

# And Finally...

## Through the Hoop with Tony Antenen

...Croquet in Cornwall.....Lords v Commoners.....and a "taxing match for Stacy International at Surbiton.....and a "freebie" for the ladies.....

Things are stirring in Cornwall and I don't mean the pixies! Tony Backhouse, late of Woking Club, is now resident some three or four miles outside of St Austell and working hard to get the game established in a croquet desert that is badly in need of an oasis! I spent a morning with Tony during visit to the Principality and have subsequently advised both the South West Federation and the appropriate CA Officers of his efforts on the CA's behalf. My thanks to Ian Maugham, SW Federation Development Officer who has, I know, made a positive response despite the many calls on his time during a busy season. Chris Hudson, the CA's Development Officer has also weighed in with possible WI contacts in the area. However, what Tony needs is to increase his 'player potential' so if anyone out there has any inside knowledge of croquet being played, or croquet players visiting or domiciled anywhere in Cornwall please get in touch with him by phone or fax 01726 71564. And when croquet comes on stream

in the far south west don't forget, you read about it here first! The annual Lords v Commoners match was held for the third year at Surbiton with Lord Gisborough's team from the Upper House reversing the results from the first two encounters and gleefully bearing the Black Rod Trophy back to Westminster until next year.

Another entertaining evenings croquet was provided by Stacy International taking on the Board of the Inland Revenue. Tom Stacey's team from the prestigious publishing house took on a team captained by Sir Anthony Battishill. This, as last year, turned out to be one of those joyful social occasions - so much so that I am not too sure who won. I seem to remember the Stacey team making off with the Fortnum & Mason champagne but on the other hand.....?

And finally, a little something for the ladies. I have recently received in the CA



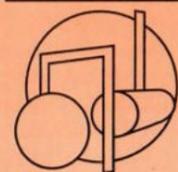
office a quantity of handbag sized Rosewater facial sprays by Floris of London, the international Jermyn Street perfumier. These are available to CA registered clubs and are intended for lady members - not only regular players but also those willing helpers behind the scenes whose hard work so often goes unremarked. Club secretaries are invited to contact me at the office for further details of this offer. Sorry, we cannot undertake to pack and post them, so arrangements for collection will have to be made. Grateful thanks indeed to Tony Brunt, UK Sales and Marketing Director of Floris of London for this generous gift.



**Don't forget the Editor's Hot-line on Monday Sept 25th 7 - 9pm**

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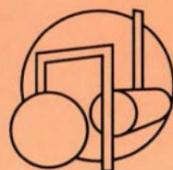
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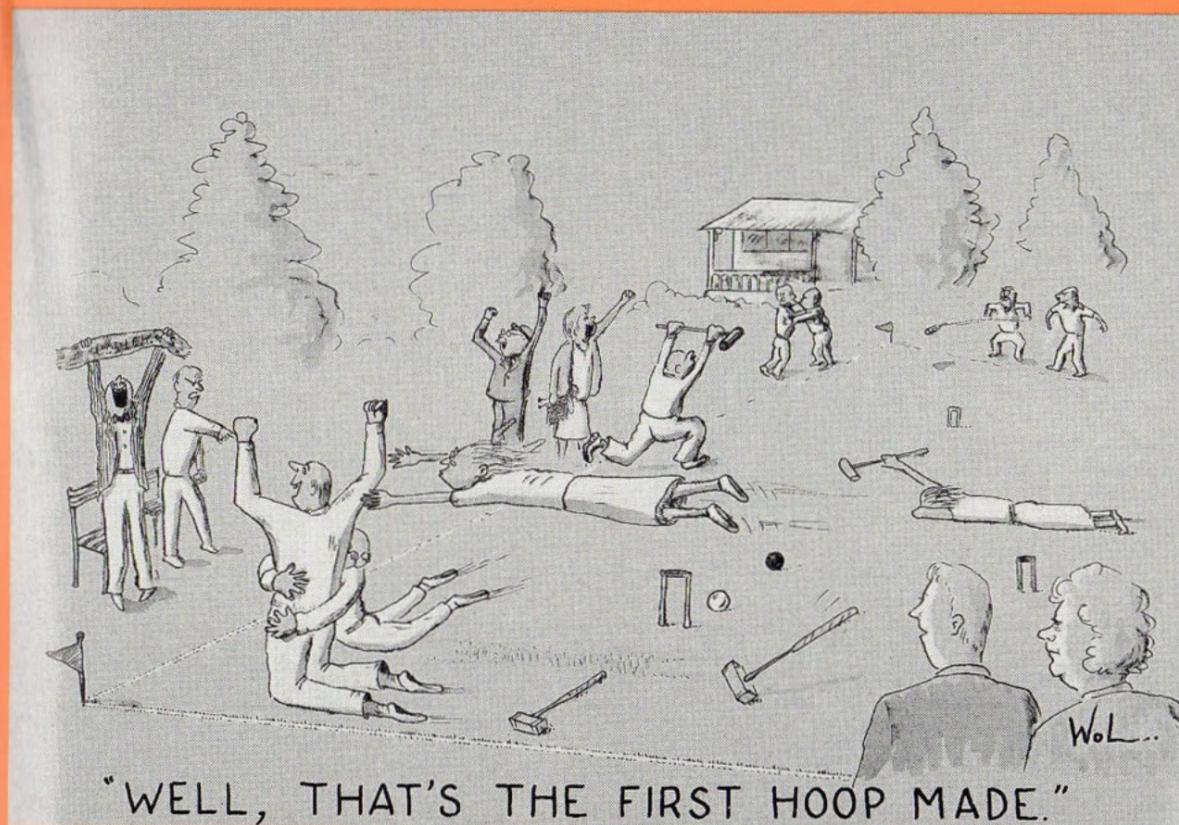


Contact: Brian Macmillan, The Croquet Association Shop Tel. 0171 - 7363148

# The CROQUET Gazette

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September 1995

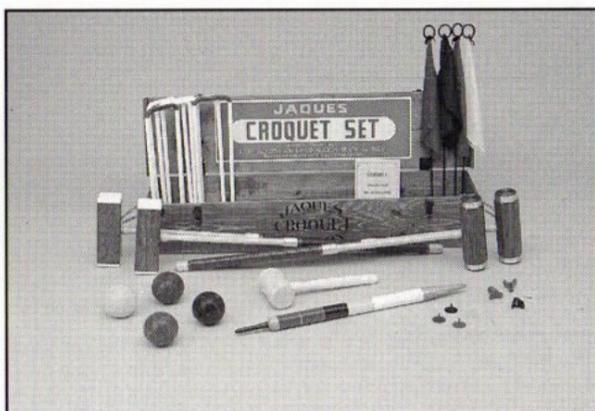


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Coaching  
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CA Committees



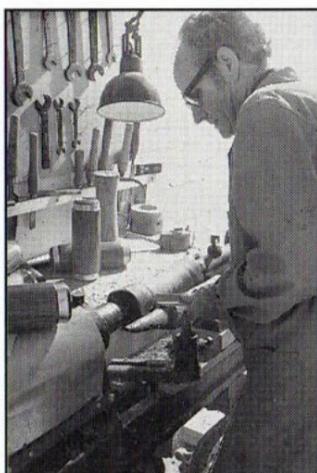
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**John Jaques**

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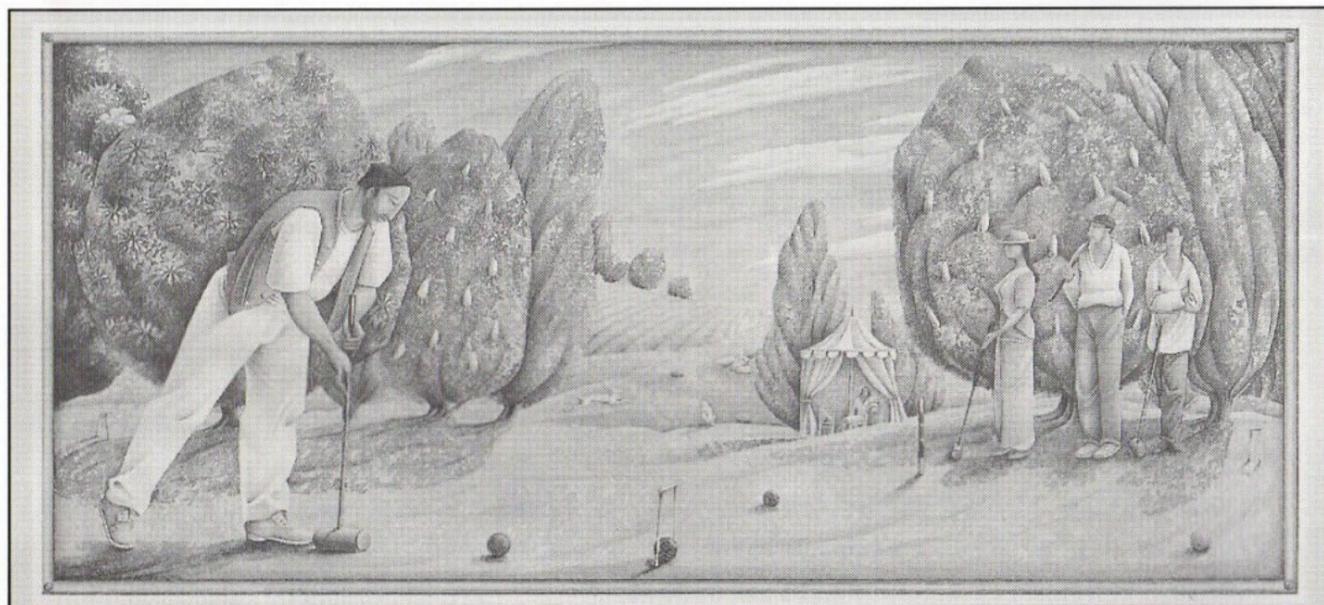
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The  
**CROQUET**  
Gazette

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Produced by Gail Curry for **Publication** in the second week of every other month throughout the year by the Croquet Association **Written contributions** on computer disc (IBM or Macintosh), typed or hand written **Photographs/illustrations** are welcome and should be sent to the Editor **Illustrations/Caroons** are by Jack Shotton unless otherwise stated **Copy date** is shown on the back cover **Tournament Reports and Results** should be sent via the CA Secretary **Delivery queries** should be directed to the CA Office **Advertising** details are available from the Editor through whom advertising should be booked **Editor** Gail Curry **Design/Typesetting** Gail Curry **Printing, Binding & Imagesetting** by The Print House.

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**The Editor Responds**

It would appear from the amount and quality of contributions and feedback I have received since the July issue that players of all levels appear to be rekindling an active interest not only in the Gazette, but in the game itself and its administration. This can only be a healthy thing for the sport. Provided of course that we can deal equally well with those that are constructive or those which may question current policies or past decisions.

During my summer travels I have received some thanks and some criticism for not writing traditional editorials as such. I have three reasons for not doing so. Firstly, I believe that there is nothing worse than a badly written editorial. That is, badly written from the point of view of lack of fact or information, and at present I am not the recipient of either in any vast quantity. Secondly, and following on from my first point, I also believe that this magazine is not a vehicle for the thoughts of the editor on any given subject. My view is that the thoughts and comments of members of the Association are far more important, and that they should draw freely their own conclusions from any information. My third and final reason is of a slightly different nature, time. It may come as a surprise to some, particularly those who try to contact me during the day, but producing this magazine is not my full-time occupation. Although towards the deadline of publication, and after an average of two hundred hours per issue, I often wonder about this myself. Therefore, I have identified certain priorities for this magazine, and at present the top of the list is occupied by development.

All that said and done, what development for the Gazette do I have in mind? Well, don't let anyone tell you the north - south divide does not exist, it certainly does when it comes to printing costs. Therefore, your November issue will be including some full colour pages, a long over due move in my view, and it may just persuade some players to take some photographs.

One other development which you may be interested to hear about is the impending birth of another croquet magazine, 'The Amateur' which will be produced and edited by Andrew Gregory. This will be the third croquet magazine, its content being devoted to mainly 'A' class play, which it is hoped will complement the Gazette - something which could hardly be said of the second croquet magazine 'Taking the Bisque' now edited by David Carpenter, which gives a satirical view of every aspect of the game and its players.

One wonders how many other 'minority' sports could boast such numerous and diverse publications? Perhaps it is possible after all to keep all of the croquet players happy all of the time?

Gail Curry

## ~ Obituary ~

### Robert Prichard 1947 - 1995

Robert David Caradoc Prichard claimed ancestry from Caradoc Vraich Vras. More immediately, he was very much the son of his father the late David Prichard. While he used to glory in complicated explanations, and enjoyed the tittle-tattle of croquet as much as the next dissatisfied associate, he belonged at heart to the "Never complain, never explain" school. The immense courage and good humour with which he underwent a long and distressing final illness set to those who witnessed it an example which few of us could hope to equal.

He belonged to perhaps the leading croquet family of the day and was introduced to the game when still at school. He played actively for over 30 years, travelled everywhere, served vociferously on the Council and knew and was known by almost all tournament players. Of his croquetical achievements, the one which will have made most impact on those who did not know him personally will have been his tournament reporting, especially of the Open Championships. Like Macaulay in his book reviews, Robert would use the report as a pretext to tell us something of his own opinions, invariably interesting and not always strict reportage. People read him with a pleasure passing that of one expecting to see his own name in print.

Robert never became a seriously strong player and it never bothered him. He played often for Wales and once accepted an invitation for Eights week, but principally he played for the fun of it. I recall my last match against him. I was winning easily and he was not on form. Lunch came. Five pints later he returned to the lawn and I never stood a chance.

Robert leaves his mother Betty, his brothers Colin and William and their families. His bulging quiver of godchildren testifies to his popularity and esteem. His wide circle of friends formed a constant stream, first to a succession of hospital sick-beds and later to the flat to which he retired.

Keith Wylie

## Chairman's Column

Elsewhere in this issue you will find an article explaining the CA's policy for loans to clubs. This facility has been available for many years but has only been used occasionally by a few clubs. Now we believe that the best use of the CA's funds is to put them to work for the benefit of clubs and players, rather than tucking them away in a Building Society account or other safe investments which yield little more than the rate of inflation. It makes sense because I believe that the best way for the sport to grow is to help clubs improve the facilities which they offer to their members. That improvement can be in playing surfaces, or in the clubhouse or pavilion. The money is available on loan rather than as a grant because in that way it can be re-circulated for the benefit of many rather than a few. Let us turn Croquet into a sport where the facilities are appropriate to the status of the sport.

This is one way in which the CA is working to promote the interests of its members, but we can only do that effectively if we have the support of members and strengthen our financial position. The members' handbook made much of the way in which the CA Associate membership has grown by more than 50% over the last ten years. What it did not say is that most of that

growth came in the early years and that Associate membership has been at best static over the last four years and actually declined last year.

This issue of Croquet is one of two which goes to all members, Associates and Affiliates, in return for their contribution to the Club Registration Fee. Of the £5.00 which Affiliates contribute to the CA through the CRF at least £2.00 and probably £2.50 is spent in providing and distributing these two issues and in maintaining the Affiliate database to make it possible. The remainder is a very small contribution for a national sport. Let me make it clear that I am not arguing for an increase in the CRF: instead, I am appealing for more Affiliates to think for a moment about taking out Associate membership. If you join now, you can have non-tournament Associateship for the rest of this year and all of next for £11.00. In return you will receive all of the issues of Croquet and the other benefits of Associate membership, but more importantly you will have the satisfaction of knowing that you are making a real contribution to the sport which you enjoy. Please help the CA to help you.

If you want to talk about Associate membership, please ring me - 01482 840739.

Bill Lamb

## British Rankings

as at 25/7/95

1 Fulford RI	2826	124	95	26 Avery MN	2300	35	15
2 Maugham DB	2773	75	59	27 Williams S (I)	2295	31	16
3 Bamford RL (SA)	2756	73	53	28 Southern C	2260	37	24
4 Clarke CD	2726	96	76	29 Heap MEW	2256	13	7
5 Mulliner SN	2659	33	22	30 Surgenor J (S)	2255	19	11
6 Westerby AJ (NZ)	2629	34	22	31 Guest JE	2255	25	16
7 Burrige IJ (W)	2613	103	68	32 Linton AM	2254	18	13
8 Cornelius DA Miss	2577	67	42	33 Patmore CJ	2238	6	6
9 Comish S	2535	54	37	34 Farthing CN	2233	9	6
10 Dawson JP	2529	46	32	35 Williams CN (W)	2228	51	23
11 Openshaw DK	2524	45	29	36 Taylor HP	2227	16	10
12 Irwin CJ	2463	39	25	37 Hallam BG	2226	64	40
13 Goacher DJ	2450	48	30	38 Watson JPG	2222	12	5
14 Day PE	2430	22	9	39 Maugham FI	2218	14	7
15 Cordingley P	2410	62	34	40 Evans MJ (W)	2205	22	14
16 Liddiard GS (S)	2344	39	20	41 Mrozinski AJ (W)	2196	8	5
17 Noble GW	2343	50	37	42 Coles WT	2191	19	9
18 Walters JO	2339	17	12	43 Murray M (S)	2189	17	5
19 McInerney R (I)	2337	27	16	44 Rogerson F (I)	2187	14	10
20 Harrison-Wood D	2333	42	23	45 Wiggins DCD	2185	6	1
21 Prichard WdeB (W)	2326	12	8	46 Toye JS	2181	8	7
22 Gaunt DL	2324	35	17	47 Gunasekera DL (W)	2176	25	12
23 Goddard JP	2314	8	4	48 Burge TR	2172	7	3
24 Palmer LJ (W)	2302	51	32	49 Schmieder CS von (I)	2159	13	8
25 Bond ID (S)	2300	39	20	50 Gregory AK	2145	55	26

# NEWS & INFORMATION

## Cost Cutting Service

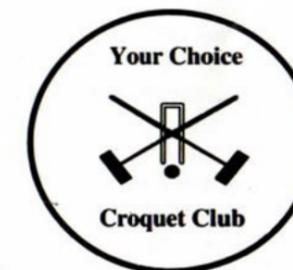
Having recently obtained a commercial sign cutter for the school he works at, John Toye is now able to take orders for signs in order to supplement his department's funds.

Clubs may find this useful for signs advertising the name of their club, direction, information or warning signs. One club for example have labelled all of their chairs "croquet" to ensure that they do not wander into another section of the club. Another club is considering cutting the names of competition winners in gold vinyl to put on the winners boards.

Signs are cut using high quality self-adhesive vinyl in a large choice of colours which can be fixed to any smooth surface and almost any picture/graphic can be incorporated. They can be supplied fixed directly onto a suitable surface or ready to fix to an existing signs/walls/etc. The cost depends on the size, the complexity of the design and the number required. To give an idea, some prices are indicated on the examples (excluding VAT and postage). For more information contact John on 01395 512660.

**Croquet Section: members only** ↑

45cm (18") x 10cm (4") coloured lettering and graphic on a white background. £10 With an acrylic base, £15.



60cm (2ft) dia. Coloured lettering and graphic on a white background. £25. With an acrylic base, £35.

## Croquet at Durham University

October might see the end of the season for croquet but it is the beginning of a new academic year.

The Durham University Croquet Club has been dormant for a number of years due to a lack of support, but we hope next year to be able to re-establish ourselves. Current Durham University students and those coming up as new students in October who are interested in joining the club should write to:

Mark Roberts  
St Chad's College  
18 North Bailey  
Durham DH1 3RH

E-Mail:  
mark.roberts@durham.ac.uk

## Veterans Mystery

Diana Brothers recent delight at winning the Veterans doubles with partner Hamish Hall was greatly enhanced by finding that her father Ted Tucker had also won the event in 1979. A fact unknown to Diana, until a close inspection of the trophies. It remains a mystery however, as to why her father and his partner have their names engraved on the side of one of the silver trugs as well as the base!

## The Price of Croquet Management

In the July issue (238) the book 'Croquet Management' by Don Gaunt and Roger Wheeler was reviewed. Unfortunately the price was not included in the review at the time, which is £10 plus P&P from either of the above.

## Indoor Carpet Details

Following the report on the use of the indoor carpets in the July issue (238), parties interested in

hiring the carpets should note that a hall of size 26yds (24m) long by 18yds (17m) wide is required. As well as this there is a nominal fee for the hire of it, but costs for transport and insurance being the responsibility of the hirer.

Anyone interested in further details should contact Derek Trotman Tel. 01670 518228.

## Bridge-Croquet News

The next Bridge-Croquet tournament will be held at Edgbaston CC on 14th & 15th October. It will be an advanced duplicate pairs event. Pairs will probably play 4 or 5 games of advanced doubles croquet, plus as much bridge as can be squeezed in. Since you will be playing with the same partner throughout the weekend, bridge and croquet, entries are preferred in pairs, although single entries will be accommodated where possible.

Entries to Andrew Gregory Tel 01223 573560.

## Croquet Photographic Competition Extension

Following a disappointing entry so far to the photographic competition launched in the May issue (237), the closing date for entries has been extended from September 1st to October 31st. Not only is this an excellent opportunity for readers to win a weekend for two at the Ripon Spa Hotel, with good croquet facilities, but it is also a good opportunity to boost the photographic library of the Gazette.

For full details of the competition please refer to issue 237 (May 1995).

# Letters...

## Shortage of Referees

Dear Gail

I imagine that we are all familiar with the difficulty of attracting the attention of a "proper" referee when hampered at a hoop for instance and deperately keen to continue the break before losing the flow. This particular situation probably accounts for the majority of instances when a referee is required. This is often simply a matter of good manners with little or no danger of faulting in the stoke. I would like to suggest that instances of this nature could be better dealt with by extending the duties of Umpires.

Item 9 in the Regulations for Tournaments lay out the current allowable duties of umpires and it is interesting to note that these include the determination of a ball off the court, yet how often is a referee called in this instance?

I would like to suggest for discussion that to the existing duties allowed to umpires under Regulation 9 be added the observation of hampered or other "difficult" strokes and the determination of claims for wiring lifts. In this way the qualified referees (the lawyers) would be relieved of the frequent need to observe situations that competent umpires (the technicians) could just as well handle. Tournament managers would appoint their own panel of umpires from the more experienced players present. A training session or competence test would be required to prepare players for these duties.

People are going to ask me why I don't simply become a referee and help solve the problem that way. Well I will, if someone will rewrite the Laws in a way that makes instant sense, but that would only make me over qualified to deal with the situations that I have referred to here.

Mike Hammelev

*An interesting, and I am sure, eminently discussable idea, for which you have just earned yourself a £10 book token. Ed.*

## Revealing Identities

Dear Gail

Can I ask if you have at the means at your

disposal to solve a mystery? I refer to the enigmatical tournament reports which appeared in Issue 236, inasmuch as they are all, save for Dennis Goulding's unattributed. I know I wrote the Cheltenham August weekend and the Sidmouth September reports, and through casual conversation I have discovered that Ron Selmes wrote the Cheltenham September weekend report. There my knowledge ceases, and as I am convinced that none of us planned to be incognito (not even so much as a nom de plume in sight!) I would dearly like to know who wrote the remainder. I cannot be the only one who feels the frustration of not knowing - is there any way of revealing the identities of the authors and letting us all sleep in peace at night?

Deborah Latham

Dear Deborah and others,

*I am sorry to hear that 'Croquet' is causing insomnia, I had always thought it to be a cure not a cause. Alas, I regret I cannot help you out with the names of any authors of the anonymous reports you seek. However, I can promise that all future reports will include the author's name, unless of course they neglect to attach it, in which case the report will not be considered for publication. Ed.*

## Croquet in Cornwall

Dear Gail

Cornwall is a deprived county. Not only does it not have its own university but it also has no Croquet Club.

Having moved to the county nearly three years ago, I have been waiting until we finally got settled before starting to think about croquet again. I have missed it badly since leaving the friendly ambience of the Woking Club in 1992; the nearest club to Falmouth where I have been living since then being, I believe, Plymouth - an hour and a half away.

I, as an inexperienced but enthusiastic player, would dearly like to assist at the birth of Cornwall's first club. But we need, among other things, to have a proposal for a site, etc etc etc. Then equally vital we need some

idea of local interest which can only be gained through publicity.

This is not a battle that I can fight on my own, even if only because, not being wealthy I cannot afford the publicity and other costs to gain the best results. However, I do have time.

I could therefore act as a clearing house for this in the area and would welcome letters, advice and the experience and suggestions of existing clubs.

Tony Backhouse

St Margaret's Cottage

Polgooth

St Austell

PL26 7AX

## Semi-Statistical

Dear Gail

David Appleton (Issue 238) posed pertinent questions about the composition of the CA membership. Unlike David, I am not a statistician. I have simply been playing our game for a long time, during which I have observed certain trends which have come and gone.

Without especially wishing to re-stir the hornets' nest resulting from my letter of three years ago (and how many of those hornets are still CA members?), I repeat that recruitment should be done from established clubs and directed at permanent local residents. We wasted enough time ten years ago trying to establish new clubs and encouraging youngsters to sign up for life.

Andrew Bennet

## Croquet Association Finances

Dear Gail

I was horrified to read about our parlous state. Herewith some suggestions:-

Membership Fee - The fee should be increased to a notional £23, reduced to £20 for prompt payment. Current charges of £21 and £18 do not conform to the "price point" theory that in effect £20 is the same as £18.  
Five Year Membership - Five years for the price of four. Since paid up from the interest earned on £80 just about covers the one year loss of £20. With the benign effect on cash flow in for nothing.

Life Membership - The Association should actively seek to recruit life members for a price where the income earned on the investment covers, or nearly covers, the annual fee, I suggest £300.

Benefactions - Not all croquet players are ancient, but one I know - who defeated me last year in an inter club match - is over 90. The Association should surely be

approaching him to ask to be remembered in his Will. And of course we should be approaching all members on the same lines. In the medium term a highly successful way of raising money, as Oxbridge colleges (for example) have proved.

I am writing this to the magazine rather than direct to the Association's Treasurer, in the hope of stimulating other thoughts on this vital topic. A healthy sport and a financially weak Association are not compatible.

Anthony Fathers

## Why No Practising?

Dear Gail

I wonder whether you or anyone else can shed a little light on a subject which seems to raise the passions of croquet players for reasons that totally confound me; I refer to the convention of not practising before a game. In a recent conversation I was having on this subject with one of my club colleagues, another member interjected with her views that "you don't practise before a match". I responded with what I thought a reasonable question - "Why?" This was answered by an assertion that it was the club's convention. However, when asked for the reason why the club has this "convention" I was promptly told that there does not have to be a reason. Now I would be the first to admit that my elders and betters in the croquet world, especially those who have been elected to committee, probably do know what is best for me. However, it seems to me that anything which prevents a member doing something which, upon first analysis, is not only reasonable but also quite sensible, should at least be based on some sort of reasoning.

The only reference I can find to the subject in the rule book is paragraph 12 of the Regulations for Tournaments in which a Tournament Manager is given the power to disqualify a player for practising on the courts without the manager's permission. In my mind, this raises far more questions about the CA's attitude towards practising before a game than it answers. Implicit in the regulation is that the possibility that the tournament manager can give permission to practise - the inference being that there can be nothing so fundamentally wrong with practising if it can be sanctioned by a manager. But what guidance are we to follow where there is no manager, or when the situation is not a tournament or when the practise takes place off the court? Finally, if the CA has a view about practising in these situations, why has it not been prescribed

in the general or miscellaneous laws of play?

Although I am a member of the York club, I actually live in Leeds and therefore I try to arrange a couple of club matches to be played in sequence so that I make more use of the travelling time. No opponent in the second match has ever expressed concern that I had effectively had some practise by playing the first. However, a remark has been made about me using the short time between matches for practise purposes. This seems an inherently illogical situation. Can you help me to resolve this dilemma by stating the CA's official view on practising before a match?

Phillip Pawson

Dear Phillip

*An interesting and perhaps long overdue question, as so many players glibly publicise this convention without question. I can understand your particular dilemma, that is wishing to utilise what time you have at the club. However there are other reasons why I could see players wishing to avail themselves of practise or a 'warm up' After all, practise was allowed at the World Championships held at Carden Park last year, although for some strange reason players were not allowed to run hoops. However, it is the official view you require, so I have consulted with Keith Aiton of the Laws Committee on your behalf and the official version is this:*

*The convention of which you speak is merely a convention, which is why it is not covered in the laws, apart from the section you state. There is therefore nothing to stop a player from practising, other than etiquette, which may be alleviated by offering the practice facility used to the opponent, providing it is of the same time and conditions. Ed.*

## Statistical Reply

Dear Gail,

The short answer to some of David Appleton's questions on the CA database is that the CA has never asked for or recorded the age or date of birth of its Associates, apart from Juniors, and therefore the database cannot provide some of the information that David suggests might be useful.

The first CA database system was a DOS based Paradox implemented for the CA by Bill Gillott and proved to be very useful. Two years ago the decision was taken to move to a Windows environment and the current system has been custom-

built for the CA by Geoffrey Cuttle using Visual Basic and provides much more information.

As far as the database is concerned, our Associates never die or fade away, they merely get re-classified so that the information does not get lost. However, the financial detail of when subscriptions were last paid has only been available for the last two years and this is a serious restriction on the examination of past Associates records for statistical purposes. We have also to remember that many of our members started to play and joined the CA before the widespread use of electronic computers, and possibly before they were invented. Although the manual records were transcribed on to the database, these lacked some information which we now regard as essential. For example, the date at which the Associate joined was not recorded before 1981.

The principal use of the database is to improve the efficiency of the office housekeeping. Here it is an enormous benefit, providing quickly and easily financial reports, general and specific address labels, a Mailsort disk for the distribution of the magazine, etc. Nevertheless, like David, I am aware of, and interested in, the advantages of statistical information. I am confident the database will become increasingly more useful and will be able to provide some of the answers to David's questions in a few year's time.

Bill Lamb

## Reply on Time

Dear Gail,

Martin Murray's reply to Brian Storey's request for guidance on the calling of time was brief and accurate but I feel that your readers, particularly those who are new to the game and may be called upon one day to keep time, deserve a more detailed explanation and I offer the following suggestion for best practice:

When a timekeeper is appointed, the players are transferring responsibility for that aspect of their game to this official. When the time limit has been reached in the middle of a turn, there is usually no problem. The extension period begins and the striker completes his turn and the adversary plays one subsequent turn. A problem arises with the normal definition of the end of a turn that it ends when the striker quits the court in the belief that his turn has ended (Law 26(d)), as this is too imprecise. Law 26(d) is superseded

by Regulation 13(c)(2) which for the purpose of determining whether the striker's turn ends before or after time is called, it is deemed that the striker's turn ends as soon as he strikes his ball or is deemed to have played it in the last stroke of his turn.

If the timekeeper calls time audibly as he is required to do so under Regulation 13(c)(1) and particularly if he does so with his back to the play, there could still be an honest difference of opinion between the players whether the ball was struck immediately before or after time. To avoid this, it should be the timekeeper's responsibility to make the decision and he must therefore be in a position to see the play. It then follows that there is no necessity to call time, loudly or otherwise, in the middle of a turn or during that last stroke. He can inform both players quietly at a non-critical moment when the time limit was reached. The striker can play without disturbance and the rest of us, whether double-banked with the game in question or playing on adjacent lawns, can get on with

our games in peace.

I am sorry that it took so long to get a reply to Brian Storey's letter. As Chairman of Council, I am prepared to look into any complaints which Associates may have and to take action where necessary. Please let me know.

Bill Lamb

### Venues Too Short

Dear Editor

It is widely known that most croquet players generally prefer not to travel long distances for play, particularly for one day events. Furthermore, the point was made at the Federation Conference earlier this year that golf croquet and short croquet players are not interested in long distance travel.

I noted that the National Short Croquet Competition area finals were at just two venues, 24 players competing for 10 places in the national final. Could there not have been five area finals at venues more convenient to the participants, especially as

the fixture book states that venues will be arranged to suit the entry?

Frances Ransom

The organiser of the National Short Croquet event, Mr Bill Gillott, gives his reply as follows.

It would have been possible to arrange four groups of six players provided sufficient managers could have been found. It was felt that people would enjoy being in large groups covering a larger area so that 2 venues of 12 each were chosen. The participants seemed to enjoy the arrangements. Nonetheless your comments will be passed to next years organiser.

## Making the Bisque

However many you make you are always one short when it comes to the tournament, so my idea is when you've got enough make some more!

I know the proper thing is to get some dowel of the precise diameter, not specified in the Rules, cut to length and sharpen the ends. No doubt mechanical means now replace the hours of pleasant whittling, but against an opponent having an excellent break it was always, with imagination, good therapy.

I always looked for old clothes horses and similar a source of supply and in fact developed a glint in the eye when passing these, playpens etc. In fact if sent to prison I'm sure I would only be four bisques away from freedom via the window. I see nothing wrong with metal bisques.

My smartest bisques were painted blue at one end and yellow at the other, hence put them in the ground correctly and there is no doubt which team they belong to, but perhaps the discussion as to who the last bisque belongs to is the most exciting part of the game!

Trying to play under all conditions led to the construction of bisques with luminous paint, you could see the bisques even when the balls disappeared in the twilight.

Plant labels are cheap but what a job trying to stick them into the ground, I need five bisques to put my bisques in, and leaving them on the ground brings back the long discussions on if and when they were used.

Best ever was in a garden where wine bottles seemed to grow in flower borders and a plate of grapes was used for bisques and of course eaten when used, this has great scope for development, playing a very high handicap player with lots of bisques could be the equivalent to at least a bottle of wine.

Now it is all solved, and the answer is as old as the great wall of China, chop sticks! They are cheap, strong, and plastic ones can be wiped clean and in an emergency can be used to eat your lunch!

One last thought, emergency bisques. Needed when all else has failed. I've used

coins, (make sure you get them back), the contents of a ladies handbag and I suppose as a desparate measure clothing could be used, but this might lead to 'strip croquet' and a whole new ball game.

Syd Jones

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## CA Loans - Come And Get Them

The CA has never been wealthy. But its objective has always been 'to encourage, promote and develop the game', which in practice means encouraging and developing clubs. This is often best done by giving financial help, as can be seen in the foundation of the Surbiton club. Two committees of the CA can make loans - Development, and Finance and General Purposes (F&GP). The first of these can also make grants, but it will not normally make available a total of more than £500. Larger amounts require the approval of F&GP.

In 1995 the Sports Council has started to distribute grants funded by the National Lottery. These are only available for projects costing more than £5,000, but they can provide more than 50% of the outlay. This is a great opportunity. Council therefore agreed to support suitable applications with CA funds for up to one quarter of the total

cost and this was publicised in the Chairman's letter to associates in January. A sub-committee has been appointed to scrutinise applications. This consists of the Treasurer (Roger Bray) and the chairmen of Development and F&GP (Derek Trotman and Stephen Badger).

F&GP has decided that this provides a good platform to set the CA's overall loan policy in context. As already indicated, the CA is not rich. But we have concluded that, if suitable applications are received, we should pursue an active policy of providing loans to clubs whether to support lottery applications or for general purposes. It would be nice to consider all applications together. Therefore, where time is not a constraint, clubs are invited to submit applications in advance of the F&GP meeting held regularly at the beginning of March each year. More urgent applications may be made at any time and should be addressed to any of the

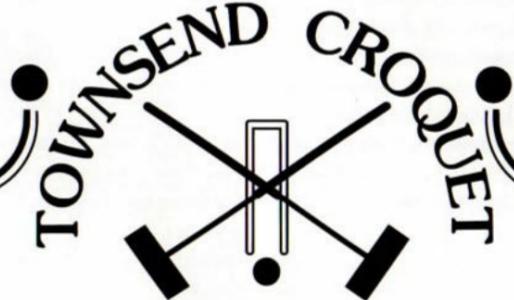
three members of the sub-committee listed above c/o the CA office.

We visualise that the maximum amount which it would be prudent to have outstanding in loans at any one time would be £25,000. After allowing for regular repayments this could permit loans of up to £10,000 per year on average. Such loans would be for a minimum of three years and might be extended to five years if necessary, repayable in equal installments over the period. Interest would be fixed for the first three years at a rate to be settled by F&GP (currently 3%) and would be negotiable thereafter.

The CA will normally be required by the Sports Council to make an assessment of lottery applications from affiliated clubs. This will take account of factors such as the overall position of the club, its facilities, the benefits expected to accrue from it plans and the view of the relevant Federation. Where a project is below the threshold for such funding, the amount raised by the applicant itself, its contribution to the activities of the CA in the past, the likelihood of the loan attracting further finance and the benefit of the project to the general good of the game will also be relevant.

But the important point is that loan finance is available. If you think that your club can benefit from it, come and talk to us.

Stephen Badger/Roger Bray/Derek Trotman



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## HELPFUL HINTS

by Don Gaunt

A Series of short tips and ideas for beginners and improvers

Please note that these hints may not always be the best solution, consider your options carefully.

### No1. Know your ratios

In a croquet stroke, the distance that each ball travels depends on the type of shot you play. So, in a roll they both travel about the same distance and in a stop shot the croqueted ball travels much further than your ball. The relationship between the distances travelled by the two balls is called their ratio.

If C is the distance travelled by the croqueted ball and Y is the distance travelled by your ball, the ratio is found by comparing C with Y.

Here are three examples to demonstrate the point.

1. A drive shot where the croqueted ball travels 6 yards and your ball travels 2 yards. C=6 and Y=2

The ratio is thus 3 to 1.

This figure can be made simpler by dividing everything by 2. This gives a ratio of 3 to 1, which is the same but easier to use because you can now say,

"For every yard (or foot or metre) that my ball travels, the croqueted ball will travel 3".

2. A roll shot where both balls travel 6 yards. C=6 and Y=6

The ratio is 6 divided by 6. Dividing everything by 6 gives a ratio of 1 to 1.

"For every yard (or foot or metre) that my ball travels, the croqueted ball will travel 1 also".

This is of course what you want from a roll shot!

3. A stop shot where the croqueted ball travels 4 yards and your ball travels 1.5 feet.

C=4 and Y=0.5

In this case, to make Y=1 we multiply everything by 2. The ratio is thus 8 to 1.

So far, so good. All we have done so far, though, is to produce a set of figures. How can they help you play better?

There are many occasions where you have just made a roquet, say on red, perhaps from a hit-in and you are faced with a croquet shot to reach another ball. The temptation is often to just do a take-off shot, leaving the red ball uselessly behind.

Look at the situation. Can you put red somewhere useful? If you cannot do so directly, can you do so by going to your target ball via another?

Consider 1. You have just roqueted a ball in corner 4. There is a ball at your hoop (4). A good croquet stroke will give you a three-ball break.

Consider 2. You have just roqueted a ball in corner 2. There is a ball at your hoop (3-back) and a ball at 2. A good croquet stroke will give you a 4-ball break.

In both cases I say "a good croquet stroke". But what sort of stroke?

This is where ratios come in. In the first consideration you need to send the croqueted ball to 5 while getting your ball to the pioneer at 4. A look at the lawn shows that the distance to 5 is about twice the distance to 4. A look at the table shows that a half roll is indicated.

In consideration 2, the distance to 4-back is about 4 times that to the ball at 2 (which you would like to rush to the middle of your 4-ball break). The table indicates a drive stroke.

So a good knowledge of ratios can help you decide which stroke is best for the occasion. Of course you have to be able to play the stroke! If you cannot do so, then off to the lawn with you for some practice!

The table below is listed in order of likely accuracy, the most accurate at the top.

Exercise: Try the strokes in the table over different distances and see if your ratios are similar. They need not be exactly the same but they should be consistent, eg if you get 3 to 1 on your drive stroke, you should always get 3 to 1. Note down your results.

Table of Ratios	
Type of Stroke.	Approximate Ratio
Drive	4 to 1
Full Roll	1 to 1
Half Roll	2 to 1
Stop Shot	8 to 1
Quarter Roll	3 to 1
Three Quarter Roll	1.5 to 1
Pass Roll	0.75 to 1

\* Exact distances will vary with players and equipment. This is discussed in Helpful Hints No2.

# The CA Council & It's Committees

In the first of a two part series, the chairmen of the various CA Council committees explain the role and responsibilities of their respective committees.

### The Finance & General Puposes Committee

F&GP, like most other CA committees, normally meet three times a year shortly before the three winter meetings of Council. It is a standing committee of Council and so its activities are governed by standing orders. As might be deduced from its name it is assigned matters relating to the general finance of the CA and 'matters not covered by the terms of refrence of any other committee'. In addition individual members have monitoring responsibilities for the work of other committees.

As a result F&GP should get a fair over-view of what is happening in the CA and this is no doubt why its Chairman is ex-officio a member of the Executive Committee.

Day-to-day control of the CA's finances lies with the Treasurer. F&GP is responsible for drawing together all pending plans and setting the annual budget, which may involve requiring certain cut-backs. But this should not be perceived as purely negative; last year F&GP was happy to point out that one committee was actually falling behind on its spending plans.

F&GP is also responsible for responding to significant loan applications from clubs. In one case earlier this year such an application was sanctioned, terms agreed and the funds dispersed in little more than a fortnight. With the responsibility for funds from the Lottery to augment other resources we hope to be receiving more applications.

And so our objectives? I suppose to maintain the CA's finances in good order and to become more efficient in dealing with the 'other matters'. I'm afraid it is as mundane as that.

Stephen Badger - F&GP Chairman

Committee Members 94/95  
Keith Aiton, Chris Clarke, Geoffrey Cuttle, Andrew Hope, Derek Trotman.  
Ex-officio: Bill Lamb and Roger Bray  
In attendance: Chris Hudson, Alan Oldham

### The Editorial Committee

The paradox of an editorial board is that if an editor is insensitive to his readership and fails, then he is unlikely to listen to anything an editorial board says either. Conversely, if he responds well to his readers and succeeds, then what need is there for an editorial board?

First, it can help an editor by acting as a sounding board against which new ideas can be bounced before they are put into print.

Secondly, even though it may not need to bark, it has to remain as an ever vigilant watch dog, getting reactions from members and discussing these with the editor. So please, if you have views, don't grumble in the bar but get out your pens and write and tell both us and the editor.

Finally we have to ensure that the magazine is a proper journal of record. It must publish the business of the CA (Council decisions, tournament results etc.) not just to inform associates but also so that future generations can turn to "the Croquet Gazette" to find out what really did take place on the lawns and in the committee rooms of today.

Geoffrey Cuttle - Editorial Chairman

Committee members 94/95  
Keith Aiton, Hamish Hall, Stephen Mulliner.

### The Development Committee

The editor asked me the question - 'What does the Development Committee do?' Here then is a brief answer which summarises the work load undertaken by the largest of the CA Standing Committees.

The main objective of the committee is to collate and administer the development of croquet throughout the CA domain and for this reason the membership includes the Development Officer from each of the Federations together with at least 2 members of Council and the National Development Officer. An annual budget which has to be

approved by Council usually includes a contribution to a Development Fund which ensures that monies are available in the form of small grants or loans to support development activities such as the start up of new clubs, improvement of court surfaces and club facilities and the establishment of four court clubs. Efforts of individual clubs to improve their facilities and/or promote the CA are recognised by the annual award of the Apps-Heley and Townsend trophies to the most successful clubs.

The organisation of the Federation Conference to encourage an exchange of information between the membership, Federations and Council was instigated by the committee and continues to feature as an important part of the years activities.

During the last year extra work has occurred in assessing and implementing the Forward Plan. One item currently being pursued is a review of synthetic grass surfaces with the object of preparing a standard for a croquet court.

Additional responsibilities have also resulted from the transfer of the organisation and use of the indoor carpets to the committee. The carpets have been an under utilised asset for several years and in an attempt to rectify the situation an Inter-Federation Tournament using both carpets on one site was organised. The success of this event should ensure its repeat next year with we hope other more local events.

Anyone wishing to know more about our activities should contact me or their Federation Development Officer.

Derek Trotman - Development Chairman

National Dev'pment Officer - Chris Hudson  
Croquet North - Bruce Rannie  
Yorks & Humberside - Keith Smith  
North West - James Hawkins  
East Midlands - Gary Norman  
West Midlands - Chris Bennett  
South West - Ian Maugham  
East Anglia - Judy Anderson  
South East - Ron Welch  
Southern - Bob Smith

### The Publicity Committee

The Publicity Committee consists of Bill Gillott, Charles Townsend, Judy Anderson and Alan Oldham, also Bill Lamb, Stephen Badger and Roger Bray as ex-officio members, with the National Development Officer Chris Hudson in attendance, and myself as Chairman. We meet about twice a year and report to Council.

The main objectives are publicity and obtaining sponsorship. Publicity falls into two main categories, internal and external.

Internal publicity is the main communication between the Council and the members, this is through the magazine and we have published this year, for the first time, Chris Hudson's members handbook and a 'Year Planner'. We also produce the Club Registration Handbook available to all clubs, which gives details of the advantages that can be gained through Croquet Association membership.

External publicity includes press releases of main events, results and details of National Croquet Day. We supply information to newspapers and magazines about the Association, clubs and the game itself.

We organise National Croquet Day, providing clubs with posters and the public with information.

We hope to provide assistance and communication between Federation Publicity Officers to co-ordinate local and national publicity.

Any comments and ideas are very welcome, please write or give me a ring on 0191 2522962.

Syd Jones - Publicity Chairman

### The International Committee

The committee has the task of organising events of an international flavour that take place in England, for example this year we have been concerned with the Solomon Trophy match against the USA and a match against South Africa. We have also been involved in setting up the visit of a group of golf croquet players from Egypt. Next year we are hosting the MacRobertson Shield and the committee is responsible for organising that event, which we intend to use as a vehicle for obtaining sponsorship income, television exposure, and hence greater publicity for the sport itself.

We are also concerned with the CA's involvement in world croquet, and hence we act as a forum for discussion on any issues relating to our involvement with the World Croquet Federation, and we choose the delegates who will attend the annual WCF Council meeting and vote on the behalf of the CA. In the next year we will be seeking ways of raising the CA's profile in world croquet, in order that our views are heard in the WCF. In this respect it is important that committee members do everything possible to maintain and enhance the rapport that they have with players and officials from other countries.

The CA is sometimes criticised for only being concerned with the "top" players. While this criticism is blatantly unfair when applied to Council as a whole, it is certainly apt (and hence not a criticism at all) when applied to this committee. I think it is vital that the CA maintains its position as one of the leading countries in world croquet, and of necessity this means being concerned with matters of relevance only to the better players. The benefit for the CA as a whole is that a higher profile will raise public awareness which in turn will lead to more

enquiries about the game and hopefully more members for clubs and the CA.

Keith Aiton - International Committee Chairman

Committee members 94/95  
Chris Clarke, Andrew Hope, Colin Irwin, Stephen Mulliner, Martin Murray.

### The Selection Committee

There is not a great deal to say about this committee, for, as the name suggests, it is responsible for selecting players to compete in events. The core function of the committee is to select players for the President's Cup, Chairman's Salver, Spencer Ell Cup, Selectors' Weekend, Barlow Bowl and Longman Bowl. This is an annual task and takes place at the end of July. Players declare their availability for these events by sending in the form provided in the fixture book. I should take this opportunity to invite people to send in the form, even if you think you are not good enough to compete. Please don't be shy!

The committee is also involved in selecting international teams, and when the need arises, in selecting individuals to represent the CA at events such as the World Championship, European Championship, and (for the first time this year) golf croquet and one ball croquet events in Italy. In the Autumn of this year we will also be selecting the MacRobertson Shield Team for 1996.

Keith Aiton - Selection Committee Chairman

Committee members 94/95  
Ian Burridge, Chris Clarke, Bill Lamb, Stephen Mulliner.

## Two Modern Day Success Stories

### Jersey C.C.

Croquet was a popular sport in Jersey before the Second World War - the Caesarean Croquet and Lawn Tennis Club. However, after the war the club was disbanded due to a lack of support.

The present Jersey Croquet Club was formed in 1982. Since its formation, and till the present facilities provided by Sports, Leisure and Recreation were made available in 1995, the Club had never enjoyed proper facilities and, indeed, played at 7 different venues. This situation made it extremely difficult for the Club to attract new members and impossible for it to participate in league events in England and to hold tournaments, though an annual match was played against both Guernsey and France; the French match was cancelled in 1994 because, having been provided with international standard lawns,

they refused to play on lawns of an inferior standard.

Despite the aforementioned difficulties the club has survived and has sent representatives to both the World and European Championships.

The new facilities - club house and four lawns - which came on stream in time for the 1995 season, were formally opened by the Lieutenant Governor of Jersey on the 8th April. The achievement of the club since then has been considerable. Membership has more than doubled, more international matches have been planned and a bid made to host the 1996 European Championships.

The club began the 1995 season with, for the first time, 4 CA approved coaches and two referees. Membership currently stands at 74 - 65 adult members and 9 junior

members (10 - 18 years old). There are more potential members attending coaching courses. The club has joined the the South West Federation League and will compete next year.

In July of this year, the club hosted its first CA approved tournament - The Jersey Open Championship - generously sponsored by Keith Prowse and Island Print.

The club has achieved more this year than it has in the previous 12 years and with the facilities it enjoys it has much to offer not only locally but internationally.

The club has a wide reputation for being very friendly and we hope this will always be so. Visitors are most welcome and will be made to feel at home.

Richard Sowerby

### Royal Tunbridge Wells C.C.

On National Croquet Day, 3rd June, the weather could not dampen the enthusiasm of members and supporters of Royal Tunbridge Wells CC at the opening of their new clubhouse and 3 lawn venue, in Calverley Park Gardens.

With her bubbling personality, television wine expert, Miss Jilly Goolden, brought a ray of sunshine to the proceedings by cutting a ribbon and officially declaring the clubhouse open, presided over by the Mayor and Lady Mayoress. Jilly Goolden was full of praise for the new venue and for the efforts by the members, led by their chairman Peter Howell, in establishing a croquet club in the middle of town.

The CA was well represented by the attendance of John Solomon, Tony Antenen and Dennis Shaw. Following the ceremony, exhibition matches took place and those beginners brave enough to face the steady drizzle tried their hand on the lawns. There was a good deal of interest and the club is hopeful of increasing its membership.

It has taken many years to establish proper facilities in Tunbridge Wells. The club, founded by Gerald Williams in the grounds of his private house in nearby Frant, lost this venue after the hurricane of 1987 when fir trees crashed down onto the lawns and clubhouse, rendering them a write off. Since then the club has struggled to survive, making applications to every possible fund

for financial support, only to be turned down time after time. Due to a generous anonymous donation, the club raised sufficient private funds to build a clubhouse and Peter Howell 'bullied' the local Council into offering under-used tennis lawns in the middle of town.

With responsibility for the future

maintainance of the lawns which need to be brought up to standard, the club's finances will be stretched but at long last, Tunbridge Wells is on the croquet map!

In the words of Mae West - "Come up and see us some time."

Audrey Howell



Peter Howell, Gilly Goolden and the Lady Mayoress and Mayor of Tunbridge Wells, pictured on the new courts at Tunbridge Wells Croquet Club.

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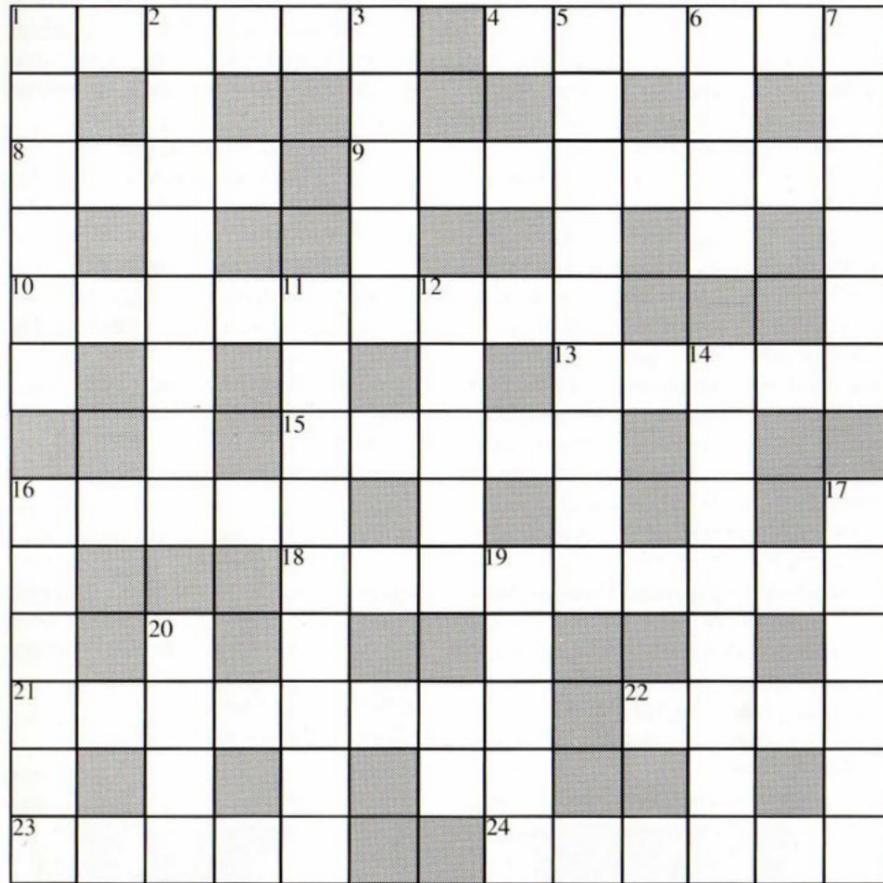
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# The Courtside Crossword



Across

- 1 Hidden from the eye, but redeemed to the ear (6)
- 4 Sailor cast away (6)
- 8 Does the Prof. pray for guidance? (4)
- 9 Fellow getting older but still running things (8)
- 10 4? Pooh! (5 - 4)
- 13 Thumps in the colours of rank (5)
- 15 Medico has a degree in excitement (5)
- 16 Game from 3 in good time (5)
- 18 Lewd? No, I'm but starting the first HQ (9)
- 21 Argues, takes sides and alternate notes (8)
- 22 Sounds like the editor's in a fury (4)
- 23 Such meetings would test saint's patience (6)
- 24 Scattered about and started growing (6)

Down

- 1 However cute, an ancient couldn't stop the sea (6)
- 2 We have a young sheep in the seat (8)
- 3 Nearly bombed back to civvy street (5)
- 5 Veto the third in sequence (9)
- 6 Radiate after orders, last (4)
- 7 Old style croquet - the point of new style garment (6)
- 11 Donation we men don't give (9)
- 12 Dismay in the style of a jolly fellow (5)
- 14 Not just the Scot's team doctor (8)
- 16 Gun-toting pot-hunter? (6)
- 17 Means to be not out with nurse (6)
- 19 Gets the advantage (or its opposite) (5)
- 20 Only a cast into the grey (4)

# Fantasy Croquet 1995

1995 FANTASY CROQUET LEAGUE  
TOP 20 MANAGERS  
(8th August, 1995)

Manager	Pts	Team
D Regan	301	Burridge, Fulford, Harrison-Wood, C. Williams
A Leggate	270	Avery, Cordingley, Fulford, Leggate
T Danby	264	Cornelius, Fulford, Gaunt, Toye
J Walters	256	Avery, Clarke, Haslam, Openshaw

R Fulford	253	Comish, Fulford, Gregory, Leggate
G Bennett	250	Cordingley, Fulford, Noble, Palmer
B Hallam	241	Aiton, Fulford, Gaunt, Goacher
C Clarke	233	Clarke, Cordingley, Gregory, Haslam
J Anderson	232	Clarke, Cordingley, Gregory, Tuke
J Death	232	Aiton, Clarke, Cordingley, Gregory
P Simmonds	232	Burridge, Cornelius, Leggate, Mulliner

D Guban	229	Avery, Burridge, Hawkins, Maugham
D Magee	227	Cordingley, Farthing, Fulford, Goddard
M Regan	227	Bamford, Burridge, Harrison-Wood, C. Williams
F Gaunt	226	Bamford, Cornelius, Harrison-Wood, Leggate
C Farthing	224	Avery, Bamford, Cornelius, Leggate
T Anderson	222	Aiton, Comish, Fulford, Lamb
Team C	220	Clarke, Coles, Cordingley, Curry
M Hammelev	215	Ames, Clarke, Cordingley, Curry
L Palmer	211	Clarke, Dawson, Lamb, Tuke

Full details of all of the teams and details for next seasons competition will appear in the next issue of the Gazette.

# Real Croquet and Full Bisques

In the last two issues there have been cogent contributions to the debate on Full Bisque versus Normal Difference handicap croquet, especially from Geoffrey Cuttle and Duncan Reeve. I cannot argue with their logic, yet I am uneasy.

I have also been in search of Real Croquet. Robert Prichard used the phrase in his report on last year's Opens. Yet what is Real Croquet?

Sunday 14th August 1994, 2pm. The first round of the Edgbaston handicap doubles knock-out, between Henry and Sylvia Fellows, a delightful couple who were married before I was born, and myself and John Green. John is an irrepressible sexagenarian who seems every autumn to undergo a life-threatening operation, and every spring to come bounding back onto the lawns with renewed enthusiasm. Henry's handicap is a dogged 3, Sylvia is a relative novice. John Green is a 14, and I am Club Champion, a minus-player, and sauntering back from a lunchtime pint at the Dirty Duck. Pleasantries are exchanged, the toss is made, the game is started by me instructing John to run first hoop. John manages this feat remarkably often - his approach to the game is similar to David Maugham's, albeit at a less exalted level. His croquet strokes are relatively poor, but he can run hoops from anywhere. Having played with John for some years, I now know that I send him onto the lawn and do not interrupt him. Five minutes later he'll return grinning, balls all over the lawn, but his clip will be one or two hoops further on. John is a steam train, who can run out of steam.

I am thus concerned when after the first hour, John has made only two hoops to Sylvia's four. Henry and I are naturally holding ourselves back. The second hour is better as John opens up a 7-5 lead on Sylvia. Henry is driven to desperate measures: at ten past four, he allows Sylvia to take the first of their four bisques. The Fellows then become spendthrifts, and a brief hour later all bisques are gone. Sylvia's clip is now on rover, Henry is going round gradually.

I judge that the time is right to enter the fray myself. Henry is having difficulties with three-back, allowing me to get in, score some hoops, and peel my partner - not all in one turn, you understand. After four hours or so, a denouement. Henry, still for three-back, has joined up with Sylvia, still for rover, in the middle of the West boundary. My clip is on the peg; John is attempting rover. He sticks. Henry elects to play, but fails three-back. As Henry trudges off, the crowd, which is appreciative, if a little restive, intervenes. "If I were you, Henry, I'd have let Sylvia have a go."

Rarely can the danger of unsolicited advice have been so graphically illustrated. Half an hour later, a denouement. Henry, still for three-back, has joined up with Sylvia, still for rover, in the middle of the West boundary. My clip is on the peg; John is attempting rover. He sticks. It occurs to the pragmatic Henry that maybe Sylvia should play, and she makes rover. Henry soon makes three-back on his sixth attempt.

The climax builds. Three clips on the peg, John's is on rover. Henry is about to play the last shot of his turn, and it is one of the two best shots I have ever witnessed. My ball is in first corner; John's is six yards due east of the peg. Sylvia's ball is a foot or so north of the peg; Henry's, which has already roqueted Sylvia's, is four or five feet north-north-east of his partner ball. Henry now hits Sylvia onto the peg, his own ball finishing three yards due west of the peg. It is completely wired from John's ball. Thus I have the honour of the last shot at Henry's ball.

Seasoned observers of croquet will know what I am about to describe. From 20 yards I hit Henry's ball, and at 60 degrees it is cut onto the peg. The perfect end to the perfect game, and perfectly timed as well, for it is now just after 7pm and the pub has re-opened.

Now that was surely Real Croquet. Four players, of different ages and abilities, spending a summer afternoon locked in friendly but competitive struggle. It was certainly the best game in which I have played.

There are four things that would have ruined our game. The first is that if any of us had been playing really well, the fine balance of the game would have been fatally disturbed. The other three are: Rain; Time Limits; and Full Bisques.

Now I'm not just talking about Handicap Doubles. A player I know is handicapped 10. He has read "Plus One on Time", and knows that when he faces a minus player, he is supposed to use his bisques straight away to set up breaks. Indeed he does so, and often wins such games. But he doesn't really enjoy doing it. The games that he enjoys have two or three bisques either way, an insignificant number. This enables him to lock his opponent into a war of minds, a war which will have many battles in the course of the game. On the occasions that he wins, he likes to think that it is not because he played better than his opponent, but because he outsmarted him.

This player does not like Full Bisque croquet, because it forces him to treat every game as if he were playing a scratch player. And

this player is not alone. I suspect that most players who are no longer improving, but have found their level, prefer a tight game with someone of similar ability, rather than seeing whether their bisques last out against a minus-player.

I am not condemning Full Bisque croquet out of hand. I accept the arguments that it is the ideal game for beginners and improvers, and that universal adoption of it would lead to more reasonable handicapping. (I also agree with Duncan Reeve that the only sensible "base" is zero. To my mind, Full Bisque croquet with a base of say 6 is the sort of compromise that can only be dreamt up by a committee. A high base is sought by those who are told that they ought to play Full Bisque, but don't really want to.)

May I offer a brief analogy with advanced croquet. I wish to dispel the Minus Myth. The Minus Myth is that minus-players are at every turn likely to hit in and go round. We minus-players propagate this Myth so that in handicap games high-bisquers will throw away all their bisques in a panic before we've had a chance to stick in first hoop. There are minus-players who fulfil the Myth - perhaps four or five in this country. The rest of us stick in hoops, take off lawns, miss short roquets. I do such things every weekend, almost every game, for I am a bad minus-player. I am not alone.

Of course the CA should promote excellence in the game by organising Championships, International matches, Master classes. But I hope it continues to support bad minus-players, for instance by continuing to invite the likes of me to the Spencer Ell each year.

Similarly, I believe the CA should promote Full Bisque croquet (with zero base). I believe it should become the primary form of the Handicap game for beginners and improvers, for instance being used for the All-England. But I hope there will remain a place for the Normal Difference game. While the Full Bisque game may be a good simulation of top A-class games, the Normal Difference game is much closer to the 'advanced' croquet that I know and love.

STOP PRESS:

Congratulations to Sylvia Fellows on winning the Halse Cup in an Edgbaston Club weekend in May. Also to John Green, who earned a reduction, and to Henry Fellows, who is now a dogged 2.5. I remain a bad minus-player.

Andrew Gregory

# The Solomon Trophy

GB v USA

Nottingham Croquet Club, 4th 7th July, 1995

After the last encounter between the two sides in the USA, which gave signs of a great improvement in the standard of play of the Americans, there was keen anticipation to see whether they had bridged the gap. However, with the World Championship held in France three weeks before the Solomon Trophy and a second international between GB and South Africa taking place concurrently at Bowdon, neither side was at full strength.

The evening before the match started Keith and Catrina Aiton gave a reception for both teams and some hosts at their house. It was an opportunity to renew old friendships and make new friends.

The lawns at Nottingham looked interesting. Limited watering during the hot dry weather had left most lawns with green patches on a mainly brown surface. The Nottingham groundsman had done a marvellous job in rigidly setting President's Cup hoops to a uniformly tight standard. However, the MacRobertson Shield format of three rounds of doubles and two of singles compressed into four days instead of six is not ideal under testing conditions.

Play started with a round of doubles to get all the players involved as soon as possible. After half an hour's play there seemed to be quite a lot of clips on hoop 2 as the English debutantes strove to conquer their nerves and the Americans tried to come to grips with the strange (to them) conditions. The GB third pair of Steve Comish and Debbie Cornelius proved to be too strong for Doug Grimsley and Johnny Osborne and finished their match in sufficient time for Debbie and Johnny to play their singles. Paul Day, playing with Chris Clarke in the top pair, overcame his nerves, and this match against Bill Berne and Carl Mabee also finished in time for Paul to start a singles against Carl. The GB second pair of Colin Irwin and David Goacher were making heavy weather of their match against the US top pair, Erv Peterson and Rhys Thomas, but won in two straight games in the early evening.

The Nottingham club had arranged a barbecue that evening, with Gordon Hopewell, face flushed as bright red as the fiercely burning charcoal, dispensed various meats cooked or charred to choice. Ominously, we learned that Keith and Catrina had been ill and were unfit to attend. Doug Grimsley had also not been well during the day. Unfortunately, it was the beginning of a stomach infection, possibly viral, which affected at various stages all of the players except Chris Clarke and David Goacher. Chris was suffering from a heavy head cold, but the rumour that David is too slow to catch a virus is probably untrue. The sickness lasted from twelve

to twenty-four hours and then left those affected feeling tired. On the second day, with bodies stretched out on the benches, the club pavilion looked more like a casualty station. From then on, management became a matter of putting on those matches where the players were capable of playing, and it says much for the spirit of both teams that players played on if at all possible, although suffering either discomfort or tiredness.

Of the British players, Debbie Cornelius and Steve Comish formed an effective partnership and both played smoothly as individuals; Paul Day and David Goacher playing with Chris Clarke and Colin Irwin respectively, made nervous starts. David's little dance of joy after successfully making a flick jump stroke through 3-back after a little coaching from Colin was a wonder to behold: later, Colin intervened again to explain the consequences to David when the latter's attempt at an angled rover peel left the peelee in the jaws of the hoop with the striker's ball in contact. Colin was as dependable as ever and showed what an asset he is to any team by playing two matches involving five games in one day, after being up at regular intervals during the previous night. Chris was in wonderful form and played with tremendous authority as befits the current World Champion. I shall long remember his triple against Erv Peterson which started with Chris's ball stuck in hoop 3 with the peelee in position and the opponent balls on the north

## Results

(GB names appear first)

Comish & Cornelius bt Osborne & Grimsley +20 +7 Clarke & Day bt Berne & Mabee +22 +6  
Irwin & Goacher bt Thomas & Peterson +11 +14

Miss D Cornelius bt J Osborne +25TP +17 C Clarke bt D Grimsley +26TP +16  
C Irwin bt E Peterson +12 +23 S Comish bt R Thomas +26 +22  
D Goacher bt W Berne +9 +22 P Day +17 v C Mabee unfinished

Miss D Cornelius bt R Thomas +25 +20 C Irwin bt D Grimsley +17 -2 +17  
C Clarke bt E Peterson +21TP +5 S Comish bt J Osborne +11 +25  
P Day +14 v W Berne unfinished

Comish & Cornelius bt Peterson & Thomas +26 +24  
Clarke & Day bt Grimsley & Osborne +19 +22  
Irwin & Goacher bt Berne & Mabee +11 +15TP

Clarke & Day bt Peterson & Thomas +17TP +22  
Irwin & Goacher bt Grimsley & Osborne +16 +24  
Comish & Cornelius v Berne & Mabee -10 +4 unfinished

**Overall Score: GB 18 USA 0 Unfinished 3**

boundary behind hoop 3 and a few inches out from corner 3: the latter became the pioneer for hoop 4 and the former the pioneer for hoop 5, each rushed effortlessly into position within a foot of the hoop.

It is more difficult to assess the form of the Americans. The conditions about which Chris Clarke was so enthusiastic were obviously an anathema to them. Bill Berne has one of the straightest swings I have ever seen and his partner, Carl Mabee eventually began to appreciate the challenge of testing conditions. Erv Peterson looked tired and Rhys Thomas was having difficulties with his swing. Doug Grimsley recovered first from the illness and played well enough to take a game off Colin Irwin. John Osborn suffered as much as anyone and played well below the form of which he is capable. The answer to Carl Mabee's question: "Why are your players so good?" must lie in the practice and experience we get of these conditions, where it is necessary to tighten up your game to make a break look easy. It will always be difficult if you play mainly under much easier conditions and if the nearest opponent who plays international rules lives a couple of thousand miles away. Nevertheless, they accepted everything with grim good-humour, although it was an experience they will surely wish to forget.

Bill Lamb

# Points Of View

Reg Bamford, Secretary of the Croquet Players Association, replies to last month's article concerning the 14 point advanced game

I would like to respond to the extract from the Scottish Croquet Association Bulletin "A Law Unto Themselves" that appeared in the previous points of view column. The subject of the article was to question whether the 14 point game should be introduced as a new variation of the game.

The introduction of the 14 point game is an attempt to present a more appealing game of croquet for the benefit of both spectators and players. It is not intended to replace the existing game. Its advantages to tournament players can be summarised as:

- \* eliminating routine break play,
- \* shortening the time spent as an out-player,
- \* ensuring that the innings changes on a more regular basis, and
- \* rewarding skilful play.

I sincerely believe that it is the ordinary club member, too, who will experience its advantages:

- \* understanding the rules of the game as a novice is made easier,
- \* a beginner or high-bisqueer has a greater chance of actually completing a game of croquet in a session of play,

- \* the out-player does not sit out any longer than 15 minutes,
- \* the game is perfect for a quick friendly after work.

However, by far the best feature of this game is in organising one-day and two-day tournaments. It is possible for a player to play up to 8 or 9 games in a day, thus making a one-day tournament very attractive. Also as a consolation event (like a Swiss or Egyptian), you can have a quick court turnover and ensure players do not sit out for long periods of time.

The article questions whether croquet needs "yet another version". May I point out that the current Lawbook recognises amongst others, three different variations of the full Association game - a 14 point (with no lifts), an 18 point and a 22 point variation. These games were all introduced in an attempt to shorten the Association game. It is hoped that the proposed 14 point game will replace these three games and thereby actually reduce the number of recognised variations in existence.

The article also questions whether there will one day be a breakaway set of top players. The Croquet Players Association

(CPA) has among its members most of the governing National Croquet Associations in the world, as well as many officials who are making a contribution to the game. It is explicit in the CPA constitution that we work closely with these National Associations and at all times in the best interests of croquet. As secretary of the CPA, I will ensure that this is indeed our practice.

On a more technical note, there was an error in the explanation of the game. A player who has conceded a contact lift is still entitled to lifts (as he would be in the 26 point game).

## Eds Note.

You have now heard, or at least read, both points of view on this proposed alternative to the full Association game. Are you for it or against it? Do you enjoy the more traditional mental and physical battle with opponents, conditions and yourself? Or are you just after a quicker game, which rewards skilful play but eliminates your 'routine' break play?

If you wish to vote on this issue then contact the editors hot-line.

## The Selection Events 1995

The following players have been selected to play in the events below

President's Cup Bowdon 7-10 Sept	Chairman's Salver Hunstanton 7-10 Sept	Spencer Ell Cup Nottingham 6-10 Sept	Barlow Bowl Cheltenham 13-17 Sept	Selector's Weekend Compton 8-10 September
I Burridge	D Goacher	D Gaunt	G Curry	G Bennett
C Clarke	C Irwin	M Heap	R Guban	H Bottomley
S Comish	P Cordingley	C Patmore	P Healy	R Brown
Miss D Cornelius	D Harrison-Wood	B Hallam	D Latham	K Carter
J Dawson	P Day	A Gregory	B McGlen	S Carter
D Maugham	M Avery	C Williams	F Ransom	T Coles
S Mulliner	S Liddiard	C Southern	A Whitaker	E Duckworth
D Openshaw	L Palmer	A Leggate	D Williamson	R Fewtrell
				C Ford
				G Fowler
				M Hammelev
				R Jenkins
				A Linton
				D Magee
				N Morrow
				F Ransom
				R Ransom
				D Shaw
				P Smith
				R Smith
				L Tibble
				P Trimmer
				A Wadley
				J Watson

# Mens & Womens Championship

Cheltenham Croquet Club  
June 12th - 18th 1995

PLAYER	LOST TO	QUOTE
Mark Avery	Goacher	"I'm going home sometime today"
Phil Cordingley	Harrison-Wood	"I did not play well, I was well and truly Panthered"
Gail Curry	Winner	"If we had played for another 20 minutes we could have made a day of the final"
Paul Day	Harrison-Wood	Not available for comment.
David Foulser	Openshaw	"Best I have played since 1991, but he played better"
Don Gaunt	Cordingley	"I do not want to talk people while I'm playing. However, the game was of a high standard and worthy of a semi or final match"
David Goacher	Openshaw	"Game up, break up, good leave, missed lift, failed triple peel. Hitting in went astray"
Andrew Gregory	Goacher	"If he plays as badly against Mark as he did against me then he will lose"
Dayal Gunasekera	Avery	"I was beaten by a better player who played to his true ability in the third game"
Rosemary Guban	Mrs Ransom	"I could not see the balls because of the dull weather. Next time I will remove my sunglasses"
Brian Hallam	Gregory	"After 12 hours of play he won by +1T with the most interesting moment being the lifting of the wrong ball by Andrew"
Mike Hammelev	Hallam	"I was dazed because it was all over in 2 hours 10 minutes"
Bo Harris	Mrs Healey	"I enjoyed it even though my knees did not"
David Harrison-Wood	Openshaw	"I should have taken it out of the hole in corner 2 when he blobbed the hoop"
Pauline Healey	Mrs Ransom	"See you in September"
Barbara Haslam	Ms Curry	"I played well and enjoyed the game"
John Haslam	Gunasekera	"I played my normal game - i.e. like a hacker"
Roger Jenkins	Gregory	"I felt I could have won it. It was a 9 hour match scrappy game, lawn did not help. Lawn 8"
David Kibble	Avery	"I was robbed. It was fun and enjoyable playing best of 3 for the first time"
Alex Leggate	Goacher	"I was devastated by it and he only took 3 minutes 45 seconds for the peg-out"
David Magee	Leggate	"Distressed. I seriously considered giving up the game for all of 3 seconds. I have improved since"
Ian Maugham	Cordingley	"He was too good for me and bigger!"
Nelson Morrow	Openshaw	"Oh God! Let me think about it. Play the ball not the man"
Bernard Neal	Goacher	"Quite pleased. I thought I played reasonably well"
David Openshaw	Winner	
Ray Ransom	Maugham	"When I'm dead people will wonder who was Ray Ransom. I do not suffer from insomnia as the world will not know I was defeated by a small plastic gnome!"
Francis Ransom	Ms Curry	"Today a rooster, tomorrow a feather duster!"
Paul Smith	Foulser	"Very cross. I was done and robbed by time limits. I wish he was better looking"
Lionel Tibble	Harrison-Wood	"I was completely overwhelmed by his swift style of play. It was like feeding Christians to the Lions. I hope he gets indigestion"

**Results:**

*Mens Championship*

First Round  
Hallam bt Hammelev +26 +23TP Gregory bt Jenkins +6 -3t +7t Leggate bt Magee +5 +14 Goacher bt Neal +16 +10 Cordingley bt Gaunt -7 +19 +4 Maugham bt Ransom +19 -16 +19 Harrison Wood bt Day +16 -3 +17  
Second Round  
Avery bt Kibble +13 -17 +10 Gunasekera bt Haslam+24 +11 Gregory bt Hallam -10 +2t +1t Goacher bt Leggate +21 +19 Cordingley bt Maugham +14 +26TP Harrison-Wood bt Tibble +13 -8 +16 Foulser bt Smith +9 +1t Openshaw bt Morrow +22 +13  
Third Round  
Avery bt Gunasekera +16 -12 +17 Goacher bt Gregory +10 +14 Harrison-Wood bt Cordingley +17TP -2 +12 Openshaw bt Foulser +4 -10 +22

*Semi-Finals*

Goacher bt Avery +19 -3 +13 Openshaw bt Harrison-Wood +10 -5 +15t  
Final  
Openshaw bt Goacher -17 +16 +26

*Womens Championship*

First Round  
Ransom bt Guban +17 +2t Healy bt Harris +13 -7 +6t  
Semi-Final  
Ransom bt Healy -14 +22 +6 Curry bt Haslam +12t +2t  
Final  
Curry bt Ransom -9 +11 +1



Brian Hallam, winner of the Du Pre Trophy at the Mens & Womens Championships

*Du Pre*

First Round  
Mrs Guban bt Maugham +12 Smith bt Leggate +13 Foulser bt R Ransom +25 Gunasekera bt Hammelev +3  
Second Round  
Gaunt bt Mr Guban +16 Foulser bt Smith +23 Gunasekera bt Tibble +3 Hallam bt Kibble +2  
Semi-Final  
Gaunt bt Foulser +13 Hallam bt Gunasekera +15  
Final  
Hallam bt Gaunt +15

*Mixed Doubles Championship*

Draw  
First Round  
MsCurry & Harrison-Wood bt Mrs Haslam & Maugham +14  
Second Round  
Mrs Healey & Gregory bt Mr & Mrs Ransom +7 Ms Curry & Harrison-Wood bt Mr Whittall & Gaunt +23 Miss Pritchard & Smith bt Mr & Mrs Magee +1t  
Mrs Guban & Goacher bt Mrs Harris  
Semi-Final  
Ms Curry & Harrison-Wood bt Mrs Healy & Gregory +25 Mrs Guban & Goacher bt Miss Pritchard & Smith +1t  
Final  
Mrs Guban & Goacher bt Ms Curry & Harrison-Wood +6t

*Process*

First Round  
Mrs Guban & Goacher bt Mrs Healey & Gregory +18  
Second Round  
Mrs Guban & Goacher bt Mrs Haslam & Maugham +26TP Mrs Whittall & Gaunt bt Miss Pritchard & Smith +11 Mr & Mrs Ransom bt Mr & Mrs Magee +21 Ms Curry & Harrison-Wood bt Mrs Harris & Foulser +8t

*Semi-Final*

Mrs Whittall & Gaunt bt Mrs Guban & Goacher +4t Mr & Mrs Ransom bt Ms Curry & Harrison-Wood +2t  
Final  
Mrs Whittall & Gaunt bt Mr & Mrs Ransom +10t  
Final of Winners of Draw against winners of Process  
Mrs Guban & Goacher bt Mrs Whittall & Gaunt +9



David Goacher & Rosemary Guban winners of the Mixed Doubles Championship, pictured here with the tournament manager Andrew Gregory.

# GB vs South Africa

Bowdon Croquet Club  
July 4th - 7th 1995

GB won a nail biter in the final game of the last match. Theirs was a useful mix, from maestro Fulford, through high-ranking Phil Cordingley and David Harrison-Wood, to local expert Alan Linton. Reginald Bamford (27) was the senior South African, with students Wynand Louw and Andrew Knox, and William Louw freshly out of 'A' levels.

In the opening doubles, Fulford, in monsoon mood, blew his opponents away before lunch! Day 1, 2-0. There was a soap opera in the first few minutes the next morning; Bamford, with all the ammunition clustered in 4th corner, played a wrong ball - Fulford proceeded immediately to do the same. And then they blasted away at each other with the power and accuracy of 16 inch naval guns. Five senior citizens on the Bowdon verandah nodded sagely and said the game was perfectly simple after all. Certainly, the two titans proved John Solomon's adage: 'Innings is winnings'. Once they hit in, it was 'see you at the peg'. Three triples by Bamford defeating one



Manager - Martin Grainger Brown. GB - Alan Linton, David Harrison-Wood, Phil Cordingley, Robert Fulford. SA- William Louw, Wynand Louw, Reg Bamford, Andrew Knox

sextuple by Fulford. Meanwhile, the errant sun returned to warm South African backs and hearts, enabling Wynand Louw to recover bravely against Cordingley from 2-1 down, and William Louw to pass on hoopitis to David Harrison-Wood. Day 2: 1 - 3. Overall 3 - 3

Doubles again. Bamford / Knox did a TPO and then contrived to win on time after four hours; Fulford/Linton were too strong for the Louws. Day 3: 1 - 1. Overall 4 - 4.

For a giddy moment during the final lap South Africa led 5 - 4 as Bamford 3x TP'd versus Cordingley, but three seconds later Fulford disposed of Wynand Louw to make it even stevens once more; and then GB forged ahead via Linton versus William Louw. There was high drama on court 1. With the senior citizens bolt upright and no

longer nodding sagely, Harrison-Wood, behind to Knox, hit in, produced two of his famous jump shots, and brought GB home to victory.

Battle honours went to Alan Linton. Bowdon players say his pipe is irremovable because it keeps his balance. Well he kept his pipe and his balance, and was the only player to win all his matches, both singles and doubles.

Our special thanks to Bill Lamb and the CA for initiating this historic contest; to Mike Sandler President of Bowdon and all of the members for their friendliness and splendid courts and to Martin Grainger-Brown, indefatigable manager and referee.

Brian Bamford (SA)

### Results:

#### Doubles

Fulford & Linton bt Bamford & Knox +19TP +26TP  
Cordingley & Harrison-Wood bt Louw & Louw +16 +12TP

#### Singles

Bamford bt Fulford +26TP -26SXP +26TP +12TPO  
J Louw bt Cordingley +18 -25 -6 +17 +25  
C Louw bt Harrison-Wood +13 +9 +7  
A Linton bt Knox +25 +24

#### Doubles

Bamford & Knox bt Cordingley & Harrison-Wood +4TPO(T) +26TP  
Fulford & Linton bt Louw & Louw +17TP +23TP

#### Singles

Bamford bt Cordingley +26TP +23TP +16TP  
Fulford bt J Louw +26TP +24TP -25TP +24TP  
Linton bt C Louw +20 +17  
Harrison-Wood bt Knox +25TP -4 +15

Overall Result: GB 7 - RSA 5

# Tournaments '95

## Southport & Birkdale Long Bisquers Tournament July 15th - 16th

The five round Swiss, ably managed by Alice Dawson, was won by Julian Tonks from York (hcp 16) who beat David Maddocks from Crake Valley (hcp 10) in a low scoring tactical last round. For a long time the score had remained level in a fascinating position - with David for Penultimate and six and Julian for Rover and five, but with under six minutes remaining Julian ran five to go a point ahead, and this is how the match ended when time was called.

Had David won that game a three way tie situation would have resulted with David, Julian and the winner of the match, double banked with the champion, between Myer Cohen (Bury - hcp 18) and Liz Fraser (Fylde hcp 14). Myer may wish to add a post script to his letter in the May issue of Croquet since his victory in this match added a commendable second place to his lengthening list of achievements.

Southport offers a wide variety of hotels and night life making it the ideal venue for a long weekend. If your handicap is ten or more then come along next year and follow in the footsteps of Chris Clarke, who won the plate ten years ago! You will be assured of a friendly welcome, excellent lunches and superb playing conditions. Those seeking to improve their game will also find many strong and knowledgeable players who are pleased to help with all aspects of the game. Peter Wilson - Fylde C.C.

## Alphabet Croquet At Parsons Green Midsummer Tournament 23 -25 June

Edgar Jackson - "Croquet tournaments are largely social events. People come for their enjoyment of playing, not usually in the expectation of winning a trophy..... the majority of players come for the fun of it. It is the Manager's job to see that it is fun for all the entrants."

The Format: Players entered as pairs, with doubles and singles counting for each other and with the excellent variation of 2 points for a pegged-out win and 1 point for a win on time.

The players were assigned twin letters of the alphabet, the capital being the higher handicap. We were welcomed on the Friday by the manager, big A with B(iscuits) and C(offee). Then six letters were dispatched to the 'UP' lawn and six to the 'DOWN' lawn. Three hours later we were all back in the club house launching into a lovely lunch. In the afternoon the letters swapped lawns. A(fternoon) T was interrupted for the ROT by a summons to the UP lawn where the aAs and the gGs were locked in battle with all the slips clinging to the peg. The problem was a cannon in which the wrong ball was promoted. The problem was solved to the satisfaction of the gGs and the ROT (little) resumed his T.

The sun was absent on Saturday, but the afternoon was warmed for at least one letter by the news brought by a runner to the UP lawn that NM and SA had beaten JL and NZ in quite another sport.

The sun shone again on Sunday by which time the eEs were distinctly ahead and assailable only by the fFs should they beat them in singles and doubles on peg-outs. It was not to be, and the eEs were presented with their prizes by the President Mrs Leila Showan. A gorgeous gossip T followed. Meantime with no Nanny in attendance from the C(reche) A(nnexe) nearby, we naughty high-bisquers felt free to play off elegant single figure handicaps, we didn't of course, but the freedom was heady.

Thank you for the lunches, the teas and a fun-filled First Tournament PG and A(lia) Sue Davies)

F(ormerly known as Olive Jackson)

## Fun In The Park To Full-Blown CA Tournaments Northampton June 2nd-4th

The Northampton Croquet Club was founded in the late 80's by Mrs May Jack. The original location was a little used bowling green in one of the town's parks where regular meetings began and members of the public were able to satisfy their curiosity and have a go. From that beginning new members were soon enrolled. One lawn soon became insufficient and the club had to seek a new home, which was found in the extensive grounds of St Andrews hospital.

Under the chairmanship of John Anstey

the club soon had two lawns laid out and was entering various national competitions such as The Longman Cup. The next satge in the progress of the club was to lay down two more courts, hold open CA events, and to get the Northampton name in the CA fixtures book. The person most eager to accomplish this was Lionel Tibble, who this year became chairman. Together with Brian Hallam and Nora Smith plans were laid down to hold two competitions this year.

The weekend of June 2nd-4th saw the realisation of all the hopes and efforts of many club members as sixteen players arrived for the Friday afternoon session. Under the management of Norman Hicks play started in perfect conditions, with a fourth court being opened for play for the first time ever. The next day, with three matches each to be played a prompt start at 9.30am was necessary. Unfortunately, the rain was already threatening and by lunch-time the thought of battling it out for another six hours in pouring rain was less inviting. Thanks to the superb catering team, headed by Nora Smith, a splendid lunch was enjoyed by all and the inclement weather was forgotten. However, most players were glad to finish their last game of the day and head off for a hot bath.

An official referee was not present at the competition and it was agreed that Norman Hicks would referee when necessary, and if he was unavailable competitors would call upon some of the more experienced players.

Sunshine brought a smile back to everyone's face for the last days play, with two matches required to be played by each competitor. What a relief this was to the Northampton club whose visitors had come from far and wide; Gene Mears had come all the way up from Brighton. With regard to age range, players varied from senior citizens down to Brian Hallam's son Peter who was the youngest at fourteen - and most welcome.

The main event had now reached the semi-finals. Bert Dickens beat John Handy +14 while Nick Evans had to play Phillip Shaw. In fact Nick and Phillip had played previously in the opening round where Phillip had played in his usual aggressive style, and had comfortably won. Nick Evans decided to throw caution to the wind this time and used his one and only bisque at the first opportunity, making ten hoops. He managed to keep ahead of Phillip for the remainder of the match and secured himself a place in the final.

The final was a classic game with Bert Dickens using his eight bisques early on to establish a strong lead. Nick Evans picked off his hoops in short breaks wary of Bert building an unassailable lead. As the minutes ticked by Nick Evans scraped one hoop more to go ahead for the first, and only time. And that was enough to win him the tournament and be the first person to have his name engraved on the silver bowl.

Those who had fallen out of the main event were automatically entered into a secondary event - the glass goblet. The final of this was a complete contrast to the final of the main event and saw Les Carrick, using his bisques a few at

a time to beat Ian Mantle.

The Northampton committee deserve to be pleased with their first CA tournament, and should look forward to even better things in 1996. The setting at Northampton is magnificent and the catering was first class. Maybe two games each day would be worth trying next time rather than one on Friday and three on Saturday. Nevertheless, if that's the only modification Northampton will prove to be a very popular tournament.

Nick Evans

## Sidmouth June 12th-16th

A five day tournament that was over-subscribed three months before the closing date. The final line up of competitors proved to be fifteen visitors plus nine local club members.

The three American blocks, graduated in handicaps, were keenly contested throughout. One of the most exciting matches of the week was that between Pat Asa Thomas (7) and John Hatherley (3); Pat kept John sitting in his chair while she reached peg and rover, but could just not make rover after thee attempts. Meanwhile, John was making steady progress towards the peg, finally winning the match by one point. The most consistent performance of the tournament was that of Dr Robert Callingham (10), son of a local member, from a small club in Cumbria, who convincingly won every game in his block.

The manager, Iris Dwerryhouse, must have had divine guidance from the Met Office since every day was dry and sometimes sunny. On the sixth day when all the competitors had returned home, it rained all day.

As a result of the climatic perfection, it was possible to complete all the block games by Thursday evening; leaving Friday free for an

additional event of "Wheeler" doubles for those who were not travelling home early.

Visitors to Sidmouth found the usual tranquility of the town somewhat disturbed by the construction of new sea defences, resulting in a constant procession past the lawns of a hundred heavy lorries per day delivering tons of gravel and rocks for a new breakwater.

All competitors were able to enjoy the catering and comfort facilities of the club's attractive thatched pavillion in its spectacular setting on the south facing coastline of Lyme Bay.

Philip Dwerryhouse

## Eastern Championships Colchester 30th June - 2nd July

### Time for Hilditch

The closest match at Colchester was unfortunately ruined by the manager. Hilditch had decided to depart from the standard 4-7-9 limits in favour of shortening the time allowed for the first two games by 45 minutes each. His logic for this is that 2 hours is too short for a deciding game; but this factor is far outweighed by the fact that the new time limits are much more likely to impinge on the first and second games. So it proved in Clarke v Goacher, two tight games reduced to a lottery by time, Clarke winning both. Had time limits been in force, neither game would have gone to time.

In the top half Maugham reached the final without dropping a game. The second semi-final was between Clarke and Fulford. Clarke double peeled him out, but fulford finished from the contact. The next two games were both settled by Fulford TP's. After the match I



Mary Goodheart, Robert Callaghan and Alison Thursfield, the prize winners at Sidmouth.

suggested that maybe this World Championship was a poisoned chalice, and now that Fulford had relinquished the title to Clarke he had also transferred his mediocrity. (Fulfordic mediocrity often outclassed others brilliance.)

Clarke was sufficiently riled by this suggestion to inflict a 26TP on Burrige. These two met again in the decisive game of the Swiss, when the result should have been reversed. Burrige tuck in 4-back after 2 peels, and Clarke went on to take the game and the Swiss.

So the final. Fulford and Maugham's encounters are usually of the highest class, rarely going beyond the 9th turn. I therefore recorded a turn by turn analysis of their games. So I can report to you that on the 13th turn of the first game Fulford stuck in 3-back (with his other clip on the peg); then Maugham missed the ball in the hoop for 4 yards. On the next turn Fulford's approach to 4-back failed completely; Maugham missed a 13 yarder. Finally Fulford won on the 17th turn. In the next game Fulford won on the 25th turn.

The 4th turn of game 3 epitomised Maugham's day. Fulford had hit on the third turn, and left himself a rush from the east boundary to Maugham's ball, which was peg high on the west boundary. Maugham hit in down the east boundary, and then rushed the other ball across to his partner ball, which cannoned off in an unhelpful direction. Maugham rushed to hoop 1, ran it, hit the 25 yard return roquet, then faced with a six foot cut rush to hoop 2, missed it entirely. Later in the game he missed a ball from 12 inches, and Fulford wrapped it up on the 13th turn.

Maugham could offer no excuses for his abject form. Fulford, though hardly error free, thoroughly deserved the Championship. In the Opens, I predict an early exit for Maugham, while Fulford might reach the final.

Andrew Gregory

Round 1  
Burrige bt Tibble +14 +8 Fulford bt Tribe +24 -4 +23 Clarke bt Gregory +8 +18  
Round 2  
D Maugham bt Burrige +8 +21 Cordingley bt Hilditch +24 +17 Fulford bt Day +20 -3 +15 Clarke bt Goacher +2(T) +1(T)  
Semi-Final  
Maugham bt Cordingley +26TP +17 +8 Fulford bt Clarke +14 +17TP +19TP  
Final  
Fulford bt Maugham +22 +13 +24

**Pristavec's Nailsea Hat-Trick Nailsea Handicap May 6th-8th**

Disappointingly, only 4 visitors entered Nailsea's May Bank Holiday tournament, but it did mean that competitors enjoyed the unaccustomed luxury of avoiding double banking. But it was a poor response for John Jeffrey, who beyond the

call of duty, culminated hours of preparation of the courts with a final cut at 7am, on the Saturday. Additionally, making lunch for 4 was little encouragement for the social secretary.

Five Nailsea members enabled the Manager to arrange an American event, with all players getting 8 games, and with the sun scorching all uncovered limbs on both Saturday and Sunday, there were no grumbles on the lack of games. Standards of play were, as they say, variable, but the ultimate winner of the plate was in doubt until the final round, with three competitors in contention, and keeping interest alive until the end.

David Murphy, playing in his first tournament off 18, was a local favourite, as he had quickly grasped the elements of the game, and understood how and when to take bisques. But his shooting let him down. Another local, eleven year old James Dixon, also 18, lost to the manager - doubtless intimidated - in his first game, taking bisques simply to keep the innings, even when no progress was possible. He came to regret his tactics.

Paul Pristavec, winner of the tournament for the past two years, played steadily, whilst Ruth and Martin Pitt, the Marlborough poultry

farmers, brought an experienced opinion on the quality of the chicken salad - but neither were in their usual form, although Ruth denies that the high spot of the weekend was the donkey ride on Weston's sands! Similarly, Bath's Bob Whitaker found difficulty in adjusting to the coarser grass and Barlow balls.

The final round began with Kristian Chambers sitting out and with 6 wins. He had played quite carefully, but realised that alternative strategies were necessary now that the forest of bisques was a thing of the past. This was his first tournament at having to bite his nails, knowing that his fate depended on others. Would the Veteran Jeffrey raise his game against Pristavec, - also with 6 wins. Dixon had 5, but even a +26 would not be sufficient net points to overtake his rival, - but he had the consolation of receiving his bronze award.

And as is often the way with an improving player, Pristavec made good use of his handicap advantage, and with the bit between his teeth, showed little mercy. He was determined to complete a hat-trick and be the inaugural winner of the Amelia Hall plate, and indeed he did - as well as a reduction in handicap.

Hamish Hall



Maureen Murphy, Rosemary Gugan - Nailsea club President with the Amelia Hall plate, Margaret Cleveland-Smith and Hamish Hall at Nailsea

**Tournament Reporters Please Note**

All reports must include the name of the reporter, or they will not be considered for publication. It would also be of use if reporters would include the date and venue of the tournament.

**Handicap Alterations**

**Cheltenham Club**  
Una Atter 18 to 16  
Gerry Eccles 12 to 11  
David Kibble 1 to 0.5  
Allan Laidlaw 9 to 10  
John Lansdown 11 to 10  
Ernest Fabian 22 to 20  
Jane Mathews 18 to 22

**Cheltenham July Week**  
Don Clay 9 to 8  
Tim Exell 8 to 6  
David Foulser -0.5 to -1  
D Harrison-Wood -1 to -1.5  
John Lansdown 10 to 9  
Bill Madams 3 to 3.5  
Audrey Mead 18 to 20  
Dennis Moorcraft 1 to 0.5  
Margaret Selmes 18 to 20  
Paul Watson 4.5 to 5  
L Whittaker 1.5 to 1  
Kismet Whittall 3.5 to 3  
Alan Blenkin 12 to 14  
John Andrews 4.5 to 7

**Southport & Birkdale August Tournament**

Miss R Anderson 20  
James Death 3.5 to 2.5  
Peter Death 1 to 0.5  
C Dent 5 to 4  
Peter Handley 5 to 4  
Carol Lewis 4 to 5  
P Mansfield 6 to 8  
Dave Nicholson 4.5 to 3.5  
Brian Kerr 11 to 10

**Colchester Hdcp Weekend**  
D Carpenter 4.5 to 4  
I Storey 1 to 0.5

**Aldermaston C.C.**  
Dr. J McMordie 1.5 to 1

**Harrow Oak C.C.**  
J.R. Hilditch 4 to 3.5

**New Associates**

Mr W.F. Barlow Lowdham  
Mr R Beekhuysen Penn  
Mrs G Beekhuysen Penn  
Mr J Brindley Birmingham  
Mrs S Burrow Jersey  
Mr M Burrow Jersy  
Dr A Clarke Wilmslow  
Mr F Coppins Burnham  
Mr J Ennever Ealing  
Mr P Mansfield Findon  
Mr J Markham Walsall  
Mrs I Markham Walsall  
Mr G Tudor Tipton

Mr J Waugh USA  
Mr G Yates Leicester

**New Clubs**

Bottisham, nr Ely, Cambs  
Brenzett & District WI, nr Romney Marsh, Kent  
Brodsforth Hall, Doncaster  
Clent, Worcestershire  
Enfield, North London  
Fittleworth, West Sussex  
Meldreth, nr Royston, Herts  
West Chittington, West Sussex  
Medland Manor, Cheriton Bishop, Exeter

**Longman Cup**

Round 1  
Southport & Birkdale 3 Bowdon 2  
Cassiobury 3 Roehampton 2  
Round 2  
Beverley 3 Southport 2  
Croquet for Leisure 3 Walsall 2  
Chester 4 Edgbaston 1  
Tyneside W/O Stourbridge  
Bury 3 Pendle 2  
Wrest Park 3 Colworth 2  
Ipswich 3 Northampton 2  
Nottingham W/O Letchworth  
Dyffryn 5 Bristol 0  
High Wycombe 3 East Dorset 2  
Cheltenham 4 Blewbury 1  
Sussex 3 Bath 2  
Hurlingham 3 Harrow Oak 2  
Medway 4 Colchester 1  
Compton bt Guildfd & Godalming  
Cassiobury 4 Woking 1

Round 3  
Dyffryn 3 High Wycombe 2  
Sussex W/O Cheltenham  
Hurlingham 4 Medway 1

**Secretary's Shield**

Round 2  
York bt Northampton  
Semi-final  
Dyffryn 5 Tyneside 2

**Mary Rose**

Round 2  
Nottingham W/O Sussex 3  
Edgbaston 4 Pendle 2  
Cheltenham 5 Letchworth 2  
Woking 5 Hurlingham 2  
Bristol 4 Northampton 3  
Ipswich 4 Bowdon 3  
Colworth 4 Southp't & B'dale 3  
Wrest Park 5 East Dorset 2

Round 3  
Nottingham 5 Edgbaston 2  
Cheltenham 6 Woking 1

**Inter-Club**

Round 2  
Woking 5 Bristol 2  
Wrest Park 4 Nottingham 3

**The National Croquet League**

Division 1

	P	W	D	L	pts
Ipswich	1	0	1	0	1
Parkstone	1	0	1	0	1
Bowdon	0	0	0	0	0
Colchester	0	0	0	0	0
Surbiton	0	0	0	0	0

Division 2

	P	W	D	L	pts
Northampton	3	2	0	1	5
Letchworth	3	1	0	2	4
Newport	1	0	0	1	1
Leicester	1	0	0	1	1
Wrest Park	2	0	1	1	1

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