr B Weitz (3), T Burge (1.5), Mrs C Smith (6) 4 wins

Block B (20 players)

1. R Schofield (8) .6 wins
2. D Regan (4.5) .5 wins
- 3= Mrs D Magee (7), M Burrow (7), J Potter (2.5), C Thursfield (14) .4 wins

Block C (20 players)

1. D Taylor (14) .6 wins
2. R Hawkins (12) .5 wins
- 3= G Eccles (12), H Flangeley (2.5), A Potter (5), Ms K Whittall (3.5), B Wainman (4.5) .4 wins

Hurlingham 1-3 May by Paul Macdonald

"More matter for a May morning". (Twelfth Night Act III Sc. IV)

29 croquet players gathered at Hurlingham on 1st May "to do observance to a morn of May". Only 29 with all those beautiful lawns to play on? Was it the recession that caused the drop from last year's figure or was it something more sinister, as some of those present were saying, a reluctance on the part of some players to put their indices and handicaps at risk, particularly in a level play tournament? Time alone will tell.

The 29 were divided into a block of 10 (the 10 lowest handicaps), a block of 7 (the 7 highest handicaps) and, in the middle, what the Manager described as an "intensive" Swiss of 12 hopefully to complete 8 rounds; the latter proved to be rather more intensive than the Manager expected and only 7 rounds were completed. The block of 7 was an odd block in more ways than one, including as it did no fewer than 6 Hurlingham players plus a seventh substituting on the opening day.

The top block went off smoothly enough, only one game not being completed. There was a fair sprinkling of triples, perhaps not as many as might have been expected given the high standard of play and the relatively easy playing lawns. Perhaps the highlights were a tight 2-ball finish between Lewis Palmer and Tom Coles (+1 to the former) and an attempted sextuple by Lewis, but it was Justin Goddard's steadiness that proved him to be the ultimate winner, losing as he did only one protracted game to William Ormerod; Lewis Palmer was a deserved undisputed runner up.

The intensive, sometimes tortuous, Swiss was won by Robert Pennant Jones, deter-

mined and tenacious as ever, winning 6 out of 7 games, with four people on 5 wins, Stuart Daddo-Langois, Edward Dymock, Paul Macdonald and Hugh Smorffitt. Stuart was declared to be runner-up in accordance with a secret and as yet undisclosed formula.

The odd third block had further curiosities, resulting seemingly from the highly unusual first day substitution. Richard Hoskyns was the winner with 5 wins out of 6 with Jeremy Glyn runner up with 4, although both managed to lose to Pat Macdonald.

"All things seem possible in May" wrote Edwin Way Teale, but then I don't suppose he ever tried to run an "intensive" 8 round Swiss with 12 players simultaneously with an odd-numbered American block!

May is of course supposed to be a merry month, but my abiding impression of the tournament was the seriousness of the play. There were few attempts at the spectacular win (Lewis Palmer excepted) which is surely one of the attractive features of a tournament, even if the attempt fails. The Darling Buds at Hurlingham were not very daring, most players preferring to make sure of their win by solid, painstaking and often dull play. This, many people told me, was another effect of the handicapping system, which they said was taking some of the fun and joy out of tournament play. The system is certainly a fair and effective and one must be supported but, like many good medicines it is having unfortunate side effects and some consideration must surely be given to finding means to counteract these.

Inter-County Championships

1. Avon 10 wins. 2. Surrey, Essex 9 wins.
4. Middlesex, Suffolk 8 wins. 6. Dorset, Warwick 7 wins.
8. Bedford, Lancashire 6 wins.
10. Cheshire, Gloucester, Nottingham 4 wins. 13. Kent 3 wins.
14. Hampshire 2 wins. 15. Sussex 1 win. 16. Isle of Wight 0 wins.

Southwick Handicap w/e

23-25 April

1. Bill Arliss 8/8 2. Ted Robinson 6/7
- 3= Eileen Magee 5/7; Simon Tuke 6/9
- Nigel Gale 6/9; Martin Granger-Brown 4/5

Manager's "Fun" Cup: Cliff Jones

(For most elegant moustache, most elegant attire, completing the only TP, and playing the most games despite turning up at lunchtime on the first day).

Southport Handicap w/e

29-31 May Egyptian

- Winner: Paul Stephenson 8/8
Runner-up: John Wilkinson 6/8

Edgbaston Open w/e

12/13 June 1993

From quarter-finals

- K Carter bt Davis +8 +23; Gregory +11 +15; Ward +4
R Davis bt Taylor -16 +2 +2T; Granger Brown +4
H Taylor bt Lendum +12
A Gregory bt Bennett +24

Consolation: Egyptian
H Taylor 5/7

Sidmouth Tournament

7-11 June 1993

Block A (David Rawkins)

1. W H Arliss 7 wins
2. A Dustan Smith 6 wins

Block B (Fortfield Cup)

1. S Orr 5 wins

Block C (Dwerryhouse Cup)

1. R Henderson 6 wins (+48pts)
2. Mrs W H Arliss 6 6 wins (+15pts)

Newport Open w/e 22/23 May by Richard Hilditch

Windbreak grows a foot

The excellent facilities at Newport again attracted a full entry of players, some from far away. The lawns continue to improve, and now have reached test match standard, in addition the wind break has grown a further foot. The final was between Strat Liddard visiting from Parkstone and local Justin Goddard. Strat edged the first but Justin's steady play allowed him to come back and win the handsome trophy (photograph frame) for the first time. Meanwhile John Smith was proving stronger than his nominal 5 handicap in narrowly winning the swiss. Question for referees: When Jerry Guest played a croquet stroke with a rover ball from in contact with the peg (but away from it), was his ball pegged out?

From quarter-finals

J Goddard bt Liddard -3 +9 +17; Best +12; Gregory +17

S Liddard bt Smith +11; Steadman +10

R Best bt Burge +2

J Smith bt Hilditch +11

Consolation Swiss Event

1. J Smith (6/8); 2. J Guest (5/7)

Roehampton High Bisquers 30/31 May by Martin Pitt

Coin flies, Concorde can't!

Anyone disappointed at not being selected to crew on the British Steel Round the World Yacht race might well have chosen to play in the Roehampton High Bisquers Tournament as a consolation.

Not that the court surfaces were any different to the proverbial mill pond but the wind blowing across the lawns was very akin to the roaring forties. Even Concorde seemingly appeared to be struggling to reach touch down at Heathrow. In one game there were problems even before the start. A lady competitor unable to satisfactorily toss a coin, handed it to her opponent. With male chauvinism it was spun high in the air to be blown into the clubhouse gutter where it kept its secret as to who had won the toss. Once play got under way Paul Campion the manager ably assisted by Referee Paul MacDonald kept competitors from 7 clubs busy and very happy completing 6, 18 point games over the two days. Only brief timed visits to the elegant first floor buffet being allowed. Congratulations to Bronach Reid an up and coming 18 bisquer from Hurlingham who was presented with the glass trophy for winning all six of her games in a most enjoyable tournament.

1. Mrs B Reid (18) .6 wins
- 2= Mr M Pitt (12), Mr M Donelan (11)
- Mr M Burger (10), Mrs J Oades (12) 4 wins

"Croquet" magazine is looking for interesting photos to accompany tournament reports

Southwick's sixth High Bisquer tournament 8-10 June

Nervous laughter as Pat Asa-Thomas guided everyone around the little indiscretions she had observed

Once upon a time a young country-lad - let's call him David - set out with his brother to take part in his very first singles tournament.

He had some from the Medway Croquet Club. Medway? How did he spell it? And where did he play? He was disappointed to be asked this question, but he actually admits to playing at Snodhurst Bottom.

At 9.30 am David and everyone-else assembled for the briefing by Pat (they say she used to be a Headmistress) Shine, and some do's and don'ts from Pat Asa-Thomas - the Tournament Referee with Ron Smith. It soon became obvious that even if anyone wanted to, no-one would step out of line in this Tournament.

David's first game was against Margaret. Some-one said she was 76, but that did not seem possible. David won the first game - just. These eighteen point games can be very confusing.

Then came lunch. There was poached salmon, coronation chicken, lasagne, ham and melon, smoked mackerel salad, vegetarian nut roast, hot cheesy cottage pie served with vegetables (to name a few). Lots of puddings followed. Was the management being fair? 2 1/4hrs of decisions during the game, and then almost as long to make more decisions with the menu. Worst of all, no-one was allowed a couple of hours' kip in the afternoon before starting round two.

After lunch came Denise. It soon became obvious that David would be sitting on his chair for long periods and could catch up on some much needed rest. The management had got this wrong - fancy playing two long games of croquet on the hottest day of the year. Was the sun too hot for Denise or did she become tired as well? David won his second game.

Then came tea and cakes. David's wife considers David too over-weight to bake him any cakes. However she was 75 miles away, and David was anxious to appear appreciative to his hosts. Well done to Diana Brothers and her helpers, undoubtedly Southwick's most successful team. Do people come to Southwick just to play croquet?

Next day, everyone assembled at 9:30 am sharp (in truth very sharp). Nervous laughter as Pat Asa-Thomas guided everyone around

some of the little indiscretions she had observed the day before. Then the words which were now becoming familiar - "I shall ring the bell in five minutes". Scramble, scramble.

David's third game was against Peter (a local lad), probably with local knowledge. But what Peter did not know was that the black ball did not go through hoop 6. Peter used his strength and Pat brought another black ball, and all was well until we noticed three clips on peg and one on rover. Someone said "It's only a game", but it's much more when you are actually playing. David won by 3.

Then lunch and another menu!!! Also an even hotter day than the day before, this meant even more work for Hyacinth behind the bar. Beautiful Southwick, twelve wonderful lawns, (lovingly manicured by Enid and Diana), but no tree cover or shade on lawn 5. "I shall ring the bell in five minutes".

Each game was getting tougher. The game with Richard proved no exception. Do all players play their worst croquet when Pat A-T is lurking? Saved by the bell 2 1/2 hours later, David won.

More wonderful cakes, and slowly during the afternoon Pat Shine's dream came true. In organising her first Swiss Tournament, Red Block produced two winners of four games and Blue Block produced two winners of four games. Four semi-finalists will produce two winners of five games. This was a just reward for her organisational skills. Pat should have been asked when she began organising this Tournament - one guessed it was not the night before. Maybe her mind is already on 1994.

For those who had not had enough, there now emerged a One-ball tournament, organised by Len and Jean Nash from Crawley. This sounded like a recipe for disaster. David won his first game, but in the second game with his ball neatly near the peg waiting patiently to peg out, there were cries of "Let's get 'im". One had conjured up in one's mind beautiful pictures of croquet being played at Bath and Cheltenham in serene tranquil circumstances. "Let's get 'im" - indeed. (and get 'im they did). Len and Jean

produced three winners, first prize went to Ron Sheppard, second was Kathleen Clarke and third was Evelyn Watto.

Day three began with reports and threats of thunderstorms, but in humid conditions David's game against Norman began. Norman had been observed to have a very good run on the first day. Rumour was going around that he had run ten or eleven hoops. That did not really seem to be in the true spirit of the tournament at all!! But what was no so widely known was that he only beat Margaret by one hoop, the day before. David won his fifth game. This will be something to tell them back at Snodhurst Bottom. A torrential downpour literally 30 seconds before the final bell. The organisation was superb all the way through, but surely this must have been a coincidence.

Another fine lunch. The rain stopped. The sun came out. Lawn 1 was really steaming.

The final proved relaxing for most people. Many dozed. Some watched. Two had to play. David found his opponent was a gentleman whom he had known for over fifty years, in fact another member of Medway Croquet Club. Both players had their purple patches as well as their black patches. On their way home, both wished they had made fewer mistakes.



David Parkins (winner), Pat Shine, Ron Smith, Pat Asa-Thomas, Rodney Perkins (runner-up)

Presentations were duly made and many heartfelt thanks were recorded. Pat Shine had appeared cool, calm and in complete control until right at the end, when Richard started all the trouble. He asked if we could have another similar tournament in the early autumn. All forty of us were behind him.

Hunstanton over 50's tournament 11-13 June by Sarah G. Hampson

Sarah Hampson finds herself surrounded by 10 burly TV men

Twenty more mature players arrived in tropical sunshine to compete for the Jane Neville-Rolfe Salver, playing at the more leisurely pace of two games a day. Drizzle and a North wind changed the scene from shorts & shirts to the latest styles in wet weather gear on the following day. There is always a happy sea-side holiday atmosphere at these tournaments, and the competitors really enjoy their games. Winter work and plenty of rain have improved the lawns immensely, ironing out the bumps and hollows, they still play fast and the accurately set hoops caused several "blobs" in the early games. This year the

players were arranged in mixed ability blocks, with a play off for the final, the change of format was necessary as the manager was unable to be present for most of the first two days, channel 4 "Gardening Club" had elected to televise her garden for inclusion in their Friday night programme, just then. Mind you being surrounded by 10 - mostly bewhiskered and burly camera men, technicians, producers, advisers etc. etc. was huge fun, far more exciting than managing a tournament! Ron Gosden was left in charge as Deputy Manager, sadly he had to retire from playing due to a bad muscle strain.

Gillian Burgin using her bisques with common sense was the winner of A Block, and David Tutt stormed through B Block winning all his games +81 points. In the play-off, seemingly totally unruffled, Gillian played her normal game and built up a commanding lead, David didn't quite have the answer, but only lost by 9.

Those who wished, played a 1-ball American block in the evening, George Chamberlain really showed the audience how to run hoops, from any distance and almost impossible angles. He went home very pleased with his Hunstanton Silver (plated) Spoon.

Summer Thirst Quenchers from Angostura

Angostura is becoming a familiar name amongst the croquet cognoscenti, as this year sees the third term of Angostura's sponsorship of one of the most prestigious events of the croquet calendar - the Angostura British Masters, to be played at The Hurlingham Club in September this year. Many croquet enthusiasts will have already discovered the distinctive yet subtle flavour of Angostura in a wide range of fashionable, low alcohol drinks - perfect for quaffing during long hours of rigorous practice, or enjoying at more social occasions with friends. In fact, this year, Angostura is challenging barmen throughout the country to develop a series of new low alcohol drinks recipes - on a croquet theme - to promote this association with croquet and the Angostura British Masters. And, as people become more familiar with the contents of that quirky little bottle - with its black and white wrap around the label and yellow top - they are also discovering that Angostura's secret blend of over 20 herbs and spices is also a natural flavour enhancer for this season's sweet and savoury sorbets.

Why not try these suggestions for refreshing drinks and exotic sorbets and discover Angostura for yourself? And, if you would like further suggestions for sweet and savoury sorbets, sherbets and cordials, Angostura has produced a mouth-watering leaflet. If you would like a copy, simply send a s.a.e. to
AAB/CA, The Mailbox,
163 New Kings Road,
London SW10 0QD.



BITTERMINT JULEP

8 leaves garden mint, washed and crushed
1 large measure of lime cordial

The zest of 1/2 a lime
2 dashes of Angostura Aromatic Bitters
Soda water
Blended ice

Lime peel to garnish
Soak crushed mint, lime zest, lime cordial and Angostura Aromatic Bitters and leave for 1 hour. Strain, add crushed ice and top up with chilled soda water. Serve in a long stemmed glass garnished with lime peel.

CARIBBEAN SUNDOWNER

2 measures of cranberry juice

1 measure of orange juice
4-5 dashes of Angostura Aromatic Bitters
Ice

Fill a highball glass with ice and add the Angostura Aromatic Bitters. Pour in the cranberry juice and top up with orange juice. Garnish with orange peel and serve.

AROMATIC HONEY SHERBET

1 tbsp natural yoghurt
1 tbsp honey
Lemonade

3 dashes of Angostura Aromatic Bitters
Blend all the ingredients with ice and serve in a highball glass and sprinkle on a little cinnamon.

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

TOWNSEND CROQUET LIMITED

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

The CA Federations

What are they?

Regional organisations of The Croquet Association, formed from clubs in their geographical area and run by officers and a committee recruited from these clubs.

How many are there?

There are 9, corresponding to the Sports Council regions and in general covering counties listed.

What's their place in the C.A.?

The C.A. Development Committee is largely made up of a representative from each Federation, meets twice a year and reports direct to Council. There is an annual Federation Conference organised by the C.A. Within the next few years each Federation will have an elected representative on the C.A. Council.

What do they do?

- * Organise leagues and tournaments
- * Provide coaching
- * Provide equipment loan to new clubs
- * Issue Newsletters
- * Organise indoor winter events
- * Organise and coach Schools
- * Provide contact with the C.A. Council
- * Provide events for the W.I.
- * Provide Croquet Demonstrations and Talks
- * Help to form new clubs
- * Organise annual Club Conferences
- * Produce development plans for the region
- * Support clubs in the grant aid applications

How do you contact your local federation?

London and South East

- Greater London, Kent, Sussex and Surrey.
- Mr. R.A. Welch (0737 772889)

East Midlands

- Leicestershire, Nottinghamshire, Northamptonshire, Derbyshire and Lincolnshire.
- Mr. G. Norman (0530) 270826

West Midlands

- West Midlands, Herefordshire, Worcestershire, Shropshire, Staffordshire and Warwickshire.

- Mr. C. Bennett (021) 4140641

Yorkshire and Humberside

- Yorkshire and Humberside
- Mr. K. Smith (0924) 406495

South West

- Cornwall, Devon, Dorset, Somerset, Avon, Wiltshire and Gloucestershire

- Mr. F. I. Maughan (0242) 234737

North West

- Lancashire, Cheshire, Greater Manchester and Merseyside

- Mr. J. Hawkins (051) 7242140

East Anglian

- Essex, Suffolk, Cambridgeshire, Norfolk, Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire.

- Mrs. J. Anderson (0234) 781783

Croquet North

- Northumberland, Tyne and Wear, Durham, Cleveland and Cumbria.

- Mr. B.M. Rannie (091) 2529739

Southern

- Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Berkshire, Hampshire and Isle of Wight.

- Mr. R.J. Smith (0734) 478802