

... business as usual at the CA Office ... another Opens ... and a new name on the trophy ... Lords and Commons on the greensward ... and a princely visit ...

Summer routine has been the order of the day here at the CA Office with the emphasis on tournament documentation as the Season swings into full operation. There is a considerable amount of paperwork generated, both incoming and outgoing, concerned with the CA fixtures machinery which is, as with the overall general running of the Association, dependant on the goodwill and energy of a relatively few members who voluntarily take on the responsibilities demanded by a crowded Season.

One of the two top events in the calendar, the Opens, took place here at Hurlingham during July. The Club were, once again, generous in their gift of the nine courts given over to the CA for the best part of the week and our thanks go to Michael Henderson, Chairman of Hurlingham croquet, and his playing-members for their support for this venture. It is yesterday's news that Reg Bamford, the popular visitor from South Africa, acquitted himself like a true Champion to put an overseas name on the Coronation Gold Cup plinth. The "Old Firm"

of Messrs Clarke and Fulford retained the Doubles (which makes the inscribing easy - probably "Ditto" plus the year will do!). Both finals went to five games each - indicative of the fiercely competitive nature of the play.

Competitive croquet of a different sort was on view at Surbiton earlier in the month when the Lords and Commons clashed mallets during the morning followed by a 'Surbiton special' of a lunch magiced by Hazel Kittermaster & Co. A hugely enjoyable day cut short by the powers-that-be having to head for Westminster for 'Maastricht Wednesday'

voting.

Finally, to end on a high note. The CA Office was the scene of a brief call in by his Royal Highness, Prince Phillip on Friday, July 30, during his visit to Hurlingham on the occasion of the official opening of the newly finished health centre. During his informal walkabout he called in at the CA Office and spent five minutes chatting to Brian Mac and yours truly, picking up one of the mallets that Brian has on display. Brian is wondering if he can claim a Royal Warrant worded .. "As swung by HRH..."!!

Tony Antenen

CHILD'S PLAY



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MAGAZINE OCTOBER



Going for Gold

Maugham & Bamford battle for the Ranelagh gold cup at the British Open

ISSUE 229

£2.50

NEWS

Angostura British Masters Championship

The first Angostura Masters, being held at the Hurlingham Club as the magazine goes out, will be a ten person event. The competition, for the best players in the UK, consists of an all-play-all twice format.

South Africa's Reg Bamford (British Open Champion) and New Zealand's Aaron Westerby will be taking part, together with Robert Fulford, David Maugham, Stephen Mulliner, Chris Clarke, Colin Irwin, John Walters, Jeff Dawson and David Goacher.

Angostura British Masters Championship: Hurlingham Club, September 15th - 19th.

French Masterclass

Players in the first French Open Championship, to be held at Fontenay-le-Comte between 28th August - 4th September, may be in for a surprise. If they

are expecting to find lawns of a lesser quality than they are used to back home, think again! The six lawns at Fontenay-le-Comte are a lesson in what can be done. Still only 4 months old, the lawns consist of a smooth green grass laid on a pancake flat surface. Because of its youth, the surface is on the slow side but nevertheless ranks as one of the finest croquet arenas in the world.

Illustrative of the speed with which European croquet is now developing, observers will also be watching out for the performance of players from the 'new' countries. With events like the Coupes des Alpes, the French and Swiss in particular have quietly been widening the frontiers of international contact. Already this year the French team have visited Australia, Ireland and Scotland, backed by sponsorship

and solid support from French Government. Meanwhile their players visit England as individuals to play in tournaments (see later article on the Junior Championship). Four French players will compete in the Open: brothers Rodolphe & Boris Dourthe; Jean-Baptiste Grochain and Johann Ravez.

Women on the up

This year more women should play in the "Selection Events" than has been the case for 20 years. Often during that time not a single female has competed. In 1993 Debbie Cornelius, Gail Curry and Annabel McDiarmid should all be taking up the battle on behalf of their sex. Hoping to prove that croquet really is a sport that can be played by men and women on

equal terms!

Warmth for winter croquet

Readers who like to carry on their croquet late into the year (or indeed to start early) might like to bear in mind clothing made from what is heralded as "the warmest fabric in the world".

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croquet

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How can we expect to be taken seriously?

Although without a sponsor this year, the British Open Championship nevertheless attracted a reasonably satisfactory amount of publicity. Satisfactory that is in regards to quantity, rather less so with regard to tone! Perhaps it was ominous that the first article of the Opens was a full page in the Evening Standard, that left some croquet-watchers open-mouthed in disbelief. The journalist of this piece started out with a quest in search of croquet "groupies". Despite a chat with Robert Fulford (perhaps England's first real professional), she got little material - a request for only one signed photograph in his career. One of Hurlingham's most "eligible bachelors" however was able to cook up a more tempting dish - aided by some Swiss friends. Our reporter apparently swallowed the bait hook, line and sinker and, decorating with some tasty quotes from others, went to work. Unfortunately, one wonders whether the

joke is on croquet! The press are now creating an impression that the game is a bit silly - but fun - and its top players are all-too-serious young men who are rightly the subject of lampooning by other, older, players who may be less talented but don't care because, unlike their younger counterparts, they have a 'sense of perspective'!

A series of articles which left a slightly bitter taste in the mouth was rounded off by a piece in the Telegraph (usually a great supporter of the game thanks to Charles Randall) celebrating the fact that a non-Brit had won! Croquet's domination by the British was "unhealthy" and had made it boring, we learned. One wonders, were Britain to dominate rather than languish in other sports, whether the British press would change to this tune for those? Furthermore, South Africa's appealing Reg Bamford was a better ambassador for the sport than Robert Fulford, the article seemed to imply. Robert's infinite patience with his responsibilities to the media seem to count for little, like his talent - his shape, it seems, is the key issue! However the aim of this article is not press-

bashing, because I think we may have ourselves to blame. Have we sewn the seeds of bad press? I suspect that many croquet-supporting journalists are growing weary of the indifference which often seems to characterise the attitude of many croquet-folk to PR and development.

Before the inaugural event even takes place there is the suggestion to abandon the title of "British Masters Championship", which has been grafted onto the anonymous "Presidents Cup", and dump the "British" nomenclature from our "Open Championship". Both titles are inspired by a desire to be media and sponsor friendly; the latter change having been made in 1984 at the request of the Championship's first sponsor. Elsewhere I have seen the 1980's policy of encouraging new small clubs to start up described as mistaken: members of such clubs whom I have spoken to would politely dissent. Such members are often also some of the most enthusiastic supporters of croquet.

It has been suggested that the casual members, the ones who have a go occasionally or who tried and gave up, don't matter and that we

should not be concentrating our efforts on those likely to fall into this category. Unyet if we are to spread the croquet ethos these people are important and it is important that people feel they can try the game, and play as little or as much as they like, without commitment. The power of successful sports is that people are captivated by the skill of the best players in important events, while at the same time can have a go occasionally at their local public tennis courts, or football pitch, in their company cricket team or snooker hall. The current ambivalence to both ends of our game can only do long term damage.

The fear must be that there may even be players in the game of croquet who believe that it has little further development potential, and/or actively want that to be the case! They might be people who wish to remain bigish fishes in smallish ponds, or people who have a hazy romanticism about tradition and small-time sports. I don't believe that this is the case for any of our 'policy makers', but nevertheless we should take care not to aid such a point of view. Fortunately the fun, and indeed the

romance, of croquet is not as fragile as some may believe. And in final ironies, it is clubs like Budleigh Salterton (surely one of the keepers of the flame of "what we like about croquet") who have the faith and commitment to put heart and soul into endeavours like the attempt to stage a 1993 World Championship.

Croquet is a great game, and loved by those who play it. Therefore it will develop and flourish, despite its detractors - including any amongst us. However, it would be easier if detractors ceased detracting and we were able to proceed in a spirit of optimism. If we do not take ourselves seriously, how can we expect to be taken seriously?

Questionnaire

Thankyou to those who have replied to the questionnaire (some 200 readers). In the past couple of issues you will already have seen some of the comments taken on board. The questionnaires will next be processed and the results published in a future issue.

John Walters (Editor)

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CLUBS

Four new lawns under construction in the new Forest

Hamptworth Golf and Country Club, situated on the edge of the New Forest, is now placing the finishing touches to four new croquet lawns, which are being seeded this month.

Hamptworth croquet lawns will be adjacent to the championship-standard 18-hole golf course and practice facilities opening next spring. The area is renowned for its great beauty and it is the first time that four croquet lawns have been built in the area. The club believes that they may well be the first new lawns in England since the war and hopes to attract interest from both local and international

enthusiasts. For membership and booking enquiries, contact Hamptworth Golf and Country Club, Elmtree Farmhouse, Hamptworth Road, nr Landford, Wiltshire, SP5 2DU. Tel No 0794 390155.

The Townsend Award 1992/93

The Townsend Award, a cup presented by Townsend Croquet Ltd in 1987, is awarded each year to a club, less than five years old, that has made the greatest advancement in its development during the season.

The award for 1992 is to Belsay Hall Croquet Club in Northumberland. The club was founded in 1989 at a beautiful English Heritage property. It has two full-size courts and a membership of fifty,

over fifty percent of who are also CA members. The club competes in the Northern Federation league and the local Croquet North league and croquet has become one of the attractions of the venue for visitors from all over the world.

If you consider that your club should get this award for 1993 submit your application to the Croquet Association Development Committee through your local Federation before the end of this year. Previous winners have been: Pendle; Kingston Maurward, South Derbyshire and York.

Syd Jones, Development Committee Chairman.

Photo: David Price, Chairman of Belsay Hall Croquet Club trying out the Townsend mallet, given to the club this year as part of the award.



OBITUARY

Doreen Coghill

When a young club, like Northampton, gets going properly for the first time, it is greatly dependent upon the drive of a few key members to make it take off. May Jack, now emigrated to New Zealand, was the driving force who got the Northampton Club started and established, but when we moved to St Andrew's Hospital, we came to rely heavily upon Doreen Coghill who, as Secretary, threw herself into the necessary tasks for the development of the Club and its new facilities. She was always there with helpful suggestions; welcoming new members, providing teas for visiting clubs; helping to run various functions; organizing teams; postponing visits to hospital in order that she could be present at the Club's Annual Dinner & Prizegiving; and then, sadly for us, succumbing to the cancer which she had been fighting off as hard as she could -

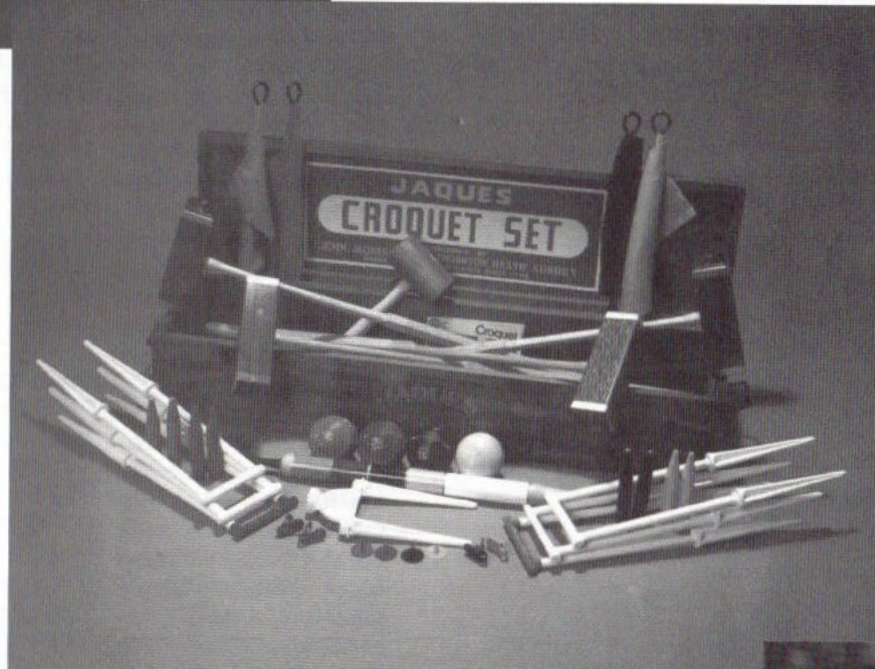
largely, it seemed, in order that she could play more croquet. She said to us, only a short time before her last bout of illness, that she intended to fill as much of her life as was left to her with as much enjoyment as possible, which largely consisted of enjoying croquet herself, and helping others to enjoy it.

Our Club is the richer for having known Doreen, and for having benefited from her enthusiasm. We intend to institute a tournament in her memory, which we hope will give the fun to our members that she would have wanted everyone to have, and that she worked so hard for us to achieve.



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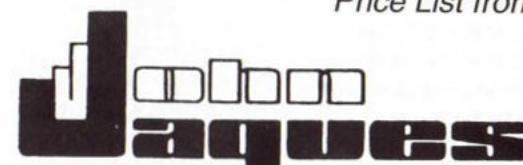
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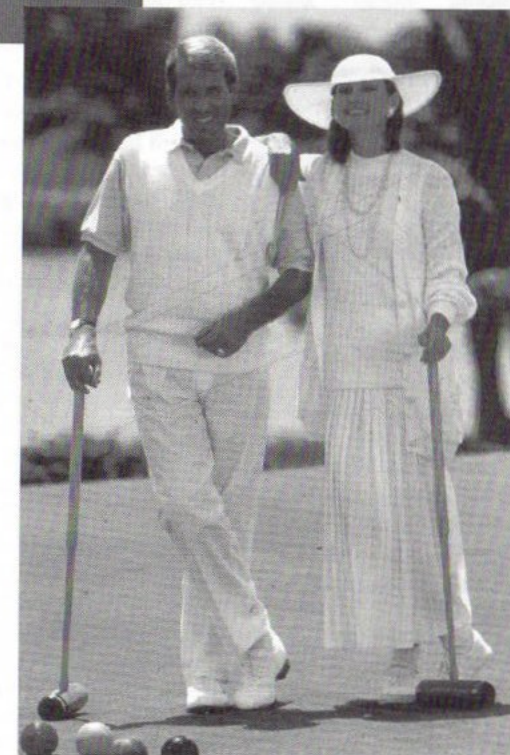
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DISAGREEMENTS

More variants for Advanced Handicap Croquet; Disagreements on handicapping; Croquet's self-image problem

Advanced Handicap Play

Dear Sir,
With reference to the recent correspondence about advanced handicap play, it seems to me that the use of normal bisques completely defeats the object of having lifts if the bisques can be used to circumvent the lift or contact.

In this club we have for some time played a game involving lifts and restricted bisques in which bisques can only be taken after a roquet has been made. This means that the high bisquer has to hit in first, and the tactics are thus identical with those of advanced play, the bisques equalising the ability to pick up a break or keep a break going, but not to destroy the opponent's lay-up. Needless to say the lifts and contact cannot be circumvented no matter how many bisques are taken.

Parkstone has this year adopted the game for the middle bisquer american block (handicaps 7 to 16) in the club tournament, and so far the reaction of the players, even those with the higher handicaps, seems to be favourable.

I must admit that I have always thought the present handicap game unsatisfactory when a large number of bisques are involved, and the 'lifts and restricted bisques' overcomes this. It also encourages the higher bisquer to use his bisques constructively when he does hit in.

Yours faithfully
Allen Parker

Dear John,
May I add a couple of questions to the lively debate about the variant of Croquet which is becoming more fashionable?

1. Who is the variant aimed at?



"I have always thought the present handicap game unsatisfactory when a large number of bisques are involved, and the 'lifts and restricted bisques' overcomes this"

2. Who is expected to win the majority of such games?

The reasons I ask these questions is as follows. In Scotland, the variant has been played quite successfully with a reasonably wide range of handicaps, but nobody has realised the effect of taking bisques between one-back and four-back, or after four-back. As a result, the matches have tended to favour the low bisquer, as the high bisquer has needed more bisques to control the leave, rather than using them to avoid giving a lift, and therefore has given more turns to the lower bisquer. With the loss of that penalty, the result would favour the high bisquer, as the low bisquer cannot usually win in two turns, which in a handicap game might be the case.

It seems usual also that the game is not aimed at the beginner, or even recently introduced player, unless of the bandit variety, as the complications of lifts and different leaves are too much.

So, if the idea is for equal chance of winning, i.e. handicap (and ten points on the AHS handicap card), the variant requires some adjustment to the laws. The variety assumed in Scotland favours the lower bisquer, the other (that the current interpretation requires) favours the higher bisquer.

If the idea, like in level play, is that one or other IS favoured, then some adjustment to the AHS points awarded, based on that likelihood, is required.

In either case, the variant is worth persevering with, as it brings a good introduction for "B" class and rapidly improving "C" class players to the advanced game, and the different approach required. However clarification is necessary before pontification can really

be justified. The assumption that the laws should not be changed is unsafe, for otherwise why do we have a Laws Committee?

Yours sincerely
Bruce M Rannie

Automatic Handicapping

Dear Sir
A number of years have passed since I last played tournament croquet regularly, for various reasons. I have only a hazy notion of the calculations of handicaps. But it does strike me that Audrey Howell (11) - I presume the number alludes to handicap rather than age, though croquet players are bred young these days! - has a point that the Chairman of the H.C.-O.C., Bill Lamb, does not adequately address in his comment.

As I recall, tournament handicappers or managers, when making recommendations at the end of the tournament, did take into account not only the number of wins and losses of an entrant under consideration but also the margin of points occurring within the wins and losses. It seems to be misleading, as I infer from Audrey Howell's letter, that gains and deductions of merit points, should be based exclusively upon game-result.

If players were placed in league tables, like clubs in football, obviously the players with maximum wins and losses would appear at the top and the foot of the table respectively.

More exactly analogous to handicapping are the football table columns of goals scored 'for' and 'against'. If handicaps are to be adjusted from one tournament to another, then accuracy requires that performances in previous tournaments should be taken into

consideration, or that handicaps should be reassessed once only, at the end of a season.

To take extreme examples: one player who had lost in the first round of every tournament in which he/she had entered, could have scored 25 points in each game played; another could have lost every game played in the season without scoring a point. Surely the former would merit consideration for a reduction in handicap nearly comparable to the increase due to the latter.

Accuracy of handicap-assessment depends furthermore on the number of events and tournaments a player enters in a given season. An incentive to tournament-playing could stem from a rule that requires a player, aspiring to make downward progress in his/her handicap, to participate in a minimum number of tournaments in a season.

To sum up: I suggest that each player should carry through a season accumulated points for and against, and that these, rather than wins and losses should take priority in the handicap assessment.

Yours faithfully
David Jesson-Dibley

Dear Sir,
Bill Lamb is sadly mistaken if he thinks that people do not give up playing in handicap tournaments because of the failures of the handicap system. I have, for one. I do not mind being beaten +26 by a better player - not that I have been - but I cannot stand losing +1 to a player to whom I have given a quiver-full of bisques. Handicaps are all very well for friendly play between two people who want to have an even competition, but in my opinion the better player should still always win; and the

handicap should only enable the weaker player to give the stronger player a game, not to beat him if both play to their strength. At the moment, the handicap system tends to mean that the weaker player wins if both play equally well. As for the chances of a minus player, they are not only really nil, they are theoretically nil. If the theory is that a six bisquer can get both balls round with six bisques, what chance has a minus player who is giving away more than the six that the six bisquer needs - and indeed, most six bisquers can get round with four. The only solution, in my opinion, is for play in groups: Group A is minus players; Group B is 0 to 3's; and so on; and you play level within your own category; and if you want to play in a higher category and get beaten regularly, that is up to you. You have to be given a handicap figure in order to decide which rank you play in, but you do not play handicap play, on the whole, once you have been given that figure. You can still have an automatic handicapping system, which moves you out of Grade 3 into Grade 2 - or out of the Fourth Division into the Premier Division, if you prefer it. Anyway, down with handicaps, I say.

Your faithfully
John Anstey

PS If you are going to have advanced play with handicaps, it makes an absolute farce to rule that a bisque can make a new turn. There is then no advanced play in it. Therefore, the rules must be re-written so as to make the opponent's last turn the one which counts, so that he gets his lift.

"We talk to them, invite them to have a go, then tell them of their nearest Club and we sincerely hope that some of you have got new members thanks to us 'wearing white'"



Mistaken Reports

Dear Editor,
Several croquet players have pointed out to me that there is a mistake in my report on last years SW Federation League Final match. I am sorry Cliff, your TP was not the first in a SW Federation match.

The first TP took place in the first ever SW Federation League Final at Bath in 1985 - the match between Bristol (the winners) and Nailsea. I was present and my husband, Donald (who read the report before I sent it to you) was the player who was peeled! It was a very thrilling doubles game, and vital for us to win to secure the whole match. John Mann and Michael Poole (Nailsea) were for Peg and Peg when John McCullough hit in and went all round doing a straight triple on Donald's ball.

Rosemary Gugan

Dear Sir
I am afraid I feel obliged to take up my pen and ask for the record to be set straight regarding my report of the Ryde Tournament which appeared in Issue 228 (August 1993) of 'Croquet'. In the third column, on page 20, there appeared a reference to Cliff Jones which read "...he committed what subsequently proved to be a slight tactical error by coaching one or two of the rest with a smoking revolver and limping on both feet..."!!! I don't wish to offend the proof-reader, but please!

What I actually wrote should have appeared thus: "...he committed what subsequently proved to be a slight tactical error by kindly coaching one or two of the rest of us and thereafter being unkindly beaten by one or two of the rest of us! (he was last seen

with a smoking revolver and limping on both feet...)"

I hope that you will see your way to printing this amendment, because while people are perfectly at liberty to think that I write rubbish, I would much prefer that it appeared as reasonably coherent and lucid rubbish!

Your faithfully
Deborah Latham

2nd Class Sport or 2nd Class Image

Dear Editor,
When the Uninitiated Passer-by (UP) watches a game of Croquet being played by people in their working clothes what can she/he think? "Oh yes, that is that vicious game normally played at the Vicarage" You can be doing all round breaks and TP's but it doesn't catch the eye or create an interest. Present the same game with participants dressed in white and the UP will stop and take notice. Look what it has done for Bowls! OK they have gone OTT with the women having to have "x" number of pleats in their skirts and club hats and the men having to wear long sleeved shirts with club ties and white caps. They look the part and people watch them! We are finding the same at Ramsgate. We are in a high profile position on the sea front, next door to the Bowling Club. So to keep "up with the Jones" we wear white at all times and consequently get a good number of spectators, mostly visitors to the Town. We talk to them, invite them to have a go, then tell them of their nearest Club and we sincerely hope that some of you have got new members thanks to us "wearing white". It's surprising too how it raises your game when

LETTERS

you have an audience. So come on you Croquet players let's improve the image, WEAR WHITE at all times, it can be worth at least TWO BISQUES!

*Yours sincerely
L.A.D. Hawkins*

August correspondents

Dear Editor,
Three comments, none of great substance, stemming from your August issue.

1. The answer to the question in the croquet Quiz "Which player had the lowest ever handicap?" appears or Humphrey Hicks (minus 5). In fact, around the end of the 1940's when he was bestriding the croquet world like a colossus his handicap was for a short time reduced to minus 5, a lowest limit of minus 5 being then imposed, a figure which has since undergone more than one change.

2. Still on the subject of Humphrey, I was startled to see among a handful of articles on tactics etc. one by Humphrey Hicks, with no indication to the reader that he had no longer been with us for a number of years, if only to remove doubts in some readers' minds that like Lazarus he had risen from the dead. The article itself appeared I believe in Croquet well over 30 years ago when I was Editor, but it retains its force today as when it was first in print.

3. John Hobbs, who expresses concern over ignorance on players' first names, should have perhaps taken up croquet, as I did, nearly half a century ago when first names were rarely heard, in common with the practice with many other games. Thus, one would expect a Manager to inform you - "Mr Townsend, you and Mr Reckitt will be playing

next on lawn 3 against Mr Cotter and Mr Solomon". Today's custom, in accordance with the spirit of the times, shows the pendulum in full swing. In croquet, the move was given stimulus by Bryan Lloyd-Pratt who never addressed anyone other than on first name terms.

I can recall two occasions when he suffered reproof, the first when he addressed Mrs Apps, the long-standing C A Secretary, as Lorn, and was told "I only permit close friends to address me in that manner Mr Lloyd-Pratt", while later, on enquiring of Captain Stoker, normally an affable man, "Do you mind if I call you Dacre?" received a curt reply "Yes".

*Yours sincerely
S. S. Townsend (aka Jim)
Westward Ho!*



"While this issue was a creditable attempt to embrace a wider audience, why was it not made more obvious? I could find no references on the inside pages and indeed no editorial!"

Dear John,
Issue 228 of 'Croquet' arrived through our letter boxes in Worthing over a period extending to some 10 days, when it became apparent that this was the promised special issue designed for more general readership - having even two pages devoted to golf croquet.

As chairman of a club with a majority playing Golf Croquet, I hope our members took the trouble to discover this fact and opened the pages where they might also have found a couple or so other features that made more interesting reading than usual.

While this issue was a creditable attempt to embrace a wider audience, why was it not made more obvious? I could find no references on the inside pages and indeed no editorial! I would suggest that the front cover could well have had "SPECIAL ISSUE" emblazoned across it. The only prior warning that I could find was hidden in two lines of Issue 227 which said that the affiliates' one copy would appear in July (not August).

While speaking on behalf of Golf Croquet players (over a thousand you have quoted) may I endorse the Golden Mallet competition not only for its progressive format which makes the game more sociable but also for its effective preclusion of Association players. This is the type of competition with which our members feel comfortable and happy as opposed to the "Golf Croquet Cups" supposedly designed for Golf Croquet players. Our members, in spite of exhortations from me and others resisted entry to this competition even at the modest fee of £5 and the convenience of having a venue scheduled at our own club.

How right they were! I understand that there

was only one application for entry in addition to the manager and that was from another class "A" player. There would have been no point and certainly no pleasure in them playing such expert players since handicapping, if employed, would do little to compensate for the differing styles and standard of play.

In future I would propose that entry restrictions similar to the Golden Mallet be placed on most Golf Croquet competitions to encourage the more competitive real Golf Croquet players to 'have a go' and that also a Regional format be employed to reduce travel.

Finally, back to 'Croquet' and its attempt for a more general appeal. Is it not feasible to limit tournament reports and readers' letters to say 500 words so that we may be spared the esoteric detail, flowery prose, irrelevant asides and attempted wit that several writers aspire to?

Issue 227 referred to this club as having re-registered with the CA in spite of having a majority solely playing Golf Croquet. I should point out that in previous years our CA registration has been costed at its fewer Association players and that this year we offered what we thought was a generous fee on the basis of value for money (for the CA that is) for our full membership.

This issue also contained a questionnaire. How much more appropriate it would have been to include this in the August issue with its vastly wider circulation. A real grass roots opinion of both magazine and the CA might then have emerged.

*Your sincerely
Bryan Teague
Chairman, Worthing
Croquet Club*

EASTERN CHAMPIONSHIP

A
Foreigner's
Perspective

By Aaron Westerby (NZ)

My first attempt at this report was unfortunately stolen along with the Toshiba laptop it was stored on...

TAKE II

Demanding conditions, a cosmopolitan entry and the end of Robert Fulford's amazing winning streak were the main features of the 1993 Eastern Championships.

The entry for the event promised much and was arguably the best ever entry for any regional championship. All sixteen competitors held minus handicaps with several other minus players on the waiting list! The four-man foreign contingent was made up of three South Africans - Reg Bamford, Dick LeMaitre and Wyand 'Vay-nent' Louw and the 'local' New Zealander Aaron Westerby.

The first round provided easy straight game wins for Fulford, Maugham, Walters, Clarke, Cornelius and Goacher. However both games on lawn four: Bamford v McDiarmid (who was a last minute replacement for Jerry Guest) and Day v Westerby were scrappy three-game all-day affairs.

The fourth seed Reg Bamford was struggling to come to terms with Annabel McDiarmid's unbelievable shooting. Annabel

won the first on time after being pegged out and had a good opportunity to seal the match in the second only needing to run a break from four-back to peg with all the balls, but she stuck in 4-back allowing Reg to take the game to a decider. Reg looked in control in the third but another Annabel hit-in allowed her to pegout Reg's forward ball. Annabel went on to win but not before giving Reg a number of 10 yard shots for the match.

Day pegged out Westerby's forward ball in the third, leaving the backward balls for hoops one and three respectively. Westerby made hoop three off the contact and followed this up by hitting corner to corner in the next turn and extracting a three ball break from a difficult position to win.

The quarters saw straight game victories for Fulford over Goacher and Westerby over McDiarmid. Maugham v Walters went to three with Maugham winning. Clarke beat Cornelius in what was one of the best matches of the Championship, Chris won the first +24, Debbie the second +26 and Chris +24TP in the decider, an excellent match considering the difficult conditions.

In the semis Fulford beat Maugham in two straight games while Clarke defeated Westerby in the third.

The Fulford/Clarke best-of-five-final

started with some nervous manoeuvring by both players but it was Chris who eventually took the first break to four back. Robert missed the lift but Chris failed to get his triple going by becoming hampered after hoop 1. From this point Robert took control of the game and two turns later had secured it with a triple. Chris was heard to mutter disparagingly 'that after all this time he had still not yet come to grips with the concept of winning the first game against Robert'.

Game two saw Robert first to four back followed by a TPO from Chris. Robert had numerous chances in the three ball game that followed but Chris in the end dealt the winning three ball break. Robert's loss brought to an end croquet's biggest unbeaten streak...43 games played on three continents spanning part of a MacRobertson Shield series, Sonoma, an Oregon Invitation, and the Eastern Championships.

Game three was a bit scrappy and at one stage all Chris need to do was to hold a four ball break to peg however he became hampered at 1-back and this allowed Robert to rescue the game.

The match and championship was won in the fourth game (and pouring rain) with a +26TP win to Robert.

The swiss was won by David Maugham.

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AROUND

... Loughborough Summer School ...
... Golden Mallet ... Essex Garden Croquet Championship ...

Loughborough Summer School 1994

We are considering repeating this year's Summer School course at Loughborough next April, and running an additional, more advanced course during the 1994 Loughborough Summer School in August.

The idea is that players who attend the first course can return to their clubs for four months practice, and then return to Loughborough if they so wish to take the more advanced course.

The new course will also give players who have already attended the existing Loughborough Summer School an opportunity to

extend their skills further.

A sizeable deposit is required by Loughborough University to book accommodation in April, and we are anxious to establish the feasibility of running such a course.

Anyone interested in attending is asked to contact Chris Hudson (0270-820296) who will be able to answer any queries on course content. Assuming sufficient players wish to attend to make the course viable, they will be asked to pay an initial non-returnable deposit before October to guarantee their place.

Loughborough Summer School 1993

The 1993 Summer School at Loughborough University was attended by 13 players, who were put through their paces by Chris Hudson and Ron Welch.

Several players were present for the second or third time. Handicaps ranged from 18 to 26. Audrey Burrell from the newly formed Blewbury Croquet Club was there for the first time together with Denis and Joan King from Scotland, Ros Pimlott from Bowdon, Melanie Pine from Hurlingham, Shelia Adams from Sidmouth and David Middleton from Harrogate.

Betty Potter and Pat Hammond from Leicester, and Joyce Adams and Miriam Reader from Tunbridge Wells were there for a repeat visit. Anthony Giraud and Heather Mallinson added a youthful element to the group.

The course ran along much the same format as the previous years, although the evaluations of stroke production on the first evening were in a more relaxed format. The course included a series of competitive games, opportunities for individual stroke clinics, and practice in setting up breaks and playing them with bisques.

The winners of the two competitions held during the course turned out to be the two youngest players. Heather Maillinson won the single ball event in a final against Shelia Adams, whilst Anthony Giraud beat Heather in the Short Croquet final.

prize. Both players will go forward to the National Final on Sunday, 26th September, at Solihull. In the progressive doubles, team gross points were Woodhall Spa 88, Sapcote 80, and Ashby 68.

The ladies of the Southwell club provided a magnificent tea after the event, and made the players most welcome. A day to remember!

Chris Hudson

The Essex Garden Croquet Championship

The finals of the Essex Garden Croquet Championship were played on Sunday 8th August at St Osyth Priory (photographed during play - top of page 11) by kind permission of the owner Mr Somerset de Chair.

Ten players reached the finals and played some scintillating croquet in glorious weather in the beautiful surroundings of the Priory. Split into two groups of five, the players played all the others in their group to determine the two who would play off for the Championship.

Play in the groups was very level with some close results and from the start it was not obvious who was going to be the eventual winner. Eventually Malcolm Daines won his block with three wins out of four losing only to Sheila Witts from Loughton. Andrew Hester won the other group on net points, his three wins out of four being matched by Roger Hilyer and Alan Witts.

The final between the two group winners, Malcolm and Andrew, was won by Andrew an Export Sales Director from West Mersea. Although Malcolm put up some spirited resistance, he was never in front and finally lost by five points after an hours play.

Andrew has been a garden croquet player for 30 years and was taught the game by a neighbour at the age of 15. He has his own lawn at home, and now goes forth to compete in the National Final of the Croquet Classic competition. Organised by The Croquet Association, this final brings together sixteen winners of group competitions around the country. The event will be held at Heathfield School, Ascot, on Saturday 25th September 1993.

Charles Townsend

... National Junior Championship ...
... Schools Level Championship ...

& ABOUT



The National Junior Championship



Back: Robert Owen; William Coleman; Martin Gay. Front: James Coleman; Othello Ravez; Johann Ravez; Ben Green

This year's Junior Championship was played at Bowdon, and 7 players including 2 French juniors, competed for the title.

The two French players, brothers Johann and Othello Ravez, were accompanied by their "manager", 20-year old Jean-Yves Guermont, who competed with the others in the handicap event for those knocked out of the Championship itself.

For Othello and Jean-Yves, it was their first experience of using bisques, and one of those joys of the tournament was seeing Othello come alive once he had mastered the art of taking bisques and started to win some games.

In the Championship, the cool play of Robert Owen was impressive. He never seemed to be disturbed by an opponent's lead, however long it was, and his semi-final match against Ben Green, the eventual Champion, was a case in point. Ben had tried a triple and failed, with Robert well behind. However, Robert persevered, slowly caught up, and eventually got in front. The situation was Robert on peg and penult with Ben on peg and 4-back.

Robert hit in, made penult and rover, and then missed the return roquet. Ben made 4-back and penult, overran his rover approach, and laid up on the boundary. Robert hit his lift shot, and pegged out one ball. Ben made rover, failed to get a good rush back to the peg, but then went on to peg out from 4 yards or so to win the game by a single point. It was a most exciting finish.

Johann Ravez was probably disappointed not to win a first round match, but he had his chances. Playing against Robert Owen, he was rover and rover against Robert's 4-back and 4-back. Johann failed rover, to see Robert catch him up and peg one of his balls out. Johann then played two marvellous shots. He made rover from one yard beyond the

peg, went off the South boundary, and then fired at the peg, just missing it by a whisker. Robert rushed into court, made rover, and rolled to the south boundary, with Johann's ball north of penult. Johann shot and missed, Robert rushed to peg and finished the game.

Without doubt, Ben Green was the best player there, and fully deserved to retain his title. His obvious disappointment when shots went slightly astray indicated a player who expected the best of himself at all times, and it will be interesting to watch his future progress.

Martin Gay from Woking had a disappointing tournament, Pendle's Coleman brothers' enthusiasm was a delight throughout, and an incredible hoop made by Othello will be remembered for some considerable time to come.

Draw

B Green bt J Coleman +12; Owen +1; O Ravez +19
J Coleman bt W Coleman +10
M Owen bt J Ravez +1
W Coleman bt M Gay +12

Process

B Green bt Owen +14; W Coleman +18
Owen bt J Coleman +9; M Gay +26
W R Coleman bt J Ravez +3
J Coleman bt O Ravez +16
1993 Junior Champion: Ben Green

Schools Level Championship at Bowdon



William Coleman lines up a peel

7th July 1993

A lower entry this year, unfortunately, but perhaps this was partly due to the state of the economy and the lack of a sponsor. Another factor was that some schools did not put themselves forward for the level event because they were in the process of re-building their teams. On top of this, many schools are finding it increasingly difficult to fit all their activities into the short summer term.

Nevertheless, it was a good final, in which Wolverhampton Grammar School retained their title against Queen Elizabeth's G.S., Blackburn. Both schools were able to field the

same team as last year, with the two Coleman brothers James and William, again playing 1 and 2 for QEGS, ably backed up by Findlay Colquhoun. Wolverhampton fielded Robert Owen, Mark Ellwell, and Richard Williams.

Within minutes of the start, both James Coleman and Mark Ellwood had made big breaks. James finished at penult, whilst Mark went on to Rover. James in particular was looking assured against Robert Owen. Playing with a lovely swing, it seemed he would finish under the hour when he started a four-ball break from hoop 1 with his second ball.

Half an hour later, James was on 3-back and penult, with Robert on 3 and rover. James set off on what looked like his final turn, only to find himself hampered on a roquet by the rover hoop. His subsequent miss let Robert in, and he went round with his second ball to win. One up to Wolverhampton.

Having got off to a good start against William Coleman, Mark Ellwell soon had his second ball round to 4-back. William fought back to reach 4-back and 4-back against rover and rover, but made no more hoops before Mark finished the game.

In the third game of the match, Richard Williams made a 9-hoop break with his first ball, and found himself on 2 and penult against Findlay's 3 and 5. Findlay was playing some nice accurate rushes across the lawn, and got round to 3-back with one ball. Richard missed his first attempt at pegging out with Findlay on 6 and penult. Findlay hit in, but 2 turns later it was all over.

Next year, Wolverhampton's team will be at University, but David Iddon, master-in-charge, has now ensured that croquet is included in the sports curriculum, and has one period a week devoted to it. Already the school's first and second year players are appearing at local clubs.

Elsewhere, at Nailsea and Taunton, for example, local club members are coaching at nearby schools, so hopefully next year will see more schools taking up the challenge. But, in the meantime, this year's final was an excellent example of how croquet should be played; a good sporting spirit, and a most friendly occasion.

by Chris Hudson

Wolverhampton G.S. beat Queen Elizabeth's G.S. (Blackburn) by 3 games to 0.

Scores (Wolverhampton names first)

Robert Owen beat James Coleman +4

Mark Ellwood beat William Coleman +8

Richard Williams beat Findlay Colquhoun +11

103rd

BRITISH OPEN championships

Hurlingham, 19th-26th July - Report by Robert

The New Era

For the first year in ten, the Opens had no sponsor, other than our host the Hurlingham Club. The onset of commercial sponsorship, Orwellian 1984, marked a New Era for the Opens in other ways. It saw the final appearance of Humphrey Hicks - 55 years after his first - and the last of Aspinall's 8 singles titles. Come on, Nigel! Prove me wrong. There were several promising teenaged newcomers: Kiley Jones (the first ever US player); D.N.S. Peterson (Plate and future Doubles finalist); J.O. Walters (future world champion) and R.L. Bamford (read on). It was the first Hurlingham Opens for Aiton, Gunasekera and Hilditch. 1984 was also the last unseeded year, though Richard's report hinted darkly at informal seeding. That report was the first for many years not to be composed by Dudley Hamilton-Miller, who died on the eve of the event. I start mine with a look at the New Era.

The management has changed little. In moving from Bond to Hilditch it is still in the capable grasp of late 1970s Oxbridge. Richard's main complaint was that those players with jobs are now too important to take whole days off to play. The years 1984-1986 had seen a concerted effort to improve and codify UK refereeing standards, prior to the MacRobertson Shield. New Championship Referees have since dwindled to a trickle. The only reluctant volunteer for Referee of the Tournament with its arduous early morning hoop duties, Bill Lamb, was oddly not qualified. One day he remarked: "My head fell off", perhaps referring to his mallet.

There were a couple more players than 1984's ration of 48. A third of that 48 entered this time too, a decade fatter, balder, more opinionated. Newcomers in 1993 were not as youthful, the one teenager outnumbered by the experienced Don Gaunt and Dick Le Maitre, with their matching styles. The top half dozen players may be younger now but the overall average age of about 37 is a couple of years higher. There was no Hicks or Bobby Wiggins though: Neal and Aspinall first appeared 27 years ago (in the week England won the World Cup). Murray's sweater was celebrating the 30th anniversary of its first visit to Hurlingham for the 1963 Varsity Match. For five of this year's

players - Goacher, Gregory, Lamb, Mrs. Ransom, Wiggins - 1984 was certainly the start of a new era: they joined the CA.

A decade of sponsorship allowed a quality game and quality products to lend each other lustre. The tangible benefits included a jolly stream of garb and trinkets for many players and overseas travel for a few. This time seven overseas players had paid their own fares here, not solely for croquet or course: Messrs. Bamford, Le Maitre and Louw from South Africa; Lowe and Westerby from New Zealand; Shipstone and Tavender from Australia. The last two had only one win between them all week, so soon joined the ranks (well, rank) of spectators. Among former competitors to watch fleetingly were Berry, Bond, Cousins, Hopewell, Peterson, Reynold, Stevens, D. Palmer, M. Saurin and E. Solomon, with lengthier visits from Anderson, Rees, Wheeler, Karmel and J. Solomon. Veronica Carlisle's absence most of the week detracted from the evenings. Wylie only came to see the openings and was delighted to see that the top players so rarely lay a tice.

Peeling

In his prize-giving speech John Solomon referred to the late 1970s and early 1980s as "the doldrums", hence his peeling trophy to encourage more exuberance. (Openshaw noted wryly that these doldrums were his most successful period.) There were half a dozen British players whose peaks, reached maybe once in 500 serious games over 15 years, were the odd sextuple or 3-ball triple. The number of players and frequency of peaks is no higher today, but they play three times as much. The rarity of such feats depends not only on the standard required but also on the decision to attempt them. This week nobody regarded the sextuple as a winning strategy, but the triple peel is a different matter. In 1984, with standard hoops, there were only 14 TPs. The year before, at sun-baked Cheltenham, Heap won the trophy for doing the only one. This week's total with narrower hoops was 78, accounting for 42% of games in the Singles, 31% in the Doubles and 21% in the Plate.

42% is exactly the same level as last year but it masks a significant dichotomy. In Sin-

gle won by the top six peelers the figure rises to 78%, whereas in other games it was "only" 19%, consistent with the Plate. David Maugham won the Solomon trophy, with 9 TPs in 11 singles games. Three were in one match, the second time he has done this in a best-of-3 (obviously with a losing TPO). Keith Aiton and Bob Jackson are the only other known cases. Triples are now such a standard part of winning strategy that the second tier figure of 19-21% (higher than achieved by the top tier in 1984) does not prove that standards have risen. Easy paced lawns also account for some of the increase - it rained every day and even the cricket field was placid - but I remember similar theories 10, 20 and even 30 years ago. The past is always less green.

Skill & Speed

At the very top, TPs are psychologically compulsory, their frequency swelled by TPOs. Clarke chose to TPO Lamb when it looked only slightly easier than tripling his own 4-back ball. The TPO is now thought so threatening that it is seldom rejected, hence all the talk of "3-back" leaves. Nevertheless, a successful TP in over three-quarters of the top games is not merely a matter of tactics, but also a tribute to the consistency of simple routine shots over long periods. Robert Fulford told me that the adrenalin from making even tiny errors restores his concentration and admitted to a high boredom threshold. 13-18 yard shooting has never been routine for most players, but has almost become so for those who have been able and willing to devote so much time to croquet at an age when people are always at their most accurate.

High standards of play can reduce analysis to identifying errors. Westerby, Walters, Burrridge and Dawson were all said to have been eliminated in matches where they made none. Naturally this critique can become somewhat subjective, especially if extended to tactical errors. Did Gunasekera make "a serious error" (as Aspinall claimed) in taking his first ball to 4-back against Fulford?

How erroneous was Maugham's long tice along Clarke's "flattest shot in the world" (West boundary of Lawn 2)? Defining an error as "putting down a break" (Test Team-speak for breaking down) can excuse any error before the first hoop, however easy the subsequent break would have been. Justin Goddard was honest enough to admit to four errors in one game: taking off a slow lawn three times and one air-shot.

The game remains too slow to intrigue each new journalist more than once (this week's was Clement Freud) but seems to present fewer managerial problems. No game went to time and Richard seldom had to lean on players to start games after 6pm. Best-of-5 finals would have been unthinkable in the Old Era. The Doubles were played as paltry single games until 1971. There are still some much cherished exceptions. Hungry Heap did not start one second game until 3pm (but atoned by winning the match in time for a 4 o'clock tea). Goacher's wins over Openshaw and Heap both went to three games, each a treat for the connoisseur, with an average margin of 6. In the first he produced "brainstorm of the week": not pegging out two balls which would have left him 8 hoops ahead in a 2-ball game. On Wednesday, Lamb played all Day.

Singles

The Championship started with possibly its lowest ever margin (Adrian Saurin beating Strat Liddiard +3 +1) but was soon in the grip of those who favour the widest margins. Choosing the seeds was not hard, though the British captain was paid the personal compliment of being unseeded. Only Walters and Goacher dropped games as all 8 reached the last 8 (Mulliner for the 13th year running, but then he's always running). Their advantage as seeds was magnified by giving them the easiest of all first round opponents: byes.

18 year-old Aaron Westerby uses an Irish grip modelled on Fulford's. He conceded only two hoops in his victories over Coles (last year's semifinalist) and Aspinall. In the quarterfinal he merely missed a few 18 yarders against clockwork Clarke, who won with two TPs for the third consecutive match. Aaron's current employer, John Walters, suffered narrow margins in games against Frances Ransom and Adrian Saurin, but won

comfortably in the third against Saurin and the first against Maugham. David's form remained thunderingly good, taking the second two +26TP. His scrappiness is often rescued by the Solomon-grip smoothness of his long mallet. Clarke took the first game in their semifinal +26, despite missing a 4-yarder after hoop 2 and making a shabby second break. Chris's mistakes around hoop three (a misapproach and a 4-yard miss) allowed Maugham to win the next two games, after being TPO'd in the middle one.

Fulford had been pegged out by Gunasekera, but promptly went out from a second and fourth corner leave, to extend his winning streaks to 37 matches and 20 best-of-3. His quarterfinal started with a seventh turn TP by Bamford. In the second game Bamford pegged two balls out, leaving himself on 2-back and Fulford on 1. The tussle that followed was reminiscent of Aspinall's famous 1986 victory from 3 versus Hogan's 3-back. Bamford wallowed (Liz Neal's word), starting too defensively and then leaving Fulford six attractive shots, half of which he hit to win +2. A 5-yard miss by Fulford was the error which broke his winning streak, allowing Bamford to take the third game +26TP.

Old-fashioned Mulliner used the New Standard Leave in his quarterfinal. Younger experts usually prefer the diagonal spread refinement of the Old Standard Leave, unless they want to force one ball to play. Fluent TPs followed in both games until the final rush to peg landed in rover, allowing the steady Goacher some play. The first game of the semifinal was one of Mulliner's least impressive: he struggled to take a ball round, fluffed the leave, failed to punish a 9-yard Bamford miss by missing from even closer, and won +26TP. Bamford had seemed taut and tentative but this wore off over the next two, which he took +17TP, +26TP.

The Championship Final

Fulford, Clarke and Maugham have won the President's Cup, but just as the mid-60s cluster of young stars (Bolton, Ormerod, Wylie, Aspinall) found it easier to prise the Cup from Solomon than the Championship - which Mulliner and Prichard also took 7 and 8 years longer to win - Fulford was the only New Era player to have won the Championship. (Avery dates well back into the

"doldrums".) The Bamford-Maugham final guaranteed another. It was their third recent clash, Bamford being the victor in both the Men's and at Sonoma in California. Played alongside the resumed Doubles final, it provided a rich feast for the thin crowd.

In the first game Bamford misapproached hoop two, thus reprieving a 2-yard miss by Maugham, who won +25TP. The next game was the reverse: Bamford was hoop-bound after three, but Maugham missed a 3-yarder to lose by 26TP. He nearly hit in by jumping over a hoop but then entered a strangely soggy phase. In a nervy third game for both, he failed at both 1 and 2-back to lose by 19. He was no better after lunch. He hit a 20-yard "last shot" but was let down by his hoop approaches and one wild miscue. However Bamford also conceded several chances. Hitting half a ball at 8 yards restored Maugham's confidence and he won with one of the fastest TPs of the week. In a clinical deciding game, Bamford went round on the fifth turn and a 3-foot rover peel was the only worrying moment. Reggie was a thoroughly worthy champion. On the court his easy rhythm and simple mallet (a much doctored early Neal) were reminiscent of Aspinall at his best. Off the court his easy manner made him a charming ambassador for his troubled country.

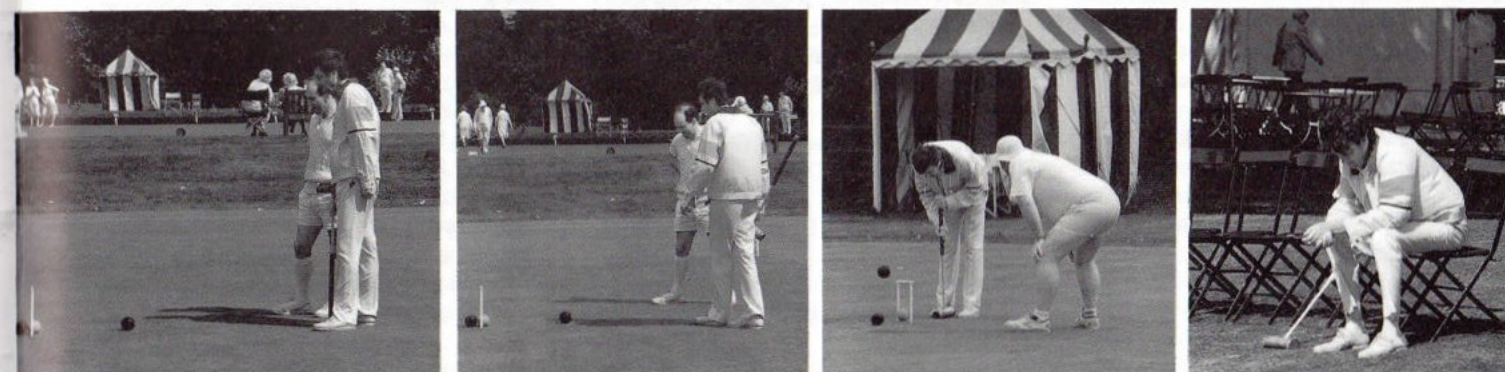
Doubles

Three of the four Doubles seeds reached the semifinals. A near upset was Clarke & Fulford beating Aiton & Maugham (respectively wearing Beauty & the Beast shirts) by only +6-3+10. The seeds to fail were Walters and his new partner Saurin, against Goddard & Day. Their middle game was a comedy of errors. After Walters had been "tripled" out in three separate turns - one by his partner - a protracted 3-baller ensued. Goddard & Day thought for 3 minutes each turn and reached some rather soft-boiled decisions, with especially poor use of wiring. Saurin punished this with his shooting but hooped poorly to lose by 1. The Cambridge pair had earlier staged "recovery of the week" against Heap & Goacher, resuming a pegged down game at 1 & 2 versus peg & peg to win +2 (TP by Goddard) with five minutes left. They were scratched from last year's semi-final by Paul's broken leg, and dispatched this year by fulgent Fulford triples.



Reg Bamford:
1993 British
Open
Champion

A poser for Nigel Aspinall during the final of the 1993 Doubles Championship (with Stephen Mulliner): The problem; The solution; The shot; The outcome.



The old firm of Aspinall & Mulliner conceded only four hoops in six games, after first dropping a game to Avery & Cornelius, when Steve stuck in the deadly but invisible rabbit-run in hoop 6 on lawn 6. A typical pattern was for Mulliner to tear round to 4-back, leaving Aspinall a TP, three of which he completed. Against Bamford & Westerby, the latter was faulted on what proved to be their only roquet of the match.

As the final contained neither singles finalist it could be played for the first time as a best-of-5, starting on Saturday afternoon. Clarke & Fulford did not take croquet in the first game, but Clarke followed a 30-yard hit with a TP in the second. Nigel had announced after pre-tournament practice "I have discovered how to run hoops", which was true until the third game. Fulford spotted the relapse and insisted on TPOing Mulliner with Aspinall on 2-back. Mulliner then went home for the night and Aspinall pounced, putting them a game ahead. The match resumed next day with two rather flawed games. In the first, Aspinall's TP was sabotaged by a cunning plan to nudge the peelee out of penultimate. Fulford again ejected Mulliner with Aspinall on 2-back, this time with success. An hour's cat and mouse tempted Nigel to try a 12 yard 4-back, a distance he had not practised. The fifth game was uncharacteristic: Fulford misapproached first and Clarke only managed one peel in a

break to the peg; but Mulliner's 18-yard shooting was not good enough to wrest the "two tubby porringers" (John Solomon's words) away from the defending champions.

Doubles is all about relationships and the following were overheard. Burge to Murray: "Good morning". Murray to Burge: "Who are you?". Burge to Murray: "Your doubles partner". Clarke about Fulford: "When is he going to learn how to play doubles again, like he does in singles?". X about his partner: "I hate him".

The Association Plate

Much variety was provided by the 57 games in the Plate, by far the largest of the few Draw & Process events left in the calendar. The players who looked strongest were Dawson (with his elegant swing), Burridge (without one), and Wiggins (stooping to conquer). Dawson's route to the final included +1 over Debbie Cornelius, after she rushed onto the peg from near a corner. Wiggins' included a winning break from the TPO contact leave against Aiton and a seventh turn triple against George Noble. In an earlier match, Noble had made the "shot of the week": a long penultimate peel that landed a foot in front of rover. An uneventful all-Woking final went to Wiggins, following his father's win in 1969.

The Family

Thus the Plate winner and both finalists in the Singles were sons of croquet players. The croquet world is itself a family, with all its comfortable routine, sibling rivalry, private jokes, silly squabbles, lasting loyalties, bonny babes and grumpy uncles. The New Era has strengthened our links with overseas cousins. With Fulford and Maugham holding the New Zealand and Australian titles, all three major croquet nations now have their Championships held by foreigners. With poorer prospects for sponsored travel, we may have to concentrate on nurturing the British club circuit, to rejuvenate and improve the broader game, as the New Era has done at the very top.

Championship finals in the New Era :

- 84 Aspinall bt Mulliner
- 85 Openshaw bt W.Prichard
- 86 Hogan bt Jackson
- 87 Avery bt Mulliner
- 88 Mulliner bt Aspinall
- 89 Hogan bt Avery
- 90 Mulliner bt Fulford
- 91 Fulford bt Clarke
- 92 Fulford bt Mulliner
- 93 Bamford bt Maugham

SINGLES

- Winner: R L Bamford** (=5 Seed) bt Maugham -25TP +26TP +19 -11TP +26TP; Mulliner -26TP +17TP +26TP; Fulford +26TP -2 +26TP; Williams +18STP +20TP; Gregory +23 +11
- Runner-up**
D B Maugham (=1 Seed) bt Clarke -26 +12OTP +23TP; Walters -17TP +26TP +26TP; Comish +25TP +13TPO; Cornelius +17TP -14OTP +26TP
- Semi-Finalists**
S N Mulliner (=3 Seed) bt Goacher +26TP +12; Browne +17 +24; Goddard +6 +13TPO
C D Clarke (=3 Seed) bt Westerby +17TP +26TP; Lamb +17TPO +24TP; R Ransom +25TP +26TP
- Quarter-Finalists**
R I Fulford (=1 Seed) bt Gunasekera +11TPO +12; Dawson +26TP +15TP
J O Walters (=5 Seed) bt Saurin +3 -26TP +25; F Ransom +23 +4
D Goacher bt Heap +4 -12 +8; Openshaw -2 +3TP +10
A Westerby (=5 Seed) bt Aspinall +25TP +26TP; Coles +26 +25TP
- Last 16 Players**
C N Williams bt Avery -21 +14 +15; Tavender +3 +23
S Comish bt Burridge +17 +26TP; Magee +16TP +26TP
T N Browne bt Hector +26 -16 +2
W E Lamb bt Day -4 +11 +3; Lowe +14 +15
D L Gunasekera bt Noble -26TP +16 +7; Shipton +23 +24TP
A D Saurin bt Murray -17 +12 +19; Liddiard +3 +1
M E W Heap bt Haggerston +5 +26TP; Gaunt -17 +7TP +17
G N Aspinall bt Wiggins -18 +17TP +25; Louw +12 +8
M Avery bt Mrozinski -16 +26 +12
D Cornelius bt Brown +15 -26 +19
I Burridge bt Aiton +15 +9TP
J D Hector bt Burge +25STP +20
P Day bt Le Maitre +13 +21TP

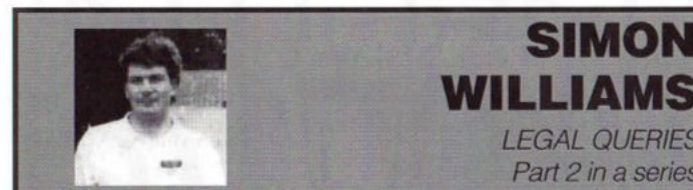
J P Dawson

- bt Guest +5 +17
- G W Noble** bt Vincent +10 +18
- D K Openshaw** (=5 Seed) bt Tuke +26 +23
- Other match winners**
M J Haggerston bt Neal +17 +13
D C D Wiggins bt Jones +26TP +11
W T Coles bt Llewellyn-Williams +17 +14
- PLATE**
Draw
Winner: J Dawson bt Burridge +17; Ransom +20; Cornelius +1; Murray +17
Runner-up
I Burridge bt Liddiard +14; Magee +24TP; Tuke +26TP; Wiggins +12
- Semi-Finalists**
R Ransom bt Aiton +2; Hector +25; Vicent +15
S Liddiard bt Haggerston +4; Gaunt +4; Noble +22TP
- Quarter-Finalists**
D Cornelius bt Gregory +25TP
D Magee bt Lowe +5; Hilditch +12
K Aiton bt Louw +3; Brown +12
Haggerston bt Shipston +17; F Ransom +11
- Other Match Winners**
M Murray bt Tavender +23; **A Gregory** bt Guest +24;
S Tuke bt Burge +19; **R Lowe** bt Le Maitre +19
J Hector bt Jones +25; **W Louw** bt Mrozinski +15
D Gaunt bt Llewellyn-Williams +20
- Process**
Winner: D Wiggins bt Dawson +22TP; Gregory +15; Noble +26TP; Aiton +14OTP
- Runner-up**
J Dawson bt Louw +22TP; Burridge +24; Liddiard +10
- Semi-Finalists**
A Gregory bt Lowe +25TP; Haggerston +8; Burge +13
W Louw bt Vincent +3; Guest +16; F Ransom +16TP
- Quarter-Finalists**
G Noble bt Hilditch +25TP; Hector +17TP

I Burridge

- bt Brown +10; Cornelius +25
- R Lowe** bt R Ransom +7; Tavender +12
- I Vincent** bt Murray +9; Gaunt +6
- Other Match Winners**
S Liddiard bt Jones +10; **R Brown** bt Shipston +25
M Haggerston bt Mrozinski +18; **R Ransom** bt Llewellyn-Williams +6; **J Guest** bt Tuke +23;
M Murray bt Le Maitre +3
Play-off: D Wiggins bt J Dawson +13
- DOUBLES**
Winners: R Fulford & C Clarke bt Aspinall & Mulliner +26 +13TP -10OTP +4 +24; Day & Goddard +17TP +24TP; Brown & Lowe +26 +26TP; Aiton & Maugham +6 -3 +10
- Runners-up**
Aspinall & Mulliner bt Bamford & Westerby +26 +26TP; Burridge & Comish +22 +8TP; Avery & Cornelius -16 +26TP +16TP
- Semi-Finalists**
Day & Goddard bt Saurin & Walters -13TP +1 +3; Goacher & Heap -4 +15 +2TP; Guest & Neal +14 +10
Bamford & Westerby bt Dawson & Wiggins +5TP +23; Ransom & Ransom +21 +26TP
- Quarter-Finalists**
Brown & Lowe bt Lamb & Tavender -14 +12 +23
Saurin & Walters bt Coles & Gunasekera +15TP; +21
Burridge & Comish bt Le Maitre & Louw +24 -19 +23TP; Liddiard & Williams +18 +18
Dawson & Wiggins bt Noble & Vincent +18 -23 +4; Gregory & Jones +26 +23TP
- Other Match Winners**
Lamb & Tavender bt Burge & Murray +25 +25
Le Maitre & Louw bt Llewellyn-Williams & Tuke +4 +4
Goacher & Heap bt Browne & Hector -26 +17 +6
Noble & Vincent bt Hilditch & Mrozinski +5 +22TP

JOHN SOLOMON Peeling Trophy: David Maugham



SIMON WILLIAMS
LEGAL QUERIES
Part 2 in a series

ADVENTURES OF PEGGED OUT BALLS

Law 15(d), as amended in the 5th Edition, is nonsense. It is meant to imply that a pegged-out ball cannot cause other balls to score points, but it actually says, "may not". The drafters of the amendment did not twig to the fact that a ball is inanimate, and cannot be forbidden from doing things. "May not" has a quite different meaning when it applies to a person. They might as well say, "My ball may not miss" or "...may not roll over the boundary." Of course it may not do these things, but equally it may!

Anyway, if a ball pegged out remains a ball in play, why on earth should it not be allowed to cause another ball to score a point? Let's set the scene. A pegged-out ball causing another ball to score a hoop point would be such a fluke that it is not worth worrying about, but as it is still perfectly feasible for the pegged-out ball to prevent another ball from subsequently scoring a hoop point, why go to lengths to exclude the reverse possibility? Much more likely is the case of the ball pegged out with a jump shot falling on another Rover ball close to the peg and causing this to hit the peg.

I can only think of one reason justifying the change, but I do not think it is the same one that motivated the changers. Since 1986, it has not been a fault to double-tap if the second contact is "...caused by making a roquet or by pegging out the striker's ball...". Thus it would be possible, having over-jumped the ball in a close half-jump pegout attempt, to hit one's ball again, causing it to hit the other ball against the peg. This particular case would seem to be very unfair, or clever, depending on one's attitude; but even if it appears to be unfair, is there a good legal reason for outlawing it? Remember that under the Hoop & Roquet Law [Law 17], one can score a hoop point by striking the striker's ball a second time, it having hit another ball clear of the hoop on the far side and bounced back onto the mallet. Provided that the striker's ball then completes the running of the hoop, it is deemed to have scored the hoop and made a roquet in that order, so the second hit was "caused by making a roquet", and is perfectly legal! One can argue that the pegout case I described above is similar, but the tender-hearted might protest that it would be dubious to decide the outcome of the whole game in such ambiguous circumstances.

The amendment flies in the face of three established tenets of the laws: (a) The principle that refereeing decisions based on split-second observation of two moving balls are to be minimised. In the same batch of amendments in 1989, both Law 16(b)(4) and Law 17 were amended specifically to achieve this end, so why gratuitously create some new tricky rulings?

(b) The principle that any ball moved by play is a ball in play, at least until the end of the stroke, or unless it quits the court. It has always been acknowledged that this principle is one that allows several characteristic manoeuvres (called 'technical adjustments' or just 'technical') which help to give Association Croquet its particular flavour, and its appeal to the skilful and innovative player. Is it not contrary to the spirit of the game to alter the Laws so as to reduce the scope of these attractive and logical features?

(c) The purpose of the Laws in controlling the game as it is played. The Laws Committee of the English C.A., in proposing this amendment, stated that "Law 15(d) was felt to be unsatisfactory in that points could be scored by a pegged-out ball after the game had effectively ended." What is the point of legislating for situations that arise after the game has effectively ended? This is not the department of the Laws but of the Regulations. If it was felt that such extra points would affect the result of time-limited games or of American or Swiss Events (and I am speaking of format here, not nationality), it is for the Regulations governing these [Reg. 13,15 & 16] to be altered rather than the Laws. As it is, the amendment not only disposes of any (unlikely) problems that might have been seen in these matters, but also affects many cases where the game has not effectively ended, thus causing unforeseen mischief far beyond the published intentions of the Laws Committee.

Arising from (b), I wonder how many other people consider it anomalous that there is no penalty when a pegged-out croqueted ball is sent off the court. Why exactly should the turn not end to reward this particular example of Gorilla-mimicry? After all, if a peeled ball goes off, it is end of turn.



STEPHEN MULLINER
GRADING SYSTEMS
A 2 part series by CA Grading Officer

2. THE 'CGS' IN DETAIL

Having examined two alternative systems, I ended part one of this article by giving the formula used by the CGS to increase or decrease a player's index in the CGS.

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

The results of this formula can be expressed in tabular form:

I _w -I _L	K = 4				K = 5				K = 6			
	INC	INC	INC	P _(W)	INC	INC	INC	P _(W)	INC	INC	INC	P _(W)
100	0.04	0.05	0.06	0.99	0	2.00	2.50	3.00	0.50			
50	0.36	0.45	0.55	0.91	-5	2.23	2.79	3.34	0.44			
40	0.55	0.68	0.82	0.86	-10	2.45	3.07	3.68	0.39			
30	0.80	1.00	1.20	0.80	-20	2.86	3.58	4.29	0.28			
20	1.14	1.42	1.71	0.72	-30	3.20	4.00	4.80	0.20			
10	1.55	1.93	2.32	0.61	-40	3.45	4.32	5.18	0.14			
5	1.77	2.21	2.66	0.56	-50	3.64	4.55	5.45	0.09			
					-100	3.96	4.95	5.94	0.01			

The column headed P(W) sets out the probabilities that the player with the higher index will win. Thus, if A, 130, plays B, 100, the theoretical probability that A will beat B is 80% (or 4 to 1 on). The probability that B will beat A is therefore 20% (or 4 to 1 against).

(3) The CGS is an objective system. Initial indices are estimated by reference to handicaps and estimates of relative strength given by reliable judges. Performance over the first 15 to 25 games is monitored to check the reasonableness of the initial estimate and adjustments are made in a few cases. Once a player has entered the system, his or her index is affected only by results. The principal administrative problem lies in ensuring that all relevant data has been collected. The advent of automatic handicapping and the carrying of record cards may help in this regard. Players will be encouraged to send photocopies of their cards to the Grading Officer to ensure that all relevant games are included.

(4) Some believe that the CGS is too volatile to provide a reliable "championship" ranking list or to determine with reliability who is ranked first. In fact, the CGS is adjustable and can produce ranking lists with different characteristics. The present ranking list is based on grades which are calculated after each game as follows:

$$G_n = (1 - Y) \times G_{n-1} + Y \times I_n \quad [2]$$

where Y is set to 0.1.

To produce a "championship" ranking list, Y could be reduced to 0.05 and certain weaker events (such as plate events) could be ignored completely.

(5) It is worth recording that I have conducted extensive experiments with these and other ideas (such as increasing K in equation [1] for certain prestigious events) and found that they produce lists that were very similar to those produced by the existing parameters. At the end of the day, all that really matters is how well you do against which opponents. The determination of the No. 1 position will often be controversial. It is commonplace for strong subjective opinions to lead to selective treatment of the evidence, namely the remembering of data consistent with the opinion and the dismissal of inconsistent data. A merit of an objective system is that all data is used impartially.

(6) The role of the CGS in selection for events and teams should be clearly understood. Its primary purpose is to ensure the selectors know which players are within the "selection envelope" for any given purpose. Such selection envelopes are large enough to ensure that every player with a remote but credible claim is included. The CGS then ensures that all relevant data is considered by providing individual records for each player within the envelope. Once that stage has been reached the selectors' subjective judgement takes over. Grade differences are noted if they exceed 5 but even these have only a marginal influence on evaluations for the President's Cup and international selections. Selections for the lower Eights make greater use of grade differences to choose between players.

BAS croquet

in **BALLS** By R Le Maitre (SA)

The problem of bias (as in bowls) and croquet has recently woken us up down here at the bottom end of the World. Early tests conducted on a billiard table soon dispelled the idea that bias is a myth in croquet. The noticeable 'draw' (lateral motion) on the fine green baize prompted a more careful examination with a view to ultimate testing on grass. The billiard table results are shown on diagram 'A', and show only the path of the last few rolls of the ball, because the distance (billiard table) was short. Bias always takes its maximum tool at the end of a run.

To determine static imbalance, over 60 spun-cast and solid moulded balls were tested in a strong brine solution. The spun-cast balls floated at a near constant depth, being weighed on a scale during manufacture. Variations were found in the solid balls, one of which refused to float at all. Curiously enough it was not undersized, and at 470.2gm only marginally overweight. The specifications for both bowls and croquet balls allow for a considerable latitude in density.

The more unbalanced balls would quickly float with their light side up, and rock or oscillate quite rapidly when disturbed. Two balls were chosen because they had zero imbalance, floating without rolling from any position they were placed in, with nothing but a few dynes of surface tension to stop them. Perhaps a little detergent might have shown up half a gram of imbalance, but these two, both spun-cast, were taken as controls for the tests. Amongst the spun-cast, the greatest imbalance found was 1.7gm, and among the solid balls the variation went to over 5gm. This is understandable, since the spun-cast balls with their pea-sized central space need only to be spun reasonably fast to ensure near-perfect balance.

The mathematical analysis of the whole motion of a wood rolling on a green takes a trigonometric exponential form, with variables and partials. The closest analogy is to be found in the rolling of a coin on edge, and this case is dealt with by Leonard Meirovitch in his book, 'Methods of Analytical Dynamics', published by McGraw Hill. The round croquet ball and the spheroidal wood make for a more difficult analysis.

During the run of a wood there is first of all an immediate stabilising effect due to gyroscopic action, causing the wood to rotate about the axis of the maximum moment of inertia, that is the axis of which the bias

centre forms one pole. This happens after the first few metres of a 30 metre jack. The gyroscopic stabilisation equations of motion are non-linear, and result in the wood losing its initial launch-wobble from almost any offset of the axis of bias: such a shot is used in bowls, and is called a 'narrow' shot. After correction the wood resumes its trajectory on full bias with the little spot mark of the bias centre rotating without further wobble.

Next comes the main part of the trajectory under stable but biased conditions, and finally the mathematically horrible demise of stability at the end which mirrors the initial stabilisation only irregularly.

Back to the testing of croquet balls on a bowling green. The Somerset West Country Club bowlers were good enough to lend one of their greens for the purpose through the kindness of their president Mr George M. Simpson, who also lent one of his own woods for the 16 metre test runs. Our thanks are hereby recorded in appreciation of his help in this investigation. Diagram 'B' shows all the relevant results of the bowling green test, the ball positions being given by sets of co-ordinates from the start point as origin: the biased ball was run with the bias on to the left as well as to the right, shown by the two curved paths.

In each case the croquet ball was ramp-launched from the same position on the same double-track rail, thus as near as possible with constant initial velocity, as well as from the same spot. The bias chosen was 5gm, equal to just under a fifth of an ounce, about 1 per cent of the mass of the ball.

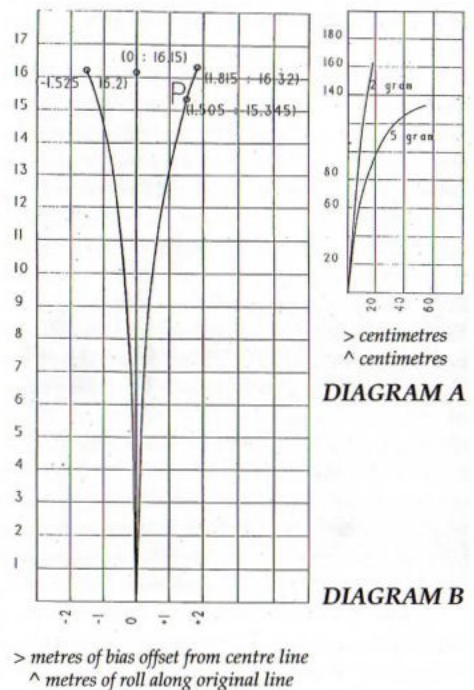
More than ten runs were made under each of the chosen conditions, to rule out gross experimental error. It was found that the arithmetic mean distance travelled by the unbiased ball along the Y axis was 16.2 metres, while the variation in length was ± 63 cm from the mathematical centre, giving a total variation of 126cm in 1620cm, or just under 8 per cent.

Similarly the distance moved by the biased ball along the Y axis was just over 16 metres, with the same variation of ± 63 cm on the right hand side and ± 78 cm on the left. The arithmetic mean draw was 167cm, being the sum of the right and left bias maximum X coordinates divided by two. In the total distance of 16 metres the variation in draw was ± 23 cm on the left hand side and ± 19 cm on the right: the mean of these two figures is 21cm which is 12.5 per cent of the total movement of 167cm.

The point marked P is on the last part of the trajectory of the biased ball. The figure of 1.67 metres for the croquet ball is not so different from that of the wood, which under test drew 2.01 metres in 16.2 metres on the Y axis. In a 30 metre jack, a wood will draw between 6 and 9 metres, depending on size and mass.

On a long hard shot the bias will quickly sort itself out to act on the right or the left, and even with a gentleshot of 20 metres or so it is plain that an imbalance of well under 0.5gm is sufficient to cause a 10mm draw and thus miss a hit-in. A hard shot will naturally overcome this to a large extent, but it makes one think, does it not? Have you ever made a long take-off and been surprised at the apparent slope of the court, which is not always the same? Maybe it was the nap of the grass, we say. In American croquet, a boundary take-off with such a draw can be deadly with only a mallet-head allowance between the ball and the boundary. Take that 'unlucky' shot which you made on a rather dry bowling green: what looked at first like the perfect roll-up for an easy short hoop, quietly, with the last few rolls, turned into a ghastly, nerve-racking jump shot!

Perhaps we should consider making a definite break with our bowling friends and abandon biased croquet. I would like to suggest that the problem is a real one and deserves some careful attention. A problem of ball specifications and testing?



INTERNATIONAL appeal

The 1993 Home Internationals

Budleigh Salterton, 5/6 June

The Home Internationals returned to Budleigh Salterton in Devon after a three year sojourn in Glasgow. The weather was on the sunny side; in fact some rather red parts had to be covered up on the Sunday. Budleigh has ten lawns with a Club House and pavilions around most of them - quite an impressive place. If only the lawns were as impressive!! Most are reasonable, with the odd bump and hollow, but a few are like meadows. Rushing a ball is difficult when one's ball is sitting at the bottom of the hollow and the target ball, only a yard away, is over the crest of a hill. My first experience of the lawns was shooting at a 9 yard tice from corner one: the ball took off like a bouncing bomb! Later my opponent had a similar shot with exactly the same reaction.

The first round saw the Scottish team take on the Irish. Martin Murray came back from one down with a TP and TPO to beat Simon Williams. John Surgenor beat Charles von Schmieder in straight games. Andrew Hope and David Appleton both lost their matches in straight games. The deciding match between Jeremy Dyer and Tom Browne went to the third game. Unfortunately Jeremy either had too much of the sun, or the overnight sleeper journey had caught up with him: after a very scrappy game Tom won +12.

The score in the England v Wales match also went to the last game with England winning 3 to 2. It should have been a Welsh victory: already leading 1 to 0, John Evans stuck in Rover with his other ball sitting at the Peg; David Wiggins won that game and took the decider.

Scotland's next opponent was England, who had a much weakened team due to the marriage of Lewis Palmer to Annabel McDiarmid: many of the guests would normally have played in the English team. Even with their second string they had -1s playing at 4 and 5. The result was 3 to 0 to England,



Scotland's Rod Williams, watched by Steve Jackson & Andrew Lampert

with two matches shared: Andrew Hope and John Surgenor taking games off David Openshaw and Simon Tuke, respectively. The level matches were suspended to allow the third round to start.

Ireland beat Wales 3 to 1 with one match shared.

With the result of the Match still to be decided, England took on the Irish. Goacher, Aspinall and Wiggins all won in straight games, Irwin and Tuke sharing their games with Openshaw and von Schmieder respectively.

Scotland and Wales played for the wooden spoon. Scotland won 4 to 1. John Surgenor beat Chris Williams in straight games even after being pegged out in the second game with his back ball on 4-back. This levelled the match at 1 to 1, David Appleton having lost to Dayal Gunasekera. Martin Murray came back from the dead to take the second +4, then in the third also came back with a TP to win +3. Andrew Hope beat Ian Burridge in their deciding game; this gave Scotland the victory. Jeremy Dyer then took two straight games off John Evans.

With the absence of the trophy, an announcement was made that England had won. The Budleigh Club was thanked for hosting the event, the Ladies of the Club were thanked for preparing the lunches and teas, goodbyes were said, and the long trek home began...

John Surgenor (Scotland)

Scotland 2 lost Ireland 3 England 3 bt Wales 2
Scotland 1 lost England 4 Ireland 3 bt Wales 1
Scotland 4 bt Wales 1 Ireland 1 lost England 4

Jersey versus Scotland

13th June 1993

The Jersey Croquet Club entertained a Scottish Select for the first, but it is to be hoped not for the last, time on 13th June. The visitors were Rod Williams, David Appleton, Philip Simpson and George Anderson, and they each played two games of singles and two of doubles against Tony Le Moignan, Martin Hodge, Richard Sowerby, Paul Duckworth

(morning) and Hugo Peterson (afternoon). The weather was much improved from the previous two days, but unfortunately the rain during that time had precluded any grass-cutting and conditions were heavy: for instance David hit the second shot, put a tice up towards B Baulk and then failed to reach first corner with his own ball!

Philip made light of the conditions winning quickly against Richard, and with Rod and David beating Tony and Martin respectively, the Scots established a 3-1 lead. However, in doubles Tony went to 2-back on the fifth turn

and Richard chose a good time to perform his first all-round break which soon reduced the deficit. The most exciting break of the day came as lunch was being prepared, when Paul hit a long shot just before time was called; he had to get from 6 to ball-box and peel partner through 3-back to be one up, and only being hampered after penult brought a really good try to an end.

The afternoon singles saw a reversal of fortunes: George was the only success for the visitors, and so the overall rested on the final two doubles matches. Rod and George beat Tony and Richard, but when Martin and Hugo won an interesting tactical match against David and Philip by +2 on time the final match score was 6-all. Jersey were declared winners by virtue of having run more hoops, and we got on with the real business of eating and drinking at the splendid barbecue at Tony and Paula Le Moignan's. The hospitality provided by Richard and Mireille Sowerby was extended for an extra day when fog closed Jersey airport. There are two new lawns being laid near the present ones, and space being prepared for two more. With luck these will be ready for another visit in 1995 and the sun will shine a bit more. Although a pint of beer can be had in Jersey for less than £1, and the hospitality was first class, the travel was expensive and the travellers thought they deserved better weather for their money!

David Appleton



Tony Le Moignan; Martin Hodge; Richard Sowerby; Paul Duckworth.



Simon Thornton; Andrew Lampert; Steve Jackson; George Anderson; Philip Archer; Philip Simpson; Rod Williams; David Appleton

JUNE
1993

tournament reports

The Newcastle Breweries Challenge Trophy 1993

Croquet North capture trophy in Scotland

The third annual fixture between Croquet North, the Federation of Croquet Clubs in the North of England, and Scottish Croquet Association "B", was held at the Scottish National Centre, Bush on 10 and 11 July 1993. At stake was the Newcastle Breweries Challenge Trophy, first presented for the 1992 fixture, which had been won by the Scots. This year, for the third year running, the winners were visitors, Croquet North 7 and Scottish CA 2.

The format was six-per-side level advanced rules ties, with the North players holding almost two bisques per person handicap advantage.

The doubles on the first day were dour affairs in general, two matches being halved (after seven hours), the third going 2-0 to Croquet North, thus ensuring a result after the six singles.

The second day singles were also generally long, although the top matches were completed at a faster pace. Four ties resulted in 2-0 scores to CN, with the other two being treated as halves (again after seven hours). Richard Neville's pegout in the last match came in the turn after time.

Croquet North appreciates the effort and

hospitality shown by the host, in preparing courts, arranging lunches, and especially from Mona Wright, who kept both teams supplied with coffee or tea throughout the two cold days, and hopes that suitable reciprocity will be shown in England for the 1994 clash.

A final footnote, before listing the results: Bruce Rannie has now played in all three fixtures, and, despite the series score being CN 2, SCA 1, has never been on the losing side!

Bruce Rannie

Nick Cordingley and Jeff Evan halved with David Farmer and Allan Ramsay -11 +5
Derek Trotman and Richard Neville beat Charlotte Townsend and David McLaughlin +17 +16T
Bruce Rannie and Roger Peters halved with George Anderson and Steve Barnett +18 -13

Nick Cordingley beat David Farmer +16 +11
Derek Trotman beat Charlotte Townsend +11 +20
Bruce Rannie beat Steve Barnett +13 +23
Roger Peters halved with George Anderson -17 +4
Jeff Evans halved with Allan Ramsay +2T -21
Richard Neville beat David McLaughlin +14T +11

1993 British Student Croquet Championships by Domenic Wreford

Champion arises from defaulting first round game at Oxford

The British Student Croquet Championships 1993 opened on a wet Friday afternoon in Oxford. The championship began without Ed Duckworth, who was winging his way down from Durham after an all-night ball, and also without Simon Rea, an Oxford PGCE student, both having to default in their first game. Unfortunately the Oxford University "Parks" were not in top condition, though the Master's Lawn at Balliol provided a quality venue for some quality play.

Paul Scott, possibly the pre-Championship favourite with the lowest handicap of 1, was not in top form and struggled a little in his first four games; however, a 26-1 victory in the sixth, and TP in his seventh and last game showed the play he was capable of, though unfortunately for him it came too late in the championship to bring victory.

Alex Leggate (1) was another pre-championship favourite who failed to find form early on, though two games won +1 on time in successive matches (the first after a tremendous 25 yard hit-in under pressure) helped to ensure a joint third place on four wins.

Phil Rees (4) started strongly, winning 4 out of his first 5 matches, unfortunately his innate hitting-in ability deserted him on the final day and an absence of tactics meant that a win in either of the last two games eluded him.

David Burns (6) had a walk-over in the first round and notched up a further three wins in his customary aggressive fashion. A good win over Chris Fathing (1) gave us a glimpse of what may lie ahead for someone whose handicap is definitely on the decrease.

Chris "Beauty" Farthing (1), one of the best student players in Oxford started the

championship in fighting form with a TP on one of the Parks Lawns (a venue that provides additional difficulty to a TP because of the undulations in the playing surface that have to be negotiated). Unfortunately, losses to Paul Scott, Chris Patmore, and David Burns made this year's championship one in which a third place was all that could be managed.

Chris Patmore (3) had a very good championship winning five out of his seven matches, losing only to Alex Leggate -1 on time and to the eventual winner Simon Rea (2) whose title of British Student croquet Champion 1993 is the more richly deserved when one considers that he had to default in his first round because he could not get a leave of absence from his PGCE course meaning that the five wins he had (including the one over Chris Patmore to give him the Championship) were effectively out of six games. Two triple peels in those six games, the second being achieved in very difficult circumstances, show just how strong a player he is, strong enough indeed to deserve a handicap significantly better than the 2 he

has.

The other competitors, Ed Duckworth (3), Mike Porter (7), Nigel Mottram (9), David Lilly (3) and Domenic Wreford (6) all seemed to enjoy themselves though at times there was to be heard self-directed comment about their playing ability or, rather, a distinct absence of such an ability.

Each day saw an improvement in the weather and in the quantity and quality of the afternoon teas provided by the Eagle and Child on St Giles. The Eagle and Child sponsored the Oxford University team this season and were happy to extend this generous sponsorship to include the championship. The gratitude of the manager Domenic Wreford and of the players, especially David Burns who seemed to have a bottomless stomach, cannot be expressed merely in words.

Finally, thanks have to go to Ian Plummer for getting up each morning to set the Balliol hoops and congratulations to Simon Rea: he thoroughly deserved his win in the championship.

Egbaston Open Weekend, 12/13 June 1993 by Graham Fowler

Manager imposes time limit on semi-final 23 hours after it started

The arrival just before the Tournament of the Gazette with its questionnaire made 'Croquet' a natural topic of conversation. I summarise several points made: 'Croquet' is not going to be displayed at W.H. Smith's (or any newsagents) for some considerable time if ever; consequently, 'Croquet' might as well revert to being a magazine of interest to tournament players; tournament reports are sometimes edited to the point makes the writing of them an unsatisfying activity. More specifically on the relationship between contributors, editor and the CA: it is acceptable to have contributions shortened/amended by the editor, but interference by others is unreasonable; there have been problems during the last year, but it seems the editor is being made to take responsibility for some decisions which were not within his ambit - notably the redefinition of the magazine's market, which was part of Council policy.

Overall, conversation and badinage were a significant part of this - as most - Egbaston Tournaments, but we did play some croquet. Last year's winner, David Lendrum was here to defend his trophy. Alas Howard Taylor was also down from Bowdon, and accounted for David in the second round of the tournament. Andrew Gregory was the only seed to reach the semi-finals. Since it was only 3.30 p.m. when these began, Andrew decided these matches could be best of three, like the final. And why not...?

As reporter, my first task upon arrival on Sunday morning was to ask Andrew why the semi-final between Howard Taylor and Rick Ravis was in progress. This was a thornier question than I realised: Andrew had lost in two games to Kevin Carter. He summarised the match with the succinct descriptor: scrappy.

The match between Howard Taylor and Rick Davis was far from over. It had looked as though Rick was going to equalise the match score when he had the opportunity to peg out one of Howard's balls. He did peg out one of the balls, but not the one we had expected: apparently the forward ball had been pushed off line and the backward ball thrust on line by a collision between the balls in an attempted pass roll. With a short shot and his remaining ball on 4-back, Howard now looked like the winner, even though Rick was on rover. But a careless shot after having scored the hoop points left Rick a shorter shot than he had a right to expect. Rick took the opportunity to split Howard's balls and take position at rover. Howard joined up in corner III. Rick ran rover and hit. So, it was one game all.

The manager now had a problem: he solved it by imposing a 2.30 p.m. curfew - 23 hours after the match had begun. Rick again needed to catch up, and was behind when time was called. Howard had a two hoop lead and decided upon a very distant leave. Rick, in

corner II, had a rush to 1-back and needed to make at least two hoops. In fact he made four. So the epic was over. Rick had qualified for a CA silver medal. What could he do in the final?

Kevin Carter had spent the whole morning waiting for the other semi-final to finish. By contrast, and not surprisingly, Rick seemed rather drained. The final was a disappointment in comparison to the epic. Kevin won fairly comprehensively in two games. A just reward as he had played the most convincing croquet of the weekend.

In the Egyptian, Howard Taylor won two more matches to share success with Mark Firth. Special congratulations are due to Mark who despite being the highest handicapped player present, won three of his six games - and only lost two others by small margins. Mark is no stranger to advanced play but his success was entirely warranted. Perhaps it suggests that other players with handicaps of six or more could benefit from playing in advanced tournaments. In addition to the prize-winners, only Bill Ward, David Lendrum and Graham Fowler finished with positive results in the Egyptian.

Massive thanks to Andrew Gregory, Chris Bennett and Ian McClelland, who not only made the tournament itself so enjoyable, but worked very hard to ensure it could take place at all: on Thursday the lawns had been under two inches of water.

Parkstone Handicap W/E, 17/18 July by David Carpenter

Metronomic Disco Dimensions lead to 24 yard hoops

Saturday morning, deep in thought, watching my opponent make another hoop, eleven bisques at my feet. A sudden tap on the top of my head makes me start, it is the Manager, Cliff Jones. "Hello David, how would you like to write the tournament report?". Clearly I acquiesced.

On Saturday the rain held off more or less and despite the lack of time-limits and a handicap range of 5 to 22, most games were concluded in a reasonable time with an excellent standard of play. In the evening, as the tennis section's disco added a metronomic dimension to play, there were three players on three wins each and thus a result was assured by the fifth round of the swiss.

On Sunday afternoon The Heavens opened, just in time for the final. The spectators watched a tense game from the comfort of the bar. In the end Ian Scott was just edged out by some appallingly cautious end-game play by the eventual winner. With three players now on four wins each second place was decided by a one ball game between Ian, Allen Parker and Beatrice McGlen. Beatrice in her first tournament away from Nottingham had played well all

weekend and attracted much favourable comment. Ian got to the peg first, but not before Allen, to much bar room applause, had run hoop four from twenty yards roqueting a ball behind it in the process only to then take off and run it again! "I hadn't realised I'd run it!" he said.

Cliff managed the tournament wonderfully, his jovial manner and quiet encouragement made even the first time tournament players feel relaxed. Thanks are also due to Parkstone secretary Margaret McMordie who helped keep everything running smoothly. Three players achieved Bronze awards Joan Parker, Joy Phillips and Derek Steven. Parkstone is a very friendly club and it was nice to see A-class players watching the tournament intently and making constructive remarks.

And the winner? I embarrassingly confess it was me.

David Carpenter 5/5
Ian Scott 4/5 One ball winner
Beatrice McGlen 4/5
Allen Parker 4/5

Guernsey vs Scotland

KGV, 12th June 1993

The Guernsey Croquet Club was delighted to welcome a 4 man team from Scotland (including their No. 1 player Rod Williams) for a 1 day handicapped match on Saturday 12th June held at King George V playing fields.

The match was sponsored by North American Stockbrokers Midland Walwyn Capital Inc. Over 7 hours of play in appalling weather conditions, the hardy visitors beat the Guernsey team by 7 games to 4 with one draw.

Guernsey ran a total of 168 hoops against 180 by Scotland.

Below are the scores with the Guernsey players listed first. (Photo page 17)

SINGLES

Andrew Lampert beat David Appleton +9
Simon Thornton lost to George Anderson -5T
Philip Archer lost to Rod Williams -6T
Stephen Jackson lost to Philip Simpson -13T
Andrew Lampert lost to George Anderson -1T
Simon Thornton lost to David Appleton -18
Philip Archer beat Philip Simpson +11T
Stephen Jackson beat Rod Williams +4T

DOUBLES

Archer & Baines beat Williams & Philip +15T
Lampert & Jackson lost to Williams & Simpson -4T
Archer & Baines lost to Appleton & Anderson -5
Lampert & Jackson drew with Appleton & Anderson

Southport and Birkdale Long Bisquers Weekend 10/11 July 1993 by Anna Giraud

Grateful to be sent to Court 5 with its sheltering hedge

Once again the lawns echoed with the despairing cries of "Not again!" as the striker's ball hurtled into the distance after missing that "certain" cut-rush. Once again proud white fences of bisques fell alarmingly as 1st hoop was clanged for the 3rd time. Yes, once again Anthony and I had joined other High Bisquers at Southport's Annual July Tournament!

To alarm the Manager, Alice Dawson, an odd number of people had elected to enter, 9 from Southport and Birkdale C.C., and 8 "foreigners" (including players from as far afield as Crawley, Sussex, and the Isle of Man). Fortunately, Pauline Lewis and Maragret Dalley were available to share the 18th place.

In the Chill wind and showery conditions of Saturday, players were grateful to be sent to Court 5 with its sheltering hedge. Here, after somewhat "Aunt Emma"-ish play by the primary colours and the generous laying up at the opponent's hoop too many times with the secondaries, Eddy Cowan and Leonard Aninsworth won the games. Thank goodness it was lunchtime - an event to look forward to at Southport whatever the standard of play!

The draw was less kind in the afternoon - Court 2. Here Julian Tonks was able to take his revenge on a Short Croquet defeat suffered in York earlier in the year. In the meantime, Anthony Giraud took the gift from his opponent of a prepared break and no more bisques (!) to win his first game.

Court 2 again. At least the forward ball had stopped running off the North boundary. Experience really does count? Dudley Simmons' play gave plenty of time, however, to act as admiring spectator of Jack Saunders hitting-in and hoop-running. (Dudley's break was to 3 back).

Sunday - warmers, but still overcast. Overnight Dierdre McLean, Jonathon Alpert and Philip Pawson were unbeaten, while Leonard Ainsworth, Eddy Cowan, Liz Fraser, Brain Kerr and John Wilkinson had each won 2 games.

This time Beryl Simmons was playing well on Court 2 while Margaret struggled with no bisques against Jack who seemed to do no wrong. Suddenly! A chance. Beryl had left an opening, on Time....Clanged again! I was certainly cheering up a lot of people.

After lunch, back to Court 5. The sun shone. The balls stayed under control. Isn't Croquet a wonderful game?!

Jonathon Alpert of Southport C.C. was presented with the Runner-up Prize, having won 4 games and the President, Paul Stoker, presented the Trophy to the unbeaten winner, Philip Pawson of Harrogate C.C. Is this the third time it has crossed the Pennines?

Thank you again Southport for this friendly Tournament. The team of early morning hoop setters, unfailingly patient Referees (and Coaches), lunchtime "Staff" and anonymous Chefs with the Manager, Alice Dawson, ensured that the players all had a very enjoyable weekend.

Southport Handicap Weekend 29-31 May

Under scarfs, sweaters & anoraks

21 competitors including 9 ladies entered for the Southport weekend tournament, travelling from as far afield as Northumberland and Hampshire.

The Egyptian handicap was ably managed by Southport President Paul Stoker who under very adverse conditions ran the tournament like clockwork, while also acting as referee & playing.

The matches got off to a good start on Saturday and although sunny a cold breeze kept most players in coats and sweaters. There was quite a bit of activity upstairs with a lot of aircraft coming and going due to the battle of the Atlantic being commemorated in Liverpool.

Unfortunately the weather got no better, we had rain most of Sunday making 4 ball breaks difficult for those not used to aquaplaning between hoops.

Sunday was dry but icy cold winds gusting at times made playing difficult as some of the balls seemed to have a mind of their own. Peter Hanley seemed to enjoy these conditions, romping around in shorts while the rest of us were buried under scarfs, sweaters, and anoraks.

The man of the tournament was Southport member Paul Stephenson who won all eight of his eight matches, I saw him do a five hoop break with two balls on the Saturday and felt then that he would take some beating. John Wilkinson was runner up winning six out of his eight matches.

In conclusion despite the weather another enjoyable well run tournament with lost of fun and good company. Again a big tank you to the ladies of Southport who provided all the wonderful lunches and teas, I only go for the food anyhow. Looking forward to the next tournament.

County Dublin Open Tournament, 4-7 June by Linda and Julian Sheraton-Davis

Youngest ever Champion of County Dublin & sneaking off to the bar between turns

The visitors from overseas were warmly greeted by the Irish with "we're so pleased you've brought the sunny, dry weather with you!" What they did not know is that we ordered it from him up there. A week earlier or a week later and there was danger of the event being classified as water croquet!

The tournament went off to a good start with Gerard Healy (-) and Nick Webb (18) living dangerously in their doubles matches. Firstly they played Linda (12) and Julian (4) Sheraton-Davis, the latter having pulled back and pegged out himself and Gerard to give them a lead of +1 (OT). Linda was for 1 back and Nick for hoop 6, who had to do or die shot of Julian's weak leave and hit in, made hoop 6 and he and Linda played a one ball shoot out for 1 back, with Nick (a garden golf croquet player who had only read up on the rules of association croquet the night before!) eventually making the hoop.

Gerard and Nick followed this victory by losing to Nick Healy (13) and Stephen Strong by -1 (OT) in yet another eventful game. Despite the loss, Gerard was on cloud nine as he made 19 points - 13 of his own, 4 peels for his partner, 1 peel and peg out on his opponents - is this a doubles record?

Another doubles match of note occurred when Pdraig Thornton and Ray Flood beat Hilary Webb and Myles McWeeney +26 in 50 minutes (possibly because Myles was having withdrawal symptoms from being disturbed from the prone snoring position in which he was often found).

Could the singles matches provide and many unusual incidences or tournament records? Nick Healy (15) beat John McAuley (7) by +1 (OT) - nothing unusual in this you may say, but they played with bisques with neither realising it was level play game. Nick was still allowed his victory.

Terence Wolfe-Flanagan and Gerard Osborne-Burke are either very brave or nutty, but they had been lured from the tennis courts onto the croquet courts to be thrown in at the deep end in the handicap event.



Ronan McInerney (14), youngest ever winner of the Championship of Co. Dublin

Both had their first croquet instruction only a week earlier and Terence even had a win-over Su Loughlin from Scotland, who claimed the Guinness had got the better of her.

Adrian Wadley, having come over from Reading, was determined to make the most of his croquet time, and played something like 15 games in four days.

Vere Lenox-Cunningham and Rupert Webb both did an excellent job in misleading their opponents, Vere by putting one of his clips on the wrong hoop and Rupert by keeping one of his in his pocket for a couple of turns. Opponents - you know you should have been watching rather than sneaking off to the bar in between turns.

The final of the Championship was a close nail-biting game between Jane (4) and Ronan McInerney (3) with Ronan proving the victor. Carrickmines Croquet Club were very proud to give him the title "youngest Championship of Co. Dublin winner ever".

Very many thanks to Gerard Healy for managing an excellent tournament and providing the brilliant weather. It was a manager's nightmare trying to fit in all the matches as Adrian (and one or two others) seemed to be needed for everything at the same time and there were threats of playing the final under floodlights. Despite all this, the atmosphere was laid back, with essential lunch and bar stops - many thanks to Lucy and her helpers for her delicious food and to the barmen.

East of England Class Events at Colchester, 5-9 July by Pat Heatherington

Mysterious forces create patterns on the lawns

Early arrivals for the first day of the Easterns were met by strange lawn settings. Vandals had entered the grounds during the previous night, uprooting several hoops and pegs, using the edge-boards to make star patterns on other hoops, decorating the lawns with corner flags and yard line markers and arranging the eight seats and benches across the courts. A search party scoured the hedges and eventually all the equipment except four yard-line markers was found, the hoops were reset and play began.

The three day Over 50 event was run as an eight round Swiss and the extremely fast lawns presented a stiff challenge to all. After the seventh round four players, Marjorie Boyd, Ron Harris, Jean Ackerman and John Williams, were all level on five wins, but only Marjorie and Ron won in the final round, Marjorie taking the Locke Cup by virtue of a +1 on time victory over Ron in the first round. Ron was delighted to carry off the Lexden goblet in his first ever C.A. event.

Thursday and Friday saw the class events, with both A Class (Advanced) and B/C Class (Handicap) being played in blocks. Sadly on Friday afternoon the heavens opened and in under an hour the courts were all flooded, unable to cope with all the water after several weeks of drought. In the A Class Robert Fulford was the only undefeated player and received the championship cup, whilst in the Handicap three players were level with three wins out of four. The cup went to Kevin Wells on countback, with Nigel Gray and Michael Belcham placed second and third respectively.

Over 50 (Swiss)

1. Mrs M Boyd (6/8); 2. R Harris (6/8)

Handicap Singles (Block)

1. K P Wells (3/4); 2. N Gray (3/4)

A Class Event

1. R Fulford; 2. C Clarke

Worthing Fourplay 10-12 July

Lionel's tots comfort players

Whilst asking me to report on this tournament the ebullient manager of the Worthing Fourplay tournament, explained to me the difficulty he had with the engraver of the trophies to ensure that he spelt the name of the tournament correctly. They were beautiful trophies, hand-blown glass tankards of elegant design and engraved with style..four of them were to go to the winning side.

For this was a team tournament, Worthing, Southwick, Preston Park, Woking, Surbiton and Crawley all took part. A team could consist of any number of players so long as four were available to play in each session. About 48 people actually played at some time or another.

A team of Four people playing in four events provided the name for the tournament). For the first two and half days, the teams competed in Handicap doubles, Advanced Handicap singles and golf. In the doubles an experiment was made in allowing only the higher bisquer to use the bisques.

The higher bisquers appreciated this as they were allowed to play more than would normally be the case. The advanced handicap singles was played with full bisques with a base of 5. Golf was played as a handicap game, much to the surprise of the many golf players from Southwick, Preston Park and Worthing. A player received 3 points for himself and for his club for completing an Association game and only two points for winning a game before pegging out and one point for each win in Golf (players played three games of golf in each match).

The Manager, Lionel Wharrad does not believe in time-limits on the sensible grounds that the best part of any game is the end game and automatic time limits often spoil them. Instead he threatened to use other devices to shorten games where necessary..whatever the reason all but two of the game played were pegged out. In one doubles game he shortened the game by simply moving on the clips for both sides an equal number of hoops and in one singles game he allowed each player to have 10 turns to try and finish the game.

The final afternoon was most exciting, this was devoted entirely to one-ball croquet, all 24 players had to play 5 one-ball games (one point was awarded for each win). By some miracle 60 game were played on the four courts in time for the prize-giving at just after six.

The winning team was Worthing helped by the efforts of their captain and chairman Brain Teague who won every one of his games thus scoring 20 points for his side. His team received the four engraved tankards and Brian also received the Ted Ross Salver as Player of the Tournament. The top points scorer in each of the six teams had a surprise when Pat Shine, in indefatigable founder of the club presented each of them with a gold medal on a neck-ribbon.

Pat Shine has done a remarkable job in bring this splendid club into existence, I understand from her that there is some chance that in due course the club will have another 2 courts. The club has access to the clubhouse of the golf course, so that food and drink were always available.

Pat Shine hopes that this highly successful tournament will help to put Worthing on the Tournament map. Certainly it is an interesting and friendly club in a pleasant holiday town and I can imagine that many people will find the idea of a week-end or week's croquet there very attractive.

The format for team competition pioneered by Derek Caporn at Surbiton and since taken up by Roehampton and Worthing may well find acceptance as a popular form of competition in other clubs.

Its attraction probably lies in two facts firstly all games are played outside the C.A.'s automatic handicap system and secondly every point acquired helps your team even if it does not bring you individual glory. This helps everyone to maintain interest in the competition.

Lionel Wharrad must be congratulated on his good-natured and immaculate organisation of what must have been quite a difficult tournament to manage. He introduced an interesting managerial idea of keeping a bottle of Malt whisky and a bottle of Brandy on his table from which he urged players to claim a tot if they felt aggrieved by the lawns, the balls, their opponent, the weather. Players who were aggrieved by the manager's dictatorial manner, or his unreasonableness, or his inefficiency or the terms of the competition were encouraged to complain in order to claim a double tot. This simple device seemed to defuse potential discord, and what with the rain and all, a number of players were perceived insulting the manager regularly. The players unanimously asked that the tournament should become an annual one; it is not clear to what extent this was motivated by the managerial bottles..

Welsh Dragon Dorke turned into Prairie Dog!

Are you one of those 'privileged' persons who have played croquet out on "the Prairie" - "the Boondocks" - "Outer Mongolia" - "the Field" - "the Desert"? These were some of the more polite epithets applied to the three courts which for the second year were being 'borrowed' from the East Gloucestershire Tennis Club in order to support the total entry of 72 for the Cheltenham July week. (I do not propose to repeat the less polite epithets!)

They were used exclusively for matches in the handicap event, and at the end of the week Peter Dorke received a special award for being the person who had played the most games out there - whereupon he thanked managers Roger and Dab Wheeler for the opportunity of doing so with a very meaningful edge to his ringing Welsh baritone! You will gather that participants generally felt it was a less than happy experience to play on these courts, but I can report that during the week the committee decided that they would not be used again next year, even though it would mean a smaller entry - so it appears that everyone who vowed they would not return if they were going to have to play on them again can safely submit their entries next year, after all...Peter did not even get the ultimate reward for his marathon of endurance, because Carol Smith, who is rapidly returning to the heights of her best form, stayed ahead of the likes of Peter, Paul Watson, Roger Jenkins and David Ruscombe-King to top the Hands ladder for the Daniels Cup.

There was some speculation that 13 courts and 72 players might have made this a contender for one of the largest tournaments in the known universe within the last aeon or so. If you were entered in class, doubles and handicap, you were guaranteed 4 class games, and 4 Swiss rounds of doubles, and while you were only required to play 4 handicap games, a total of 194 games were played, averaging out at 7 games per player with some energetic souls managing a maximum of 12.

It was a week of mixed weather and mixed standards of play, with quite a number of people mysteriously not succeeding in playing the class croquet of which they are capable. David Howson, for instance, reckoned he set some sort of personal record when he had a doubles match in which he played only two shots - one of which was putting his ball onto the lawn, and the other (to use his exact word) wasn't! Conversely Roger Jenkins succeeded in attaining a Gold award for a straight triple peel, and Hugh Smorfitt achieved a natty little combination peg-out against Peter Darby, which the latter described as being an "optimistic" sending of the forward ball in the direction of the peg from the east boundary while going to Peter's two on the north boundary, getting a rush to the peg on one of them, and cannon-

ing the aforementioned forward ball onto the peg with the subsequent croquet stroke. Peter doubtless got his own back in the customary rowdy game of golf croquet in which they were both involved late one evening...you know the sort of think - mallets in one hand, beer tankards in the other! Meanwhile, parenthetically, David Ruscombe-King and Laurence Latham discovered they were members of an increasingly select group - they were still both defending the beleaguered Dunsinane stronghold of round-headed mallet users against the advancing Birnam wood of square-headed mallets!

The size of entry in the doubles - split as is customary into the Secretary's Spoon for family pairs and the Barwell Salvagers for non-family pairs - meant that quite a number of games were double-banked. This was not the ordeal one might have feared, largely because of the use of the Wharrad twelve-turns-per-side-after-the-bell system - a superb scheme for relieving you of the pressure of hurrying your playing decisions as 'Time' looms. Its only drawback on this occasion was that it was yet another piece of paper to remember to fill in (besides one's own handicap card, the results board, and the Hands ladder card!) - a degree in administration is getting to be a prerequisite to being a croquet player these days! At any rate, the system seemed to suit Richard and Mary Wainman, because they were able to keep ahead of the field, most notably constraining Ron and Margret Selmes and Richard Brand and David Prescott into runners-up positions, to win the Secretary's Spoon. The destination of the Barwell Salvagers, despite hot contention from such pairings as Michael Rangeley and David Ruscombe-King, Audrey Whitaker and Derek Harrison, Norman Gooch and Maureen Evans, and Dave Foulser and David Kibble, hinged upon the outcome of the game between Dennis Moorcraft and George Chamberlain against Stephen Badger and Alex Jardine - it was close, but Stephen and Alex triumphed and bore the Salvagers away accordingly.

There were six classes (each with two blocks of five players), and only four cups - hence two winners of plaudits (much easier to clean!) and engraved glasses. Alex Jardine was in contention for the Calthrop Cup in Class F, but while he did manage to keep Edith Bailey from meeting husband Cliff, fresh from fending off the challenge of John Exell, in the final, he didn't keep Cliff from winning it! Class E was won by David Kibble against the likes of George Chamberlain, Roger Wheeler and David Ruscombe-King, while David Prescott beat off the -not inconsiderable challenge of Andrew Potter, Derek Bradley and Carol Smith to win Class D. Back among the cups, Kismet Whittall wrested the Asa-Thomas Trophy from Ron

Selmes after they had fought off Edward Dymock and Dennis Regan respectively, and the combined efforts of Bob Fewtrell, Lawrence Whittaker and Geoffrey Taylor in Class B were not sufficient to keep Stephen Badger from taking the Money Salver home (it was obviously his week for collecting salvagers!).

Dave Foulser's mallet had fallen apart under the stress of a doubles match earlier in the week, though it was out of plasters and splints by the time he met Peter Dorke in the semi-final of the Challenge Cup, but it was Peter's consistent shooting and good play that kept Dave out of the final, just as it was Bernard Neal's patience and canny tactics that brought Paul Smith's efforts to overcome being pegged out to naught. The final was a fascinating contest between the red dragon of Wales and the bulldoggish tenacity attributed to the English; Peter's dragon-crested mallet roared straight round to four-back after a start which showed his shooting was just as devastating as it had been in the semi-final, but while Bernard took longer to get going, his careful positional play left Peter nothing but long lift shots to go at, whereupon his hitherto reliable shooting cruelly deserted him, and Bernard was left with the not too onerous problem of working out where he was going to put the prodigious Challenge Cup when he got it home.

Bernard, were it not for the thought of all the silver polish, what wouldn't the rest of us give for such problems!

Event 1 - (Class Events)

Group A - Challenge Cup

1. Prof B G Neal

2. P Dorke

Group B - The Money Salver

1. S Badger

2. R Fewtrell

Group C - The Asa-Thomas Trophy

1. K Whittall

2. R Selmes

Group D

1. D Prescott

2. A Putter

Group E

1. D Kibble

2. D Ruscombe-King

Group F - Calthrop Cup

1. C Bailey

2. A Jardine

Event 2 - Daniels Cup (Handicap Singles)

1. Mrs Carol Smith

2= R Jenkins; D Ruscombe-King; P Dorke; P Watson

Event 3 - Secretary's Spoon (Family Handicap Doubles)

1. S T Badger & A Jardine

2= D H Moorcraft & G Chamberlain; M W Rangeley & D Ruscombe-King; Mrs A Whitaker & D Harrison; N Gooch & Mrs M Evans; D R Foulser & D Kibble

Event 4 - Barwell Salver (Handicap Doubles)

1. Mr & Mrs R Wainman

2= Mr & Mrs R Selmes; R S Brand & D Prescott

Double deflection shot brings rich reward for Catherine

The tournament I think is best described by the comments made in the closing speech of the chairman Leslie Butler when he said "I have enjoyed many tournaments at Parkstone but cannot remember one I have enjoyed more than this one, yet we have had the worst weather ranging from torrential rain to tropical sunshine and yet no one complained. We have had to start games earlier and finish them later to enable us to complete the seven events."

As a first time competitor to this tournament I would say the lawns were as good as any I have played on, and it says much for the organizers with all the bad weather they were able to cut them every morning. Our thanks to Bob Bailey and his able offshoot Margret McMordie who not only manage the tournament with great skill, in their spare time cleared the lawns of water, acted as time keepers and referees.

We were treated to two good nights out organized by Stratford who also gave lessons in the evening to those of us unlucky enough to have been knocked out.

You would have thought it was the Olympic Games for all the medals being worn, congratulations to Ian Storey and Peter Trimmer for Golds, and John Lonsdale, John Wilkinson and Brian Best for Bronze.

The luckiest shot of the tournament must have been from Catherine Storey who was trying to make a wide join with her partner ball which lay in first corner wired from her ball at first hoop. Her ball hit the peg then the

first hoop and gently rolled up and touched her partner ball.

The best shot of the tournament came from Stratford who was wired from his opponent's two balls lying between the first hoop and first corner. His shot took his ball to the left of the sixth hoop, and to the right of the first hoop and took the skin of his opponents balls which is all that was showing. He went on to win from 1st hoop and 6th hoop when his opponent was on peg and peg.

The sketch shows the Club house and the high embankment which look as if the trains are in the sky when they go past.

Event 1 - Class Events

A Class (Dorset Salver)

1. Don Gaunt

2. Strat Liddiard

B Class (Weldon Trophy)

1. Audrey Whitaker

2. Rupert Webb

C Class (Cope Cup)

1. Alex Jardine

2. John Wilkinson

Event 2 - Cripps Memorial Cup - Handicap Singles

1. John Wilkinson

2. Peter Trimmer

Winner of 'Y' (Evan Rose Bowl): Betty Widdows

Event 3 - Handicap Doubles - (Summer Doubles Cup)

1. Roy Edwards & Audrey Whittaker

2. Don Gaunt & Alex Jardine

Winner of 'Y': Strat Liddiard & Veronia McClements

Ramsgate W/E, 10/11 July by Gordon Drake

Cliff in a Cliff-hanger on a lawn with a Cliff

Yes, there is a croquet club at Ramsgate splendidly situated on the top of the cliffs overlooking the harbour. This view provides a soothing pastime during a game when not in play!

One of the four lawns available has been re-made and is raised about nine inches above ground level as a platform. It is very level and a perfect playing surface; the others are due for like treatment in future.

Such was the setting for the twelve participants for the July handicap week-end. It was most proficiently managed by Cliff Jones who has that unique ability to combine seriousness with joviality. The weather was sunny (most of the time) but one of the 'occasional showers, heavy at times' decided to drop its load during the mid afternoon on the first day, but the courts drained unbelievably well and play didn't stop. The outright and worthy winner was the improving Len Hawkins whose last game with the

manager was a real Cliff hanger... In the closing stages, the game had resolved itself into a one-ball affair through the last two hoops. Cliff eventually hanged himself by running penultimate twice. One other notable feature from many was the great performance of a long bisquer in Harold Niblett who, after losing his first game against the redoubtable Cliff, went on to win all his other games, attributing his progress to the coaching he received at the Ardingly summer school last year.

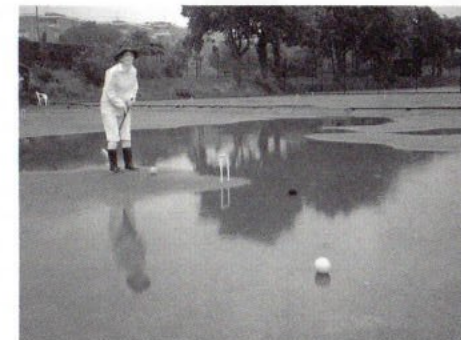
We were all most adequately sustained from the very moment of arrival up to leaving by the happy team of ladies who, with untiring devotion, plied home-made goodies to our full replete; a five star recommendation for anybody wishing to visit this neck of the woods. Thank you Ramsgate.

Winner: Len Hawkins

Runner-Up: Harold Niblett



LS.



Artist & Player: Liz Taylor-Webb

C.A. versus Welch C.A. at Cheltenham 3rd July

SINGLES

F J Landor lost to C N Williams -10

D R Foulser beat P J Dorke +12

A J Bogle lost to D Regan -3

P A Darby beat P A Heath +4

F J Landor beat P J Dorke +2

D R Foulser lost to C N Williams -12

A J Bogle beat P A Heath +12

P A Darby beat D Regan +22

DOUBLES

Landor & Bogle beat Williams & Regan +7

Foulser & Darby beat Dorke & Heath +5T

C.A. v C.A. Ireland at Cheltenham 12/13 June

Haslam & Ms Curry beat Williams & Flood 2-1

Maughan & Mrs Lewis lost to Browne & Ms Shorten 0-2

Darby & Mrs Widdows beat Barklie & L-Conyngnam 2-0

Ms G Curry beat S Williams 2-0

J Haslam lost to T N Browne 0-2

F I Maughan beat Ms J Shorten 2-0

P A Darby lost to R Barklie 0-2

Mrs C Lewis lost to V Lenox-Conyngnam 0-2

Mrs B Widdows beat R Flood 2-0

FINAL RESULT: CA: 5 beat CAI: 4

.... I HAVE JUST HAD AN ORDER FOR ANOTHER SIX

.... FATHER CHRISTMAS I AM SURE WILL BE LOADED UP WITH THEM SO ORDER NOW AND DON'T BE DISAPPOINTED