

The Croquet Gazette

Issue 258

November 1998



**"NO I DON'T NEED A REFEREE.
IT'S A VIAGRA SIDE EFFECT."**

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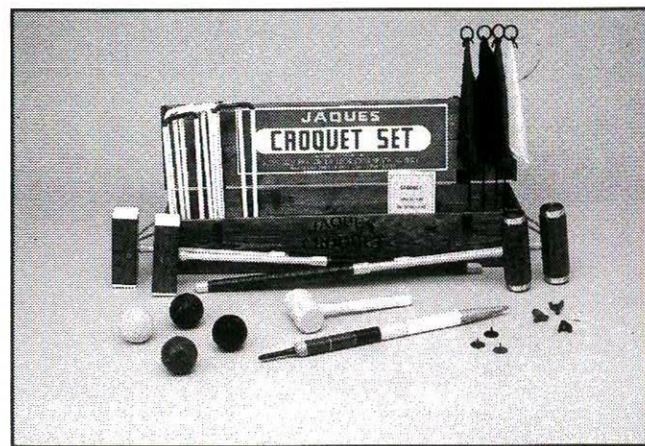
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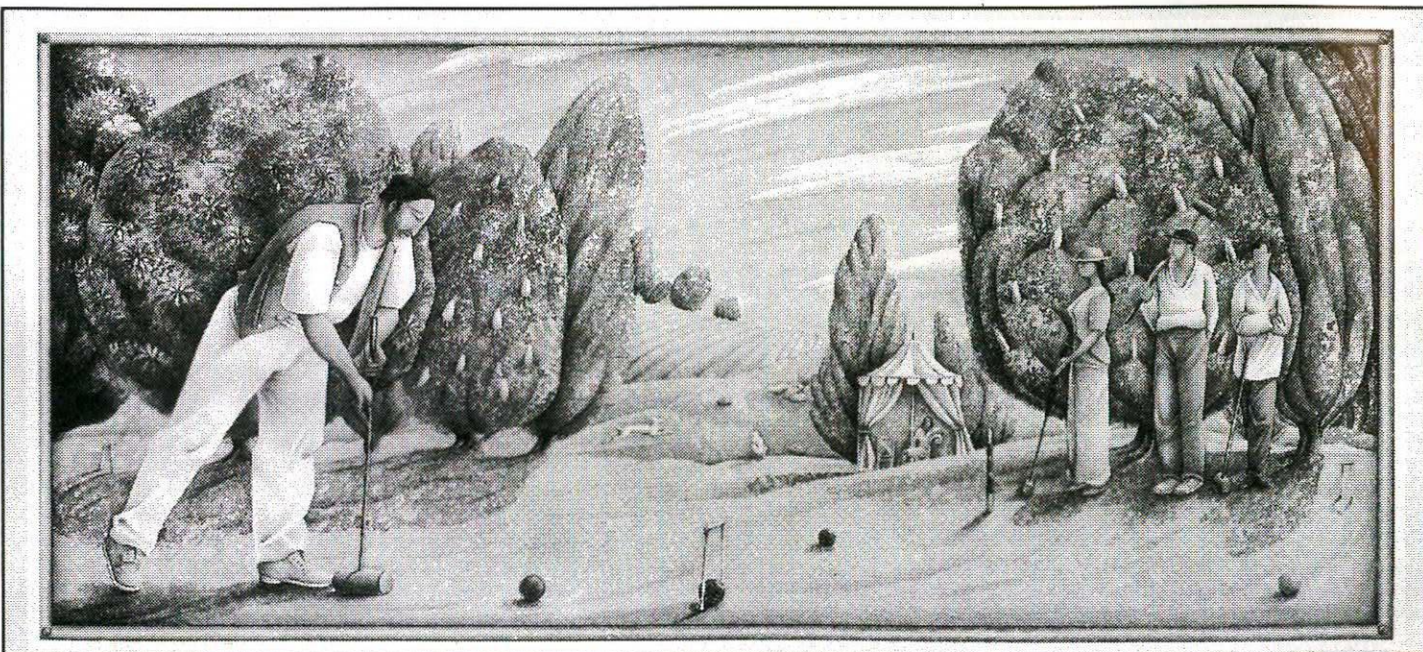


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Photographs are always required. Both black and white or colour prints can be utilised. Please detail on the reverse of all photos the subject of the picture, and if you require the photographs to be returned please include your address on the reverse.

Tournament Results & Reports

Tournament results should be reported on the new tournament return sheet. These have been issued in a bid to make the reporting of events and the administration of the rankings easier. Please ensure that the forms are used. Tournament reports should be written and sent to the editor within SEVEN DAYS of the completion of a tournament. Failure to comply with this guideline will result in reports failing to be published.

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Chairman's Column

Normally the minutes of our AGM are published in the Gazette but due to deadline dates it is usually at least four months before they can appear. By this date we are starting to think of next season rather than reflect back on last season and items such as the Chairman's report are not really still topical. This issue I have had the opportunity to post my column for the November issue after the AGM and feel that publication of my AGM report in place of the normal column would be more appropriate. Apologies to those of you who attended the AGM and have heard it all before. May I wish you all a very merry Christmas
Bill Arliss

Annual General Meeting 1998

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Twelve months ago I was elected your Vice Chairman at the Council meeting following the AGM, fully expecting to serve a one-year apprenticeship under Chairman Badger. Very sadly this was not to be and just a few weeks later, on Stephen's sudden death, I took over as acting Chairman with my position confirmed by Council at the December meeting. With the passing of Stephen, the game lost a very capable administrator and many of us lost a very good friend.

Last year was a year of celebration for our first one hundred years and this year has of necessity become a planning year for the next one hundred. Not only are we starting our second century but we shall shortly be entering a new millennium and must be prepared for all that the twenty-first century can throw at us, if we are to remain a strong and stable organisation. Regrettably, the last decades have shown a major move towards materialism and financial constraints have now become uppermost in almost all matters. We may not like it, but it's the world we now live in.

It is not only the CA itself which has to respond to this financially based environment but also many of the clubs. This year we have seen local councils, who own croquet lawns and for many years have lost the cost of their maintenance in their general budgets, suddenly try to pass these costs totally on to the users. Sudden increases in rental of 200-300%, which can possibly be justified by accountants on a cost basis, simply cannot be absorbed instantaneously by clubs. I am sure the Nottingham Club for one will agree with these sentiments.

Stephen realised change would be necessary during his term of office and started a review of our Association with the formation of the Planning Group. The Group started with very broad terms of reference looking at where they



felt the CA should be heading in the next century. They looked at not only the nature of the sport but also its organisation through the Association and the Federations. The Planning Group produced its final report in January of this year, after consultation with many of the sport's leading figures, the Council itself, the playing members of our Association and the clubs through two Club Conferences. This was just the starting point, as the report contained basic proposals, which now require implementation. Tournament, Development, F&GP and Publicity committees have already taken on board those proposals, which are relevant to their activities, but matters concerning the organisation of the CA itself, such as membership, representation of clubs and the general way in which Council conducts its business have been handed over to a Constitutional Working Party (CWP) chaired by Quiller Barrett. They are well into their deliberations and intend to introduce their detailed proposals for discussion by the December 98 Council meeting. The need for consultation with all concerned is fully recognised by the Group. If after detailed consultation we find major changes should be made to our Association, new proposals will be prepared for consideration at the AGM in 1999.

For several years now we have received grants from the various Sports Councils. I say various, as recently we have had to deal with both the UK and English Sports Councils. At the time of the last AGM we expected a considerable reduction in the grant for 1998 but were very pleasantly surprised when we were awarded £17,000 for this last year. Unfortunately, due to policy changes of only supporting major sports, (i.e. the ones that don't really need the support) our grants from these bodies will almost certainly come to an end and we shall have to manage on our own generated income. This will make the present review of our operation even more significant.

During recent years we have gradually built up a first class coaching structure, and development support for new and less firmly established clubs that has been partly financed by the various grants. We must not allow this work to fall by the wayside as it is at the very heart of our national organisation. Very careful allocation of our available resources will have to take place. I am sorry to say that it is very likely to increase the cost of playing croquet, but I venture to suggest that we shall still be very

competitive with most other sports.

We are on a continual quest to bring croquet to the general public's attention in the drive to attract more members. This year the media suddenly discovered that a well known pop star and his wife played croquet for relaxation. This led to three days' hectic activity and resulted in three TV and four radio interviews for myself and other members of the Association. Unfortunately this sudden upsurge of interest by the media soon died away but we made the most of our brief period in the spotlight.

Our office at Hurlingham is also girding its loins for the twenty-first century. Our e-mail connection was fully established early in 98 and is now in regular use. For those who have the technology, our office can be contacted at caoffice@croquet.org.uk. It is already reducing our postal costs for some routine business, but don't worry because we are not abandoning paper and the post office. At present there are over 200 e-mail addresses in the CA database.

Our target is to have our own web pages on the Internet later this year and hopefully this will rapidly be achieved now that we cannot get on the lawns. The technology is already in place, we simply have to prepare and launch our own displays. Although our own pages are not yet on line I would like to thank Dr Ian Plummer of Oxford University and John Greenwood who have displayed considerable data on English croquet on the Internet for some time, working closely with our office. Ian now displays a complete set of the laws on his web pages. The CA at first opposed internet publication of the laws and although we own the copyright of the laws, there was little practical we could do to stop others, all over the world, publishing copies on the Internet complete with known errors. We felt our best response was to publish ourselves working directly with the Chairman of our Laws Committee. I believe all the unofficial copies are now removed.

Unfortunately our office computers that were in use at the beginning of the year were of rather doubtful vintage and usually objected if asked to do more than one thing at once. We have therefore taken advantage of the large drop in computer prices and installed two new units complete with modern office software. This should make our office much more compatible with many home computer users and hopefully reduce our operating costs. Using our computerised membership records we have now very successfully introduced a Direct Debit system for the payment of subscriptions. This has certainly made a dramatic drop in our office workload at the start of the year. I would very much like to thank all members who have co-operated in this exercise. 74% of our membership now pay by this means.

Although last year was technically our Centenary year, some of the special events for that year followed the 1997 AGM and should have reference in this report. Specifically I refer to the Centenary Dinner at Wimbledon and the Centenary Exhibition at Wimbledon, which will

continue until November of this year. I am sure that all who attended the dinner, there were about 180, will agree that the event was extremely successful and a fitting climax to our Association's Centenary year. Particular thanks must go to one of our members, David Godfree, who organised the dinner on our behalf. Similarly, I would also like to express our thanks to another member, David Drazin, who masterminded the Centenary Exhibition for the Association. It would also be remiss of me if I did not formally record our thanks to the All England Lawn Tennis Club at Wimbledon for their help in organising and supporting two of the main Centenary year celebrations.

Our Planning Group report recommended that all variations of the game should be fostered and brought into a national framework of competitions. I would like to make specific reference to Golf Croquet in this context. Whilst very few of our Associates actively participate in serious competition in this form of the game, there is nevertheless a very large number of Golf Croquet players in this country, possibly even more than the Association players, if the garden croquet enthusiasts are taken into account. The contribution made by the club Golf Croquet player to the playing facilities in this country is very significant and without it some clubs simply would not survive. At present the CA runs four main competitions for Golf Croquet, The Golden Mallet, the All England Golf, The Golf Croquet Championships and the Golf Inter-Counties.

Up until 1994, all administration of Golf Croquet affairs was placed under the aegis of the Standing Committee which seemed most appropriate, but this structure was replaced by the formation of a Golf Standing Committee which took responsibility for most Golf based activities. Of necessity, most members of this committee had to be co-opted from active Golf players but the committee has started to tackle some of the problems involved in this version of the game. I believe that we must continue to give strong support to this committee as the strengthening of Golf Croquet in this country can only reflect positively on all other forms of the game.

Just recently the World Croquet Federation held the Golf Croquet World Championships at Leamington Spa and several of our members assisted in the organisation. The eventual Champion came from Egypt and he demonstrated that this form of the game can be very exciting and requires considerable skills.

Our proposed winter programme for indoor play on the carpets almost came to grief when the RAF decided to use unspent funds to upgrade their gymnasium at Innsworth and we lost our January venue. Luckily the South East Federation were able to come to our rescue as they had organised a two-mat competition at Maidstone, sponsored by the Maidstone Council, which we were able to use as our final for the heats that had been run in Wolverhampton, Soham and Innsworth. The schoolboys from

Wolverhampton won both the Maidstone and the national event. Playing speed croquet on very fast carpet may not be to all players' liking, but almost all who have tried it come back for more.

The Association Croquet World Championships were held in Bunbury, Australia, in November. Once again we were able to demonstrate the UK dominance in this sport and congratulations must go to Robert Fulford gaining the title for the fourth time. Apart from the many titles that Robert has already won, we must also recognise the way in which Robert has developed the techniques of the game to such an extent with the multiple peeling manoeuvres. Many try to copy him but few succeed. We also claimed second place in the World Championships with Stephen Mulliner taking the honours.

We have now completed another very full domestic tournament programme. This has also been Robert Fulford's year with his success in the Opens, the Men's and the President's and, together with Chris Clarke, the Open Doubles. We have to go back to our President's and Humphrey Hicks' Championship days to equal this feat. In the Open Championships many of our experienced players were very much surprised by a 16 year old from the USA, Jacques Fournier, who reached the final, but was then despatched three straight by Robert. Another visitor from the USA, Mik Mehas, won the Plate.

Twenty-one counties plus a CA select team contested the Inter-Counties Championship at Southwick and Compton. Unfortunately Northumberland were unable to field a team but were replaced by a new entry from the Channel Islands. New regulations for entry to this event have now been posted which will give priority to counties within the domain of the CA but will protect entries such as Glamorgan (outside the Domain) which have been with us for some years. Avon was the eventual winner of division 1 with Surrey in second place. Nottingham won division 2 and was promoted along with Essex and Yorkshire. Despite the initial opposition to divisionalisation in this event two years ago, I am sure it is now fully accepted by all because of the very high level of competition it maintains right up to the last round, indeed sometimes right up to the last shot.

This year also saw the centenary of the Peels which was held at Surbiton. Our major ladies events, the Barlow and Longman Bowls, were held at Southport and won by Gail Curry and Kathleen Priestley respectively. Both events were played as sixes. Ladies, can we make it two eights next year when the event comes south to Southwick?

Earlier in this report I referred to a very full tournament programme. Each year we get further new tournaments registered with very little drop out of older events. Are we reaching saturation point? This is a question we must answer as the entries for some tournaments are certainly dropping.

Finally I would like to thank Paul, Brian, Janet and Shirley in our Hurlingham office, all

members of the Council and its committees for the help I have been given during this last eleven months. It is not easy to take over the Chairmanship with no preparation. Thank you for your forbearance when I have not fully known the background to some of your favourite topics.

In summary, I believe our activities during this last year have made a useful start to the preparation for the next century and although we may expect our playing costs to rise, I look forward to continued spread of the game of croquet in all its forms, supported and developed by a strong and active Croquet Association. Perhaps one of these days we may manage to leak one of the best kept sporting secrets - Croquet is a superb game with something for all ages and abilities.

Ladies and Gentlemen, thank you for listening to me. If you have questions on any of the points I have raised or any other points on the operation of your Association, I will do my best to provide the answers.

Bill Arliss

~ Obituaries ~

Peter Mayers 1930 - 1998

After a very sort illness, Peter died on Sunday August 30th 1998. He was born in Dublin but spent his early years in Sale in Cheshire. He gained a degree in Chemical Engineering at Birmingham University and had a career in the oil industry latterly based at an office in London, to which he travelled each day from his home in Beaconsfield, Bucks.

Peter was introduced to croquet by Mr & Mrs Scaddan at the Budleigh Salterton club.

He joined the local High Wycombe club in late 1989 with a handicap of 16. His game improved rapidly and by the start of the 1998 season his handicap was 4. Peter played in many tournaments especially at Budleigh Salterton and Cheltenham. He joined the High Wycombe club's committee in April 1991 and gave service initially as treasurer then as secretary and was always ready to give encouragement to new members.

Peter had other interests notably with the local operatic society also running the charity Christmas card shop in Beaconsfield.

Peter was a gentle man with a friendly welcoming smile. He will be sadly missed at High Wycombe.

G Youd.

His Honour Alexander Karmel QC 1904 - 1998

Alex Carmel, who died on 27th September 1998, was one of croquet's characters. His hey-day was in the period 1960-64 when he was selected for the Surrey Cup, then the second Eight and for those who had never played in the President's Cup. A one-eyed player since the early fifties, he was a regular on the summer circuit, playing the Opens, the Men's, at Hurlingham and on the south Coast. He was a strong supporter of Hunstanton and in personal terms his croquet apogee was in 1968 when he beat Brian Lloyd-Pratt to become the Norfolk Champion.

Alex was born in Newcastle and started off work in his father's tailoring business. He was a fine athlete and his speed and size, for he was a big man, fitted him to play rugby for Northumberland as a centre three-quarter. He decided to read for the Bar and was called in

1932. He developed a large practice in Manchester and Liverpool and took silk in 1954. Always a fearless advocate, he frequently settled cases after lunching with his opponent, since food and drink were an essential part of his life both at the Bar and on the croquet circuit. He became an Old Bailey judge in 1968. Alex was a close friend of Ian Baillieu and their conviviality, particularly in the early evenings, was legendary, with trebles being more important than triples.

Personal memories are numerous. Characteristic was the comment when he was thanked by the writer who in his first year had beaten him +26 in the sixth turn in the 1967 Hunstanton big handicap: Alex retorted that it had been an "effing awful game!". The writer's son, aged 11, was allowed to play Alex in the Y at Hunstanton in 1979. Few of those present will forget the grin on the face of the boy, then quite small, pegging out Alex's forward ball. However, Alex's other ball was for rover and, with a handicap of -1.5, he knew what he had to do, and went on to do it.

Our thoughts go to Mary, who was six months his senior, and who survives him. Theirs was a close marriage: when playing friendlies against Mary, Alex would demonstrate his affection by ensuring that he always "broke down" so as to leave her a four ball break, with a dolly rush for her hoop. When last seen by the writer a few months ago Alex was complaining about the liquidized nature of his food; but he laughed when reminded that this had been the form in which over the years he had most enjoyed sustenance. Alex was a great source of fun and was much loved by those who knew him. Twinkling to the end, he died as he lived, with a smile, and with dignity.

HC

A class or ultra defensive opponents. It is only against the positive, break-playing players who occasionally break down that we have a truly interactive, intelligent, interesting and skill-building croquet. In such games the handicap system seems to work and we each have roughly a 50/50 chance of winning.

Can anything be done, perhaps with the handicap system or tournament regulations, to encourage more open and courageous play in the 8 - 20 handicap range?

One experience of chess-clock play was promising; my opponent used a lot of time repeatedly splitting me up, and when the time ran out (so taking croquet was no longer allowed), I easily set up and ran a break. Or perhaps there could be some variation in full bisque play in which the in-player concedes the innings if they fail to make adequate progress after a few turns. Perhaps there should be a limit on how many hoops can be scored off the partner ball, or on how many hoops can be scored in single point turns.

I'm not sure what the solution should be but think one is needed, not just to help me and

others like me, but also for the sake of our A class victims, to help speed up slow games in tournaments and most importantly to encourage positive and skill-improving croquet.

Don Terrible

Unfortunate omission

Dear Editor

I have recently returned from Leamington after playing in the World Golf Croquet championships. A topic of discussion among the players was the article in a national paper in which you were quoted.

The comments were felt to be less than complementary about the players and hence about the Championship.

I realise the press may not always give a fair representation of an individual's views and would ask that you print a general letter of reply in your editorial.

Donald Beck

The article of which you speak was published in the Times on Thursday, 1st October, and was an interview by Sarah Potter, who is currently working on a series under the brief of women in sport. The article should have been published in the last week of August; however due to the commonwealth games and certain happenings in the White House it was delayed. I was asked for further comment to give the article a current flavour two days before publication, so offered the World Golf Croquet Championships.

I have been led to guess that the quote which upset some of the players is, "The downside is you'll have people competing there who wouldn't make a local team, but the rules are simple and it can be quite exciting." However, there was a slight omission, which was that the sentence should have ended, and did so on the tape, "but it is a very different game requiring different skills." It is therefore unfortunate that the editing of the interview caused the distress you refer to.

As yet I have not received any report or photographs from the World Championship. Perhaps one of the competitors or a member of the Golf Croquet Committee would care to furnish me with them so that those members who were not able to attend the Championships themselves may read about them in the Gazette.

Gail Curry

Editor

Clocking up the evidence

Dear Editor

The Northampton Club have now run several tournaments with clocks, and despite the opposition of one member - who hasn't tried it - it seems to be very popular. Even people who are capable of spinning out a game to 5 hours, if allowed to, can finish inside 80 minutes when they have to. It would be very interesting to try the effect on some of the game's notorious slow coaches. One name at least springs to mind.

In our most recent one-day end of season

competition 16 games were played of which 9 were pegged-out and total scores of 35 or over were recorded in 8 games. Higher bisquers won 10 of the games, and lower bisquers won 6. In my opinion, this was caused more by favourable handicaps than by the time allowance, which ranged from one minute for half or one bisque difference up to thirteen minutes for a 17 bisque difference - the greatest on the day. In the latter case, the 1 handicap player had 34 minutes and the 18 handicap player had 47.

26-0 wins were only recorded by high bisquers against low, but close finishes occurred between all combinations: high v high; high v low; low v low. The highest score in any game was 26-21 between a 1 and an 18.

A very quick resume of the rules to which we play: we use chess clocks. When your flag falls you may play single shots only, including running hoops or pegging-out, but you cannot take croquet or play a continuation shot. When the second flag falls, the game stops dead and can be drawn. An extra point is scored for pegging-out in time, so you get three for that, 2 for a win on points, and 1 for a draw.

Although the initial outlay may seem a little high (we bought 8 clocks at £35 each) there should be no depreciation, and it certainly enables you to get more games into a day. We aimed at 5 rounds, but it was so cold that the kindly manager shortened it to 4 matches, drawing the last round on a Swiss method to try to ensure a winner. If you're not sure whether you would get on with clocks, why not borrow some from your local chess club, but make sure that you have a really waterproof covering for them. We use Glad Ziploc storage bags. You have to take the clocks out to wind them - only once a day - and to set them for each game, but the buttons can be pushed in situ. Why not give it a try?

John Anstey

Egyptian format

Dear Editor

It is ten years since Paul Hands devised the Egyptian format and applied it to the Level Play Weekend at Cheltenham. It has since been modified, improved and is in widespread use. However, I have noticed that recently an important component of the system is frequently omitted.

When the system is used for handicap events all players have the same starting index and most games result in the same number of points being exchanged. And hence the Egyptian becomes the equivalent of a Flexible Swiss or Swiz. The same is the case when it is used for level event blocks in which all players have the same starting index.

The true usefulness and elegance of the Egyptian is seen when it is used for a level event and the starting index is set according to each player's previous ability - usually their handicap. This means, firstly, that the maximum number of games are between players of similar ability based on current form. This means that if a 3

handicap player loses to another 3, then loses to a 3.5, he/she might then be paired with a 4 or, perhaps, a 5 or 6 on their way up.

The second implication is that prizes are given to the player(s) who improve their index the most over the course of the tournament - the 6 who finishes up playing like a 2 or the 16 playing like a 10.

The reason why the Egyptian format has been so popular over the years is that players in good form have a crack at those of a higher class; those out of form have a chance to take on lesser opposition and regain their confidence.

The table of initial ratings might be:

0	200
0.5	195
1	190
1.5	185
etc.	

(Recognise the numbers? Handicap trigger points divided by 10.)

The table of rating adjustments will be:

Difference in ratings	Higher player If win	Higher player If lose	Lower player If win	Lower player If lose
0 - 8	+4	-4	+4	-4
9 - 16	+3	-5	+5	-3
17 - 24	+2	-6	+6	-2
25+	+1	-7	+7	-1

This effectively gives an accelerated progression up (or down) the handicap over the course of one tournament.

If managers resume the adoption of the original Egyptian scheme they will find it popular, flexible and very easy to manage.

Kevin Carter

Refining the AHS?

Dear Editor

Is there a feeling that some club handicappers too rarely adjust their bandits' handicaps, relying on the automatic handicapping system to bring them down quickly enough? "Five wins and they trigger" say the exalted A class players who long ago gave up handicap play.

Not all players are able to go out on the tournament circuit. They gradually improve in their home clubs, swapping points with other improvers in closed systems, and then gain an unwanted and not fully deserved reputation amongst visitors with lower, more realistic handicaps, or when playing away.

Two small changes would have various benefits for the game and eradicate areas of injustice, reward skill, stop penalising the innocent, encourage low bisquers to attend handicap tournaments and visitors to return, and lead people away from the temptation of omitting to record an "unfair" -10 on their cards (if they keep a card, that is).

Bisques left standing: Improving beginners and others from time to time play so well that they quit the court not having used all their bisques. Why not reward this with extra handicap points, one for each bisque or half bisque not taken? Most improvers will gladly receive this bonus, as it enables them to realise

Letters...

How can we encourage adventurous play?

Dear Editor,

Some A class players have thought me a bandit this season, my handicap having been 18, then 16, then 14. The blame should be laid on those (mainly male) Aunties who beat me so often, keeping my handicap high. I would like to stimulate some thoughts as to how many handicap games could become more balanced.

Like many improving players, given a good position I can usually run a 4 ball break for 12 hoops using a few bisques, without ever having to do an accurate rush, a difficult approach shot or a roquet of more than 3 yards. The break is sustained with good croquet strokes

and accurate pioneers.

Getting the break set up is another matter. Against an A class player I can use bisques and then do my solo party piece, boring and unsatisfactory for both players. But against low or medium ranking defensive players who give me few if any bisques, I have no chance, often spending a dreary 3 hours taking futile long shots while they potter around a hoop at a time with their partner ball. If I join wide they split me up. It is losing these games which keeps my handicap high, not deliberate banditry.

Obviously I need to improve my 25 yard shots and rushes. but what I really need to improve first is building breaks from average positions, i.e. my 10 yard shots and rushes. But these chances don't come up when I play either

their ambition of improving their handicap. Console the victim by removing fewer than ten points: he stood no chance today, poor thing. Get the score from the level play table: e.g. four bisques standing means +14 for the winner but only -6 for the loser. Record the result as +20(4bs).

Twenty-sixed, no croquet: High-bisqueur again deserves more than ten points, and croquet should contrive to give them and make these one-sided embarrassments rarer. Two options: give the victor the usual ten points but deduct nothing from the victim; better still, treat this as an automatic +19/-1 swing: after all the loser did fail to hit in when putting his second ball on the court. Record the result as +26 nc.

Or we could even allocate the +19/-1 score to any handicap game ending 26-0. Others may have views on whether to extend it to some level games.

These two adjustments are simple to understand (most croquet players are reasonably intelligent, some even understand scoring in bridge). They are easy to introduce. The card can accommodate the result. I am aware of the argument that points belong not to the player but to the system, and that adding new points is inflationary, like printing more banknotes. But we are told the double entry bookkeeping aspect

already leaks at the edges.

Any system of rules needs to serve those for whom it was created, not the other way round. Refining the AHS is a natural process which will preserve respect for what is basically a good system.

David Brydon

With the best of intentions, David Brydon is trying to force the AHS to deal with cases that it was never intended to. Principles of Handicapping makes clear that the AHS is game hungry and is of little use for players who do not play many competitive games. The AHS is the backbone of the handicapping system but it is not the only part of it. The basic principle of the AHS is that a player whose handicap is correct can expect over a reasonable number of games to win fifty per cent of them; it does not matter how he wins them, or by how many. There will always be quite a lot of lop-sided results because the handicapping system chops a broad spectrum of ability into a number of discrete steps and this is exaggerated by random fluctuations in handicap.

Outside the AHS there is provision for the small number of players who improve rapidly and for perhaps a larger number of new players

who are improving steadily. This is where handicappers are expected to take the strain. If you try to make the AHS do the job of handicappers by altering the rewards for winning easily by any amount that is likely to be significant for new players, the integrity of the AHS will be compromised by the larger number of lop-sided results within the main body.

In any case, the suggestion that players should be rewarded for conserving their bisques is probably not in the best interests of the game. Managers who are running a tight tournament would not be too impressed by players who are wasting time in faffing around trying to conserve their bisques in a game that is effectively dead.

The real solution lies in improving the standards of handicappers. Bruce Rannie has suggested that the coaching system should be used as a vehicle to do this and the Handicap Co-ordination Committee will co-operate with the Coaching Committee to this end.

Roger Wheeler's letter in the previous issue of the Gazette (issue 257) regarding the signing of handicap cards gives me the opportunity to reply that the AHS is in effect a voluntary system which operates to the benefit of all. Of course, there must be trust between the players; the very laws of the game are based upon that trust. Nevertheless, you only have to examine the number of handicap changes recorded in any issue of the Gazette to realize that the number of reductions greatly exceeds the number of increases. This may be a matter of under-reporting, but concern was expressed at the 1997 AGM that provision should be made on the card for counter signing. If it helps to improve the accuracy of the system well and good, but it cannot be made compulsory. Whether Roger will be regarded affectionately as an amiable eccentric or as a champion of individual liberty remains to be seen. Whichever, his contribution to the initial development of the AHS was valuable and is gratefully acknowledged.

Bill Lamb, Chairman Handicap Co-ordination Committee

In support of opposition

Dear Editor
I must agree with Roger Wheeler who wrote strongly opposing the counter signing of handicap cards in the September gazette. My understanding is that this is being introduced to try and overcome the problem with a minority of players consistently not filling in their cards. I doubt that this will overcome that problem since they will continue to leave their cards at home and their handicaps will continue to be incorrect.

In a letter in the January 1997 gazette I recommended the following actions to overcome this problem:

- Make a -2.5 target.
- Allow the manager to oversee cards and report defaulters.
- Discourage non-handicap card events.

Richard Hilditch

1998 President's Cup, Parkstone, 10 - 13 September 1998

Report by Stephen Mulliner

Having inherited the mantle of Manager/ROT/rapporteur from William Ormerod, who had to withdraw for family reasons, I should start by recording grateful thanks for the warmth and enthusiasm of the reception afforded to the players by the Parkstone members. No effort had been spared and the lawns, the hoops and the catering were all of the highest standard.

Round 1: The Parkstone lawns were in excellent condition but recent heavy rain required the use of lawn 5 in place of lawn 3 on day 1. Fulford began with a routine 26tp against Openshaw. Irwin began well against Clarke but failed 1-back and lost by 19tp in two turns. Avery failed a long hoop 2 against Mulliner and duly succumbed by 25tp. Comish, the holder, mounted a slightly embarrassing defence by playing a wrong ball in turn 1 against Maugham! The correct ball was placed in Corner 3 and Maugham responded by placing his in Corner 1. Comish then took contact from the Corner 1 ball but failed hoop 1. This left Maugham with a ball in baulk and two balls at his next hoop. Despite this burden, a 6th turn triple duly followed.

Round 2: Avery hit the lift against Maugham and won in two more turns, 17tp. Mulliner used the super-shot opening against Comish and completed a 5th turn 26tp. Clarke hit the lift against Fulford but failed hoop 5 in a TPO and his opponent duly cleaned up 21tp. Irwin defeated Openshaw by 15 in a rather messy game.

Round 3: Comish opened his account with a competent 17tp against Irwin and Fulford hit the vital lift to record the same score against Avery. Maugham could not start his triple against Clarke but his opponent could not hit so Maugham duly recorded the first non-triple win of the event. Openshaw chose a 2nd corner opening against Mulliner but missed his turn 4 shot and duly lost to a 7th turn triple.

Round 4: Irwin defeated Maugham by 12 in a poor game. Clarke enjoyed a routine 7th turn 26tp against Comish and Openshaw broke his duck with a 25 against Avery. The early leadership battle between Mulliner and Fulford was resolved in the former's favour after he completed his fourth consecutive TPO against the World Champion. Fulford rolled up to hoop 1 off the contact but bounced off the hoop to perfect position. Mulliner took refuge in Corner 4 but Fulford, having boosted hoop 1 to the north boundary, failed to approach hoop 2 from Corner 2 and never took croquet again.

Round 5: Mulliner hit his Duffer tice and had a quick 6th turn 26tp against Irwin. Avery reached 4b in turn 4 against Clarke but went off

the court before hoop 4 in the midst of an untidy triple. Clarke went to 4b but Avery hit and took his forward ball to rover. Clarke hit the lift and finished 17tp. Fulford and Maugham produced the most spectacular croquet of the event so far. Fulford laid a ball just short of the peg in turn 1. Maugham hit from A-baulk, stopped it to near Corner 2 and retired to Corner 4. Fulford hit the ball near Corner 2, took off to Corner 4, hit and rolled up to hoop 1 and went round! Maugham missed the lift but Fulford failed to rush to hoop 1 and laid up. Maugham hit, attempted but failed a TPO and reached 4b with a good leave. Fulford hit a 21 yard lift from B-baulk and finished 17tp.

Round 6: Irwin had a quick 26tp against Avery. Maugham hit the final lift against Openshaw and won 17tp. Fulford peeled Comish to hoop 3 and won 23tp. Mulliner used the super-shot against Clarke and hit in turn 3 but could not progress. Clarke missed and Mulliner reached 4b with the almost universally used diagonal spread. Clarke hit down the East boundary and reached 4b himself with the identical leave. However, Mulliner hit and finished 17tp.

Round 7: Fulford and Clarke recorded swift 26tps against Irwin and Openshaw. Comish and Avery were equally anxious to avoid holding the first series wooden spoon and the former eventually triumphed by 17. Mulliner looked likely to inflict his seventh consecutive triple after Maugham had failed hoop 2 but failed 1b with one peel done. However, Maugham missed the 5-yarder at the ball obscured by 1b and Mulliner regained the innings but had to settle for peg and rover. Maugham now hit and took his backward ball to 4b with a tight forcing leave (peg ball in hoop2, rover behind 3b, own balls 15 yards south of Corner 2 with a rush to hoop 2). Mulliner hit with the peg ball, laid up and won in his next turn by 16.

The first series positions were therefore: 7 wins: Mulliner; 6: Fulford; 4: Clarke; 3: Maugham, Irwin; 2: Openshaw, Comish; 1 Avery.

Round 8: Clarke beat Irwin 22tp and Comish defeated Maugham by 17. Mulliner used the super-shot against Avery but missed in turn 3. However, Avery hit in turn 4 but failed at hoop 2 and Mulliner won in two turns 25tp. Openshaw made a good start against Fulford but missed a short roquet after 1-b. Fulford peeled him to hoop 3, survived leaving a double in Corner 2 but failed a longish hoop 1. Openshaw hit but eventually fell victim to a 27 yard roquet and a triple, 12tp.

Round 9: Saturday dawned with heavy rain which compelled play to be switched from lawn 3 to lawn 5 until lunch-time. Irwin failed a TPO against Comish and lost by 13. Clarke reached 4b against Avery in turn 5. The lift was missed but Clarke elected to create a series of leaves before winning 26tp. Fulford adopted the super-shot opening against Maugham who hit in turn 4 and finished 26tp in turn 6. Mulliner looked to have a 26tp wrapped up against Openshaw when he over-approached 2b with two

peels done. Openshaw established a break and peeled Red through rover but then missed a short roquet before 3-back, handing Mulliner a win by 18 and a two game lead over Fulford.

Round 10: Clarke also adopted the super-shot opening against Maugham who also hit in turn 4 and reached 4b. Clarke hit, completed the TPO and pegged out both balls. However, Maugham had the better of the ending and won by 9otp. Openshaw reached 4b against Comish who hit the lift and replied in kind only for Openshaw to hit and finish 17tp. Irwin finally stopped the Mulliner bandwagon by hitting across the court after Mulliner reached 4b and completing a neat delayed TP after the leader missed the lift. Fulford looked for a time as if he might not be able to capitalise on this chink because both he and Avery were finding it very hard to negotiate a hill in front of hoop 1 on lawn 5. Eventually Avery failed a delayed TP and Fulford emerged the winner by 8tp.

Round 11: Fulford and Mulliner met in a potentially crucial encounter but Mulliner failed to capitalise on two excellent hit-ins and Fulford strolled to 25tp. Maugham had an eventually comfortable 16tp against Openshaw while Avery found a bit of form to end an eight-game losing streak at the expense of Irwin by 18tp. Comish was unable to complete a triple against Clarke but hit the lift after Clarke had gone round to win by 16.

Round 12: Mulliner bounced back from two losses to defeat Clarke 26tp in turn 8 while Comish had all the early play against Fulford. However, Comish was unable even to begin a triple and had to settle for 4b and peg. Fulford now hit and won by 5tp in two turns. Avery extended his winning run to two games with 26tp against Openshaw and Maugham moved above Clarke to claim third place with 17tp against Irwin.

Round 13: The leaders kept the outcome as open as possible by losing, Fulford to a routine Clarke 26tp in turn 8 and Mulliner to Comish 14otp. This game looked like being resolved in Mulliner's favour after Comish was TPOd and failed to make progress after the contact. However, Mulliner was unable to take what turned out to be his only chance to get going and had to lay up on the west boundary. Comish hit from Corner 4 and won in that turn. Avery notched up a third consecutive win by defeating Maugham 23tp after the latter claimed to have suffered from excessive wind at the wrong moment (or something like that, anyway!). Openshaw and Irwin produced the longest and most incident-filled game of the event. Irwin completed a TPO and pegged out both balls and eventually arrived at 1b with Openshaw on 3 and an impasse developed. The resolution of the impasse and the subsequent play created much entertainment with numerous hits and misses from both parties and eventually Irwin triumphed by 4 despite two gallant late hits by Openshaw from 4b on Irwin's rover lurking south of the peg.

Round 14: Comish managed to beat

Entry Form

1999 Indoor Tournaments

Club:.....

Players' Names:.....

.....

.....

Address of contact:.....

.....

.....

Tel No:.....

Tournament: (please tick as appropriate)

Open Pairs - Jan 16/17

Club Doubles - Mar 13/14

Completed form to be sent to the CA office together with entry fee of £25/tournament (cheques payable to The Croquet Association).



C.A. 1999 Indoor Croquet Tournaments

Two Indoor Speed Croquet Tournaments have been arranged for the forthcoming winter season to be played at RAF Innsworth in Gloucester using the now established rules and the 14 point doubles format.

The first event to be played over the weekend 16/17 January 1999 will be an open pairs competition restricted to the first twelve entries received.

The second will be the Indoor Club Pairs Championship for the Council Cup. This will be played on the 13/14 March 1999 by club teams of up to 3 members of whom any two can be nominated for a match.

Entries for each tournament should be made on the accompanying form and sent to the CA Office together with an entry fee of £25/pair/event to arrive at least 14 days prior to the event.

Avery 23tp well before Irwin and Openshaw completed their Round 13 crowd-pleaser. Openshaw looked like going down to a delayed Clarke 26tp but an Irish peel at rover left the back of the striker's ball inside the jaws so that Clarke could not hit the near escape ball. He attempted to hit the other escape ball but missed. However, Openshaw missed a short roquet before hoop 2 and Clarke won by 25 soon afterwards. Mulliner's challenge was dented by a routine 6th turn 26tp from Maugham (i.e. a triple containing several moments of excitement saved by superb single ball skills). Fulford, on the other hand, was first to 4b against Irwin who hit the lift and completed the peels of a TPO but was forced to attempt an 8 yard peg-out which missed by the proverbial coat of paint. The pick-up was not trivial but Fulford managed it with his customary efficiency and played a solid break to the peg to win the President's Cup for the second time.

44 triples were completed (77%) and the standard of play was generally as high as that statistic would indicate. Fulford, despite the inevitable effect of full-time employment on his practice possibilities, was in impressive form throughout and only had one poor game in very windy conditions (which he still won) and his three losses were to 26's from Clarke and Maugham and a TPO from Mulliner. Mulliner won his first nine games with good shooting and almost faultless break play. His loss to Fulford apart, his defeats all turned on good shooting from his opponents. Clarke and Maugham were less reliable than the leaders but produced plenty of excellent croquet. Comish recovered well from a poor start and Irwin was always dangerous and usually in deadly shooting form. Avery had a wretched run of eight defeats but showed better form towards the end and should look back at his season with satisfaction. Openshaw made a welcome return to the President's, even accepting the need to do a few triples, and was only let down by some errant short roquets.

Results:

Avery (4 wins) bt Maugham +17tp, +23tp, Irwin +18tp, Openshaw +26tp.
Comish (6wins) bt Avery +17, +23tp, Maugham +17, Irwin +17tp, +13, Clarke +16.
Maugham (8 wins) bt Comish +25tp, Clarke +26, +9otp, Openshaw +17tp, +16 tp, Fulford +26tp, Mulliner +26tp, Irwin +17tp.
Mulliner (11 wins) bt Avery +25tp, +25tp, Comish +26tp, +14otp, Maugham +16, Fulford +12tp, Irwin +26tp, Clarke +17tp, +26tp, Openshaw +26tp, +18.
Fulford (12 wins) bt Avery +17tp, +8tp, Comish +23tp, +5tp, Maugham +17tp, Mulliner +25tp, Irwin +26tp, +13, Clarke +21tp, +26tp, Openshaw +26tp, +12tp.
Irwin (5 wins) bt Avery +26tp, Maugham +12, Mulliner +17tp, Openshaw +15tp, +4tpo.
Clarke (7 wins) bt Avery +17tp, +26tp, Comish +26tp, Irwin +19tp, +22tp, Openshaw +26tp, +25.
Openshaw (3 wins) bt Avery +25, Comish +?, +17tp.

Chairman's Salver, Hunstanton, 10 - 13 September 1998

Results:

Burge (11 wins) bt Aiton +1 +24TP, Gaunt +19, Burrow +13 +13, Goacher +26TP +26TP, Trimmer +16 +16, Dawson +16TP +6.
Dawson (10 wins) bt Aiton +17TP +25TP, Gaunt +3 +24, Burrow +17TP, Goacher +10TPO +17, Trimmer +4, Cordingley +3 +24.
Cordingley (8 wins) bt Aiton +6 +8, Gaunt +17TP, Burrow +24 +26, Goacher +20TP, Burge +26 +13.
Gaunt (7 wins) bt Aiton +9TPO +4, Goacher +4 +13, Trimmer +23, Burge +3, Cordingley +23.
Burrow (6 wins) bt Gaunt +14 +7, Goacher +7, Trimmer +13 +26, Dawson +9.
Goacher (5 wins) bt Aiton +26TP, Burrow +26TP, Trimmer +5 +2, Cordingley +26.
Trimmer (5 wins) bt Aiton +7 Gaunt +19, Dawson +7, Cordingley +11 +11TP.
Aiton (4 wins) bt Burrow +4 +26TP, Goacher +26TP, Trimmer +8.

Spencer Ell, Compton 9 - 13 September 1998

Report by Liz and Chris Williams

After a closely fought playoff, Dave Kibble took the Spencer Ell Cup at Compton, beating Michael Heap +7 and finishing at 8 in the evening by security lights. The win was unfortunate for Heap, who had from an early stage led the competition for most of the four days. Kibble, with 1 win after 3 rounds, made up for lost ground by winning 9 games in a row, and putting himself in the lead with 2 rounds to go. However Heap beat Kibble in round 13 by +26tp. Round 14 saw a quick win for Heap by 23tp over Dyer. Meanwhile Kibble took over three and a half hours to beat Leggate, the longest game of the event by far.

It was a shame the final went into dusk, because shots were missed which would never have been missed in daylight. Heap's triple failed when he tried to peel penult before making 3b and the ball finished hard against the west wire. He attempted to peel again before 4b on a take-off from his yellow to get red to black waiting at 4b. Heap maintains that there was no pull this time, and yellow finished in exactly the same position as before - hard against the west wire. He got good position at 4b, and stuck in the hoop!! Kibble took the lift from B baulk and hit, making hoops 1b to Rover and leaving red about 6" SW of 4b and his balls on the east boundary giving Heap a perfect triple from the lift to B baulk. He said he didn't think about the

possibility. Heap then missed all three balls and gave David the game. Neither player deserved to lose, and the conditions made for a very scrappy game.

Hoping to continue his recent excellent run of form, David Harrison-Wood was expected by some to win the trophy, and was out in front with Heap early on. However a run of defeats put paid to that, though he did finish strongly to end third on 9 wins. Harrison-Wood managed to win four games on the final day: two of them having been pegged down.

Jeremy Dyer and Chris Patmore managed to obtain an impasse in their second game. Referee of the Tournament, Harrison-Wood made them start from baulk on a number of occasions when neither player would move their single ball; two balls having previously been pegged out. On one occasion Harrison-Wood made the players toss a coin and the winner was allowed to place his ball a yard in front of hoop 6 and run the hoop from there. Patmore won the toss and promptly stuck in the hoop. Eventually Dyer scraped home by 4.

Alex Leggate played well, finishing fourth on 8 wins and with 3 triples in the second half.

Chris Williams lost his first game of the competition, as he usually does, but made up for this and came middle of the table with 7 wins.

Chris Patmore, Graham Gale and Jeremy Dyer all had a disappointing event and never looked like putting together a long run of wins. Patmore had a number of very close defeats including one by 4tp to Michael Heap when all Patmore had to do was rush peel his partner through rover, make rover and peg out. He managed to miss the rush peel.

A total of 21 triple peels were completed in the event which improve the mark set last season by 5.

Despite a late start one morning due to a downpour, the competition was completed in four days, ably managed by both Chris Williams and Roy Wallis, they both having been asked separately by the CA to manage the event.

Results:

Gale (3 wins) bt Patmore +1, Dyer +14, +15.
Patmore (3 wins) bt Gale +12tp, Williams +3, Heap +26.
Williams (7 wins) bt Gale +5, +17, Patmore +14, Dyer +26, Heap +26, Leggate +17, +12.
Harrison-Wood (9 wins) bt Gale +21tp, +5, Patmore +5 +14tp, Williams +17, +26tp, Dyer +20, Leggate +17, Kibble +17.
Dyer (4 wins) bt Patmore +26tp, +4, Harrison-Wood +26tp, Williams +23.
Heap (11wins) bt Gale +16, +26, Patmore +4tp, Williams +17, Harrison-Wood +16tp, +2tp, Dyer +3, +23tp, Leggate +20, Kibble +24tp, +26tp.
Leggate (8 wins) bt Gale +11, +17tp, Patmore +23, +19tp, Harrison-Wood +13, Heap +17tp, Dyer +23, +3.
Kibble (11 wins) bt Gale +7, +24tp, Patmore +25tp, +3, Williams +3, +26tp, Harrison-Wood +10otp, Dyer +4, +19, Leggate +7.
 Play-off: Kibble beat Heap +7

The Selectors - Sidmouth, 11th-13th September 1998

Report by Kevin Carter

The manager thought he was being smart in nominating as the tournament reporter the first loser on Friday morning. When he was demolished in under an hour by Dai Morgan he was hoisted by his own petard and here we are

Dai was one of several up and coming stars in this year's event, which one veteran described as the strongest ever. Three days of intensive top quality competition against other rising stars and a group of established players, all at about scratch, sort out who has what it takes to step up to championship standard. Indeed, one name on the cup is a certain Robert Fulford.

Sidmouth hosted this year's renewal. What a gem of club, which few of us had visited before. It has three good courts and one which is truly excellent - Parkstone or even Hurlingham quality. There is a large clubhouse with good food and drink, the hospitality was magnificent and the crowd watching the final was large and appreciative.

Even after the ROT, Bill Arliss, reduced the hoops to 1/16th", conditions were still easy on the rain-softened ground. We saw nine TPs - including four by Sam Tudor (if you include his OTP).

After two days of a Swiss, nobody was unbeaten and nobody had failed to win at least one game. The consistent Andrew Cowing led the field, with Nelson Morrow, Peter Taylor, and Roger Jenkins just behind. However, the top two went through to Sunday's best of three final, while the rest battled out a Swiss consolation. This eventually went to Roger Jenkins, who tenaciously outfought Peter Taylor, with Sam Tudor, Gary Bennett and last minute stand-in David Coates all close up.

Dai Morgan faded, but this promising second-season player's time will come, as will Sam Tudor's. Local Devon players, Brian Smith, Shaun Carter and Australian Ladies Champion, Shona Vaissiere, all surprisingly disappointed.

Saturday night saw an enjoyable tournament dinner, attended by most of the players, along with some spouses and friends.

The final between Andrew and Nelson was a tense affair from the outset. It looked as if Nelson's nerve was holding until he blobbed penult after a four-back peel on his forward ball. A prolonged tactical battle followed, with both players making twitchy errors, but Andrew eventually scrambled home +4. The second game was more straightforward. Nelson's two errors were two too many against his highly promising adversary from Cheltenham, who romped away +23.

So, the handsome Ranelagh Weightman Cup was presented to Andrew Cowing by the CA Chairman. Thanks were made to our hosts and I have never before seen players spontaneously applaud the appreciative spectators who watched throughout.

There is talk in the CA corridors of power that the Selectors should be reformed. Creating a Fourth Eight is one option. However, I am one of many who believe the Selectors in its present format, with 16+ players, provides a unique blend of bonhomie, high quality play and a stepping stone to greater things that ought not to be too readily discarded.

Results:

Winner: Andrew Cowing Runner-up: Nelson Morrow
 Swiss Consolation: Roger Jenkins

CROQUET BALLS FOR CHAMPIONSHIPS, TOURNAMENTS AND CLUBS

The BARLOW GRANDE TOURNAMENT ball, known as the 'GT' will set the standards for Championship and Tournament play into the new century.

The 'GT' is approved by the CA for Championship play at the highest level, comes with a 3 year warranty against warping and splitting and is stable in performance in all climatic conditions. Recent CA tests revealed remarkable consistency in size weight and resilience. All sets are matched to these exacting standards.

The CLUB ball, known as the 'C' (formerly known as the Championship ball), will continue to be available as the most economical ball conforming to the CA Championship requirements.

GARDEN croquet balls available in primary colours only.

1998 prices

'GT' £139 per set 16oz Garden £42 per set
 'C' £97 per set 12oz Garden £38 per set
 add £5 per set for postage, packing and insurance. Special postage rates for multiple orders.

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Send for a full list of Top Quality Croquet Equipment and Sets.

CA Centenary Mallets remain available in 1998

CROKEY is a board game based on Croquet, played on a chequerboard. Counters are substituted for balls and are moved in the manner of Queen pieces in Chess. The MDF board gives a secure fixing for the metal hoops and centre peg to permit repeated attachment and removal of the clips.

The rules of Croquet have been adapted to take account of the absence of the dynamic element and to 'tune' the game to give a reasonable share of turns between the sides. However, the routes presented by a chequerboard pattern deny the possibility of a 'missed shot' which in Croquet could for example terminate a break. To produce an equivalent miss in the board game, a contestant may choose to play a MISS CARD at a crucial point to displace the opponent's 'ball' at the end of the opponent's turn. There is a variety of such 'misses', the nature of which is not known before being played. Such an uninvited intervention with an unpredictable effect adds fun and requires further skill in contingency planning.

The Rulebook describes games based on Golf and Association Croquet. The handicapping system of Bisques is included. The booklet "getting started" gives guidance, explains the use of Miss Cards, and includes notes for Chess and Croquet players.

CROKEY is sent in flat-pack form in a postal carton at £26 inclusive of postage in UK (please enquire for rates abroad). Send S.A.E. for illustrated leaflet.

TACTICAL GAMES, 19 NORTHWOLD, ELY CAMBRIDGESHIRE CB6 1BG

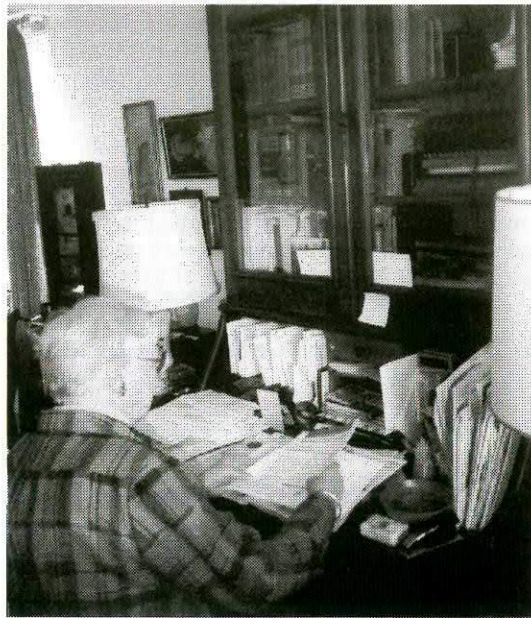
EXCERPTS FROM A BIBLIOGRAPHER'S CASEBOOK

by David Drazin

VII. THE HAYES CONNECTION

If you have seen Nancy Rhoades's *Croquet: An Annotated Bibliography* from the Rendell Rhoades Croquet Collection (Metuchen, NJ, & London: The Scarecrow Press, 1992), you could be excused for thinking that the initials HPC stand for 'How to Play Croquet', the title of many of the books she lists - and most of the rest have very similar titles. But it so happens they actually stand for the [Rutherford B] Hayes Presidential Center in Fremont, Ohio, which I had occasion to visit recently, and to which Nancy presented her late husband's treasure in 1992.

Readers of Nancy's catalogue raisonné will have some inkling of how this collection came into being and of the make-up of a very remarkable croquet nut. Over lunch at her home in a plush assisted-living complex outside Columbus, she reminded me that he was a man of many more parts than you would have thought possible. Twice named Outstanding Educator of America, he was an omnivorous collector, professor of maritime biology, explorer, historian, printer, publisher, consultant to the US Postal Service, and leading environmental protectionist. Aged 83, now recovering valiantly from a stroke she suffered last December and planning to write three more books of her own, Nancy told me of the 23 collections for which she had to find homes on Rendell's death, aged 62, in 1976. Besides the croquet, there were, to mention but a few, the stamps, the 7000 specimens of crayfish, and what can only have been the first and last collection of sauerkraut of all time!



Nancy with her eye still on the ball

Comparing the US croquet literature with our own, I was struck by the plethora of slim introductory manuals and rule books I saw, the static character of the rule books over a long period of time, and the dearth of informed works which went into any detail about anything. Soon after the game was introduced there from the Old World in the 1860s, the US game got stuck in a deep Victorian rut, only to emerge



The writer at work in the Hayes library

from the shadows in the 1970s. How, I wondered, could this have come about? Perhaps it was largely due to the distribution of population in a vast country, the power of the press, and the enduring influence of the state in the structure of American society. It would seem that radical innovations by such regional bodies as the National American Croquet Association (New England), the Chicago Croquet Convention (the Midwest), and the Croquet Association of Kentucky were effectively undermined by the press which profited from a nationwide market. There was money to be made from rule books, but serious money meant big sales, and that meant glossing over local initiatives. Starved of wider publicity and eroded by inter-regional pressures and national inertia, the codes pioneered by those bodies never achieved critical mass. No authoritative history of US croquet has been published to this very day. Hopefully this want will soon be made good and we shall be given a detailed account of what really happened.

But why Fremont ('no mountains here?'), which you might think of as Twin Peaks with no more than a hillock on the skyline? And what about the president? The natives boast that, apart from the presidential centre, they have nothing which can conceivably be mistaken for a tourist attraction or third dimension. The 'center' is something else! What Rhoades and Hayes had in common were deep roots in the state of Ohio and a fanatical commitment to the game of croquet. Hayes was inaugurated in 1877 at the height of the Gilded Age, when croquet was all the rage in the US, after having served three terms as state governor. During his tenure of the White House, federal business revolved around the state of play on his back lawn. Fremont was his ancestral home and it was fitting that his memorial institution should be built in the grounds of his 25-acre family estate there. But those of us who like a good fast lawn will be saddened to learn that he named it Spiegel Grove, which might loosely be translated as 'swamp bog'.

The HPC really is worth a visit, should you happen to be thereabouts with an hour or so to kill, even if you're not that fussy about croquet literature. The president's home will soon be re-opened to visitors, fully restored to the condition in which he lived there, complete with 3,000 of its original artifacts. The library of 70,000 volumes is quite splendid, far the most friendly and efficient resource of its kind at which I have ever had the good fortune to work. No surprise that the staff take pride in the fact that it is the most popular presidential centre in the US. Perhaps there is a moral here. Diligent searches of the president's private and state papers have failed to unearth a speck of dirt on this paragon of virtue. History may rate JFK the greater statesman, but the HPC pulls in more visitors.

The Case Of Mr Jones Whitmore, The Croquet Pioneer

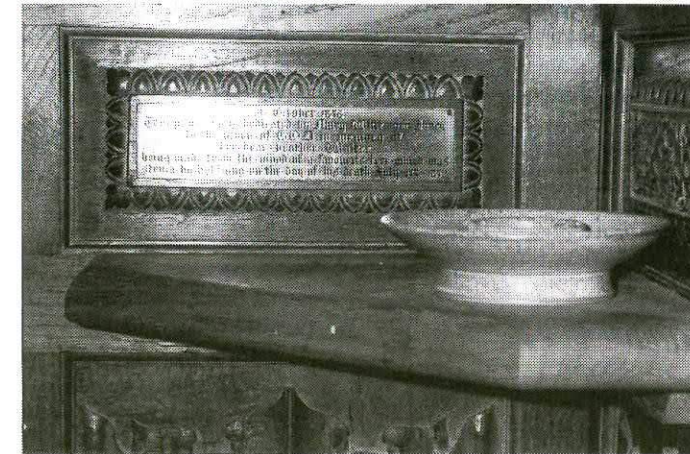
Article & photos by Neil Williams

Out of the blue, in the spring of 1998 a stranger rang to say he had in his possession a copy of an old croquet book. Would I like to see it? It was called 'Croquet Tactics', and was written by Walter Jones Whitmore.

I had read Prichard's *The History of Croquet* and I know about Walter Jones Whitmore. (He had changed his name from the family name, Whitmore Jones.) I also knew about his book on croquet tactics, published in 1868. Both the man and the book are among the most significant and important landmarks in the history of the game.

Jones Whitmore had, for example, established a system of Laws, without which the game would never have been standardised. He organised the first tournaments and fought many hard battles for croquet in its earliest years.

"By the way," said Sam, my caller, "there's an inscription on the fly-leaf. It says 'Mary Whitmore Jones, Chastleton, June 1868'. I arranged to call on Sam to see the book. It was as he had said, plain, slim, dark green with gold lettering and just 39 pages. By now I was hooked, this was something special.



The family memorial to Walter Jones Whitmore in the church. No mention of croquet.

The intriguing thing was the inscription. Mary was one of Jones Whitmore's sisters. Was it her own handwriting or was it the author's?

I explained to Sam and his wife over a cup of tea that Chastleton was Chastleton House, the Whitmore Jones' family home. The date on the inscription was a month after the book was published, a presentation copy?

What would Sherlock Holmes have done next? Visit Chastleton, of course, where there might be samples of handwriting to compare.

I also wanted to know what else there was at Chastleton from the earliest days of croquet. Prichard had mentioned that the house had kept some of Jones Whitmore's inventions - such as the boot-lace winder, which he had been shown. Were there books, papers, photographs? Did the croquet lawn, even, still exist?

The National Trust took Chastleton over in 1991 and then began a multi-million pound programme to restore the house - a house to which only minor changes had been made since its construction in 1607. The same family had lived in it ever since - the Jones family, later becoming the Whitmore Joneses.

My luck was in: Chastleton had just reopened to great acclaim from both the public and the experts. The work of restoration and repair had been completed and this unique house stood revealed in all its glory.

For the croquet player, of course, the house has even more



Beyond the tree, the croquet lawn at Chastleton House, looking towards the house.

significance. It was here from the late 1860's that croquet ceased to be simply a pleasant summer diversion and was set on its course to become a national and then an international sport.

And that difficult, proud, penniless, eccentric, inspired man, Walter Jones Whitmore, played a unique part in bringing this about. He was the pivot and the pioneer.

The visit to Chastleton in 1998 as a player is, however, to suffer a sense of loss. Scarcely anything of him or his work remains: no books, no papers, no pictures. Though the room curators are thoroughly briefed on their rooms and the house in general, mention croquet and you draw a blank. In the white parlour there is a copy of the book Mary wrote, *Games of Patience*. Am I getting nearer at least to solving the mystery of the inscription? The custodian opens the book for me in case Mary has written in it. She hasn't. We pass through the oak parlour, where Prichard says Jones Whitmore did his work. No traces of that work here. In a room at the top of the house there is a glass case containing a few sad hoops, dug up "when the lawn was relaid", says the label. What? The lawns were relaid, which lawns? Not croquet lawns? Perhaps there is something left after all. And yes, there, through a small, worn pane in the window of the Long Gallery I see down below a series of three lawns, each at a different level. The middle one is 'the one' I am told.

You cross the first lawn, descend a flight of steps, and there you are. Two huge trees and a steep bank separate it from the third lawn, beyond which lies a shrubbery and then a wall, and beyond that a glimpse of the village. A beautiful setting, utterly peaceful, the croquet lawn of your dreams. And as in dreams the scene does speak - of those early days. You see the figures move around the lawn, hear the chock of mallet on ball.

Back home I reflect not so much on my failure to find out more about Sam's book, but on how sad it is that this small, historic episode in Chastleton's long life - Jones Whitmore's work on croquet - is so faint an echo. And then I begin to realise something else. Chastleton now rests in the nation's care, not in the hands of a single family. This means that for the first time we have an opportunity to commemorate and acknowledge an unsung national achievement.

It would be wonderful if the CA Centenary Exhibition could be permanently housed at Chastleton. Failing that, could we not at least provide leaflets about the importance of the house and of Jones Whitmore to croquet? Visitors could also be given information about croquet now - the CA, its work and how to make contact. Above all, can we not work with the National Trust to erect a plaque on the edge of the middle lawn - to the memory of Walter Jones Whitmore? I would like it to read:

To the memory of Walter Jones Whitmore, 1831 - 1872, of Chastleton House, the father of modern croquet, a sport which for the last hundred years and across the world has given summer pleasure to many thousands of people. In gratitude.

That, surely, would be to perform an act of justice, and grace our own centenary in the finest possible way.

All England Handicap Final Wrest Park, September 26-27 1998

Report & Photos by John Bevington

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I would suggest that in future the club hosting the final should also be responsible for providing a full illustrated report. Such words appeared in my report on the 1996 final. As I am now secretary of Wrest Park and they have served to construct the petard with which I have now been well and truly hoisted. Having returned to earth in one piece there can be no excuses; self-imposed responsibilities, like petards, are there to be discharged. Last year's final mustered a mere four contestants, and so for this year the CA had the bright idea of expanding the final to include not only the winners but also the second and in some cases third places from the six area finals and running it as a six-round Swiss. More competitors, more competitive and, one hoped, more convivial. The 1998 All England attracted 376 entries from 34 clubs, and the 16 finalists are listed below: Reaching the final is an achievement in itself, as it necessitates



The players: LtoR Roger Brookes, Ian Lines, Barney Lewis, Dave Mundy, Gerry Eccles, Stephen Stuart-Matthews, John Gibbons, Mark Fawcett, Daniel Mills, Tony Tizard, Peter Spiller, John Moore, Robert Essler, Andrew Davies, Richard Smith.

Name	Club	Yrs playing	H'cap at Jan 98	H'cap at final	Area final
Richard Smith	St. Albans	2	18	12	Wrest Park (W)
John Gibbons	Cassiobury	1	18	9	Wrest Park
Ian Lines	Bowdon	5	1	0.5	Pendle (W)
John Moore	Tyneside	2	20	11	Pendle
Robert Essler	Pendle	20	7	6	Pendle
Tony Tizard	Ealing	5	14	11	Harrow (W)
Stephen Stuart-Matthews	Aldermaston	1	22	16	Harrow
Roger Brookes	Nailsea	1	16	4.5	Nailsea (W)
Gerry Eccles	Cheltenham	9	12	6	Nailsea
Daniel Mills	Bath	3	16	11	Nailsea
Dave Mundy	Medway	1	16	10	Southwick (W)
Barney Lewis	Tunbridge W's	5	10	7	Southwick
Andy Davies	Woking	1	12	11	Southwick
Mark Fawcett	Roehampton	6	14	11	Surbiton (W)
Peter Spiller	Hurlingham	3	12	11	Surbiton
Russell Bretherton	Parsons Green	2	18	8	Surbiton

to get progressively faster in the afternoon. Tony Tizard obviously benefited from his practice as his game against Ian Lines finished without Ian having taken croquet. Dave Mundy pegged out his opponent, Gerry Eccles, but also pegged out his own ball leaving him on hoop 1 versus hoop 5, a position from which he never recovered, going down by 6. John Moore was playing John Gibbons, another first round winner, and was struggling to get in front of the hoops as his take-offs were taking off too far, and John Gibbons eventually won +8. Daniel Mills and Stephen Stuart-Matthews had substantial wins against Roger Brookes and Andy Davies. Barney Lewis, as bye, had a walk round the park and watched some anglers land a 7lb 6oz bream from the Long Water.

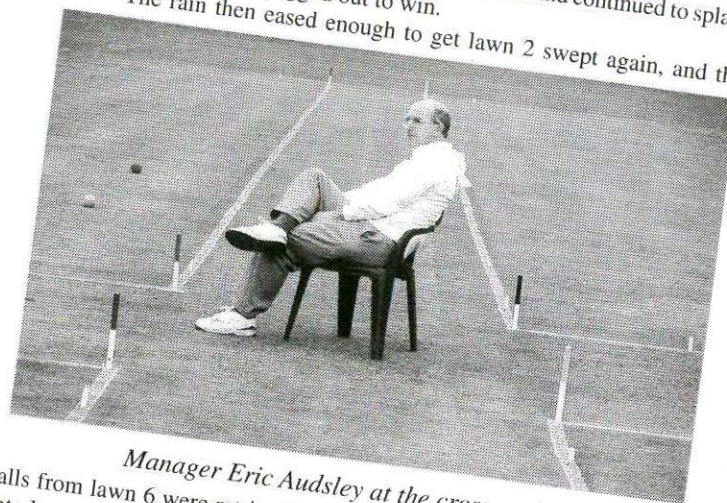
Everyone now had a feel for the lawns, and in the third round Barney Lewis and Andy Davies rapidly saw off Gerry Eccles and Roger Brookes. Ian Lines was left with the vestige of a chance when he hit the single ball when John Moore's front ball missed the peg and he pegged the other out, but he made only one more hoop. Tony Tizard was having difficulty hitting in against John Gibbons and thus was unable to take advantage of a number of golden opportunities, and John eventually got his game together to win +24. Peter Spiller was playing Mark Fawcett, with both yet to break their ducks, and Peter found his form and had both balls round to 4-back, but both players then began sticking in hoops. Eventually all the clips were on the peg. Peter rushed his ball onto the peg, Mark hit and rolled up to the peg but wired himself and hit the peg in his attempt to hit the other ball, leaving Peter to win +1. In the other games Robert Essler and Richard Smith had a dour struggle which Richard eventually won on time +4, and Daniel Mills nearly completed a heroic recovery against Stephen Stuart-Matthews. Needing an all-round break in the last turn of the game, he had got as far as 2-back when he missed the

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return roquet after the hoop. After three rounds John Gibbons and Stephen Stuart-Matthews were both undefeated, followed by four others on two wins each, and everyone was looking forward to the next day.

We arrived to find that the heavy overnight rain had left the lawns well and truly soaked, but after an hour's hard labour with buckets and squeegees four of the six were more or less fit for play. The key match between John and Stephen began on lawn 6, along with the game between Daniel Mills and Tony Tizard, but at 11.30 the deluge began, and within a quarter of an hour the lake on lawn 4 had merged with the lake on lawn 6 making further play impossible. The other games were also fighting a losing battle with the rain, but before rain totally stopped play John Moore continued his good form with a +26 against Andy Davies, and Richard Smith won +21 against Roger Brookes. Peter Spiller and Dave Mundy battled away on lawn 3, until the lake on the west boundary finally joined corner to corner, and then abandoned in favour of lunch, as did Barney Lewis and Robert Essler on lawn 1. Ian Lines and Gerry Eccles, also on lawn 1, were determined to get their money's worth and continued to splash away until Ian finally pegged out to win.

The rain then eased enough to get lawn 2 swept again, and the

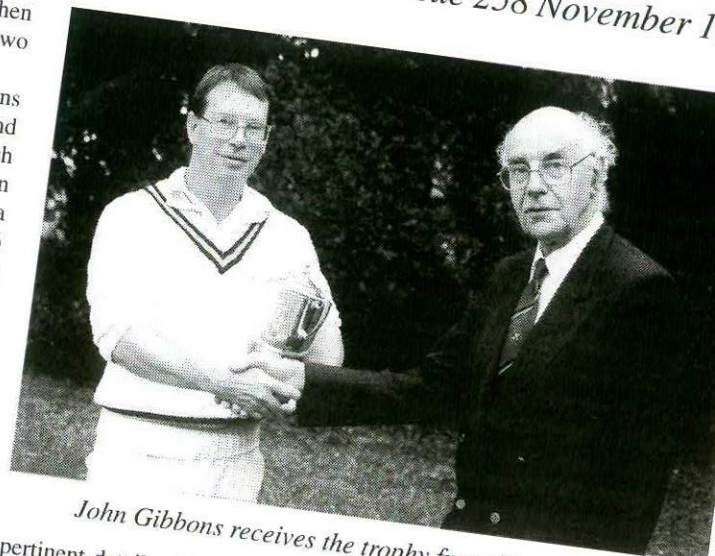


Manager Eric Audsley at the crossroads

balls from lawn 6 were retrieved from the lake. Daniel and Tony moved onto lawn 1, which had dried out just enough, Daniel eventually winning +11 on time. John and Stephen resumed on lawn 2 at about twenty past two. With minutes to go and as the rain commenced yet again, Stephen, three points behind, stuck in 2-back with yellow. John cornered and Stephen ignored the hoop and joined with red. John then joined wide on the north boundary beyond hoop 2, Stephen made 2-back, and, with the aid of a perfect rush, 3-back. His rush after the hoop ran into the peg and the next split shot left him well short of John's balls. A difficult choice, and one with which we are all familiar. The shot missed, and John set about splitting the balls wide as time was called. Stephen missed the 20 yard shot, leaving him with a nap hand of second places (the club competition, the area final and the national final) and John as the winner +1 on time and the 1998 All England Handicap champion. John won all his games and was always thinking about constructing breaks and leaves and was not afraid to tackle ambitious shots if there was a dividend in sight. Stephen, Daniel Mills, John Moore and Richard Smith also played well; none of them have been and on this evidence will continue to do so.

Those that remained assembled in the pavilion for tea, and Alan Oldham, who had braved the weather to come and present the trophy, noted with pleasure that not only was it the first time a player from the Cassiobury club had won the trophy but also that Cassiobury was one of his clubs. He is also the Cassiobury club handicapper - clearly experience means you judge it right! We should congratulate not only the winner but all the players, who had to put up with as varied a mixture of conditions as they are ever likely to meet, and also manager Eric Audsley, who remained unflappable throughout, did all the refereeing, shifted gallons of water and contributed most of the reporting on the play. Organiser Bill Arliss had said to Eric that he wanted the final to be "a memorable event". On that count it was an unqualified success, as I can't imagine that any of the participants are ever likely to forget it. We later discovered a small but

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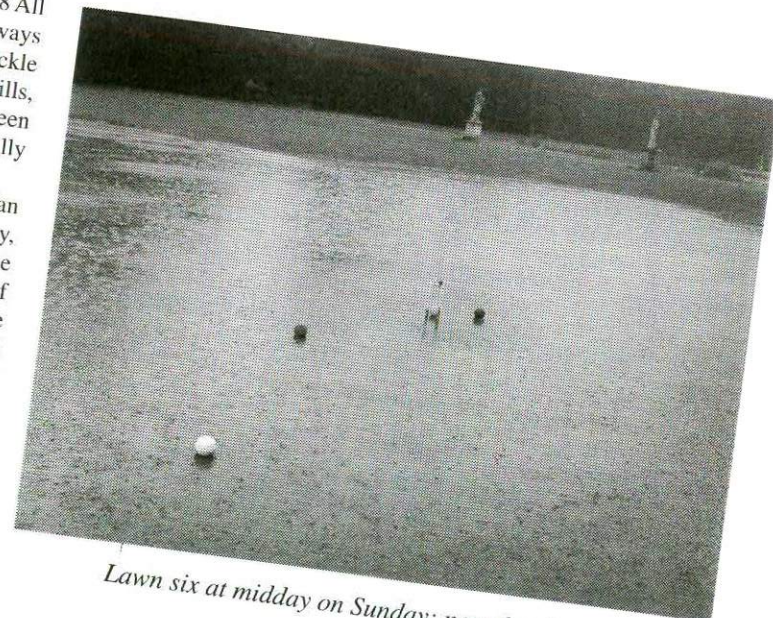


John Gibbons receives the trophy from Alan Oldham

pertinent detail which they can add to their reminiscences. On Sunday September 27 1998 the wettest place in Britain was Luton (a mere nine miles from Wrest Park), where 3.1 inches of rain fell during the day.

Results

Player	Wins	Results
John Gibbons	4	Gerry Eccles (+25), John Moore (+8), Tony Tizard (+24), Stephen Stuart-Matthews (+1T)
Stephen S-Matthews	3	Mark Fawcett (+23), Andy Davies (+23), Daniel Mills (+3T), Roger Brookes (+23), Peter Spiller (+3T), Tony Tizard (+11T)
Daniel Mills	3	Dave Mundy (+26), Ian Lines (+24), Andy Davies (+26)
John Moore	3	Mark Fawcett (+2), Robert Essler (+4T), Roger Brookes (+21)
Richard Smith	3	Richard Smith (+9), Roger Brookes (+25), Barney Lewis (+2), Gerry Eccles (+8)
Andy Davies	2	Robert Essler (+9T)
Ian Lines	2	Peter Spiller (+16)
Roger Brookes	1	Dave Mundy (+6)
Robert Essler	1	Ian Lines (+26)
Gerry Eccles	1	Mark Fawcett (+1)
Tony Tizard	1	Gerry Eccles (+26)
Peter Spiller	1	
Barney Lewis	1	
Dave Mundy	0	
Mark Fawcett	0	



Lawn six at midday on Sunday; now that is wet!

A POINT OF LAW

To Tell or Not To Tell ? (Simple Rules for Guidance)

Compiled by Raymond Ransom

Those new to croquet often have difficulty in deciding when to tell an opponent that they are about to do something wrong. The guidelines below provide simple rules to follow but if in doubt you should consult the rule book or ask a referee.

You Must

- ◆ Remind your opponent to take their continuation shot if they have forgotten.
- ◆ Tell your opponent if they have misplaced a clip.
- ◆ Forestall your opponent (that is stop them playing) if:
 - ◆ They are about to take croquet from the wrong ball,
 - ◆ They are about to take croquet when not entitled to,
 - ◆ They are about to play a single ball stroke when they should be taking croquet.
 - ◆ They are about to play a stroke when not entitled to do so.
 - ◆ When a ball is misplaced. This can happen when:
 - 1) A croqueted ball finishes within the yard line area and

is not placed on the yard line.

- 2) After running a hoop the ball finishes within the yard line area and is replaced on the yard line in error.
- 3) After a croquet stroke, the striker's ball finishes within the yard line area and is replaced on the yard line in error.
- 4) After a continuation stroke, the striker's ball finishes within the yard line and is not replaced on the yard line.
- 5) A double banker has marked and moved one of the balls of your game and your opponent is unaware of this.

- ◆ When your opponent is about to play a questionable stroke, that is one which would possibly result in a fault. An example would be a possible crush stroke.
- ◆ Tell your opponent if they are about to strike a ball from a double banked game.

Your Must Not

- ◆ Tell your opponent if they are about to play the wrong ball.
- ◆ Tell your opponent if they are about to run the wrong hoop.
- ◆ Tell your opponent if they are about to run a hoop after taking a half bisque. Remember that the stroke is legitimate but the hoop has not been made and therefore there is no continuation stroke.
- ◆ Give any advice to your opponent or accept any from him/her.
- ◆ Tell your opponent that they have a lift.

National Club Events

The Longman Cup

Nottingham v Parsons Green, Cheltenham, 4 October 1998

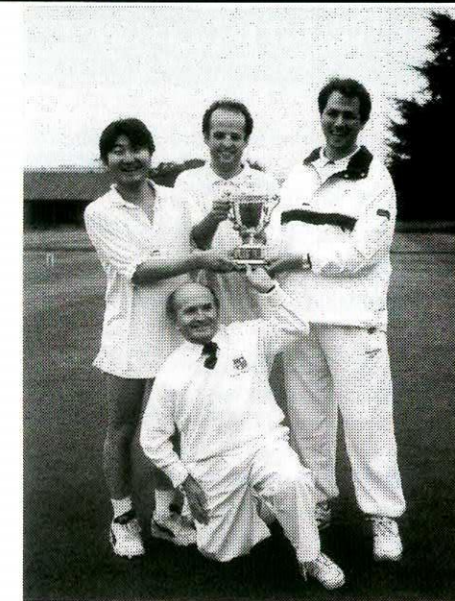
Report by Nick Parish,
Photo by Susan Davies

An exciting final was in prospect at Cheltenham, with both teams having overcome their semi-final opponents 5-0 on the previous day. Nottingham had beaten Norwich, while Parsons Green had defeated East Dorset. A new name was certain to be on the trophy, but while the very name "Nottingham" spoke of pedigree (indeed they had won the Mary Rose final 4-3 on the previous day), not even the most senior member of the Parsons Green team could remember having won a club trophy before.

The team comprised (Parsons Green) Lynn Callan (11), Nick Parish (14), Kotaro Miyata (16) and Adam Crowley (16), while Nottingham fielded David Brydon (6), Roger Berkley (8), Roger Gold (11) and Jed Allen (14).

In the morning doubles, Lynn and Kot took on Roger G and David in the first match. The game flowed freely, breaks were made, Kot played with the right ball most of the time and Parsons Green were quickly into a 1-0 lead. In the other match, progress was extremely slow, mainly due to the graveyard that was hoop 2, to which at least 20 approach shots must have been played. Nick's stuttering break to 3-back was eventually to prove decisive, as despite a late rally from Roger B, Parsons Green prevailed +4 on time. The only mitigating feature was that everyone did - eventually - make hoop 2. So, as we adjourned to an excellent hot lunch, Parsons Green were two up with three to play.

In the afternoon nerves were on show. In the doubles Lynn and Nick were up against David and Roger B, while Kot played Jed and Adam took on Roger G. Following a good, early break from Lynn to 3-back in the doubles match, David played a flawless break round to rover. During this break, which would have been a pleasure to watch had it not been made against us, Jed and Roger G were the only players to be seen in play on the other courts. Parsons Green fought back with Nick also going round to rover and Adam and Kot putting in sterling recoveries on the other courts. Adam, the only Parsons Green player to have played in all five rounds of the competition, was unable to sustain the recovery and Roger G came home first to put a point on the board for Nottingham. Kot, however, completed his recovery in full with a fine 3-ball break and having made rover with both balls,



The winning Parsons Green Team (l to r)
Kotaro Miyata, Adam Crowley, Lynn Callan and Nick Parish

had only to peg-out. Having missed the peg-out, he opted to lay up in the middle of the lawn. Jed missed, giving Kot another chance to secure victory, but once again the peg was failed and Jed made no mistake with his next shot and went on to make the scores level at 2-2. Parsons Green had a significant lead in the doubles, and soon Nick had only to make a 3-yard roquet and peg-out to secure the vital win. For a player who had never played outside the comforting environs of Parsons Green before this was easier said than done, but done it was and Parsons Green became the new name on the Longman Cup.

I must finish by thanking Don Gaunt and everyone at Cheltenham for their hospitality and both teams for a sportingly-contested match, not to mention the loyal supporters, Joan, Sue Graham and Mo.

Results:

Longman Cup 1998

Round 1: Southport bt Walsall 4 - 1, Watford bt Northampton 3 - 2, Reigate bt Harrow 4 - 1.
Round 2: Bowdon bt Southport 3 - 2, Nottingham bt Bury 3 - 2, Beverley bt East Riding, Ripon bt Tyneside 3 - 2, West Park bt Ipswich 3 - 2, Norwich bt Colworth 3 - 2, Letchworth bt Leicester 3 - 1, Watford bt Kenilworth 3 - 2, High Wycombe bt Zenmet 4 - 1, Blewbury bt Woking 3 - 2, Dyffryn bt Bristol 5 - 0, East Dorset bt Cheltenham 3 - 2, Medway bt Surbiton 4 - 1, Southwick bt Compton 3 - 2, Parsons Green bt Hurlingham 3 - 2, Reigate bt Roehampton 3 - 2.
Round 3: Nottingham bt Bowdon 3 - 2, Beverley bt Ripon 4 - 1, Norwich bt West Park 3 - 2, Watford bt Letchworth 5 - 0, High Wycombe bt

Blewbury 4 - 1, East Dorset bt Dyffryn 3 - 2, Southwick bt Medway 4 - 1, Parsons Green bt Reigate 3 - 2.

Quarter Finals: Nottingham bt Bowdon 4 - 1, Norwich bt Watford 4 - 1, East Dorset bt High Wycombe 3 - 2, Parsons Green bt Southwick 4 - 1.

Semi-Finals: Nottingham bt Norwich 5 - 0, Parsons Green bt East Dorset 5 - 0.

Final: Parsons Green bt Nottingham 3 - 2.

Mary Rose 1998

Results:

Round 1: Letchworth bt Surbiton 4 - 3, West Park bt Northampton 6 - 1, Dyffryn bt Sussex 4 - 3, Nottingham bt Hurlingham 5 - 2, Bowdon bt Bristol 4 - 3.

Quarter-Finals: West Park bt Letchworth 6 - 1, East Dorset bt Dyffryn 5 - 2, Nottingham bt Colworth 4 - 3, Cheltenham bt Bowdon 5 - 2.
Semi-Finals: West Park bt East Dorset 6 - 1, Nottingham bt Cheltenham 5 - 1.

Final: Nottingham bt West Park 4 - 3.

Inter-Club 1998

Results:

Round 1: Bowdon bt Harrow Oak 6 - 1, Cheltenham bt Bristol 5 - 2, Surbiton bt Ipswich 4 - 0, Northampton bt Sussex 4 - 3.

Quarter-Finals: Bowdon bt Woking 6 - 0, Hurlingham bt Cheltenham 4 - 3, Surbiton bt Nottingham 4 - 3, Northampton bt West Park 4 - 3.

Semi-Finals: Bowdon bt Hurlingham 4 - 1, Surbiton bt Northampton.

Final: Bowdon bt Surbiton 4 - 3.

The Secretary's Shield 1998

Results:

Quarter-Finals: Ripon Spa bt Middlesborough, Bowdon bt Letchworth 6 - 1, Northampton bt Bristol 4 - 3, Zenmet bt Reigate 4 - 3.

Semi-Finals: Bowdon bt Ripon 4 - 3, Northampton bt Zenmet 4 - 2.

Final: Bowdon bt Northampton 5 - 2.

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Tournament Reports.....

Tournament Reports.....

Tournament Reports.....

Roehampton B level 4 - 5 July

Report by Tony Fathers

This popular and growingly established tournament, well managed as usual by Douglas Gurney in his efficient and laid back manner, was blessed by two consecutive days of dry weather.

The sensation of the weekend was Kathleen Priestley who arrived in only her third year playing the game with a handicap of 7. In her first five games she demolished opponents with handicaps ranging between 3.5 and 6 but lost the final to Mike Town (3.5) by only 3. Not surprisingly her handicap came down to 5.

The progress of this charming 'bandit' generated further discussion on the justification for not altering handicaps in the course of the tournament. The reason usually given is that it is not fair to earlier contestants if the bandit is brought down for later matches. This appears to favour the view that it is better to condone a manifest wrong for a longer period rather than changing a handicap when the facts require it.

Ramsgate handicap, 4 - 5 July

Report by Frances Low

This was my first visit to the Ramsgate Club but friends had told me to expect a warm welcome. This I certainly did. I must thank all those who were so hospitable and in particular the wonderful caterers who looked after us so well with a succession of tempting meals.

There was a good standard of entry with handicaps ranging from 3.5 to 20 so there were many interesting, close games. Congratulations to Medway's Simon Miles who was a deserved

winner by 1 point from local star John Sanderson. It was nice to see young Simon's enthusiasm for the game and how much he is improving.

Cassiobury 24 - 26 July

Report by Dennis Goulding

Fifteen players took part in the annual Watford tournament in the wooded surroundings of Cassiobury Park. Blessed with good weather, apart from a rogue shower on Sunday afternoon, the tournament was deservedly won by Russell Bretherton, a visitor from the Harrow Oak Club. Russell with his (short lived!) 11 handicap, won all six games beating local Peter Thompson in the final.

In order to get all the games completed in 2.5 days a tennis court was commandeered as court 3. It was quite adventurous on that surface but the most bizarre game was played between Bill Gillott and Ted Matthews. After almost 3 hours of play Bill won on time 7 hoops to 5.

The tournament was splendidly managed by Robert Bateson and everyone thoroughly enjoyed themselves, especially when consuming the homemade cakes for afternoon tea supplied by the Arthur Reed household. Why not come and join us down in the woods at Watford next year?

Parkstone handicap 1 - 2 August

The tournament got off to a good sunny start with 15 visitors and 5 club members taking part, with handicaps ranging from 3.5 to 18. With three games to play on the first day games started at 9.30 a.m. prompt. The sun held out until the last game when the heavens

opened and thunder rolled round the sky. It was gone 9.00 p.m. when the last games were completed and only two players unbeaten, Peggy Nutland and Samir Patel.

On Sunday morning Peggy and Samir battled it out with Peggy winning by 14. The afternoon saw Peggy up against Gabrielle Higgins, Gabrielle trying to win the tournament by beating Peggy so they would both have 4 out of 5 wins but with Gabrielle winning on the who beat whom. However the afternoon was to turn into a Manager's nightmare with Gabrielle beating Peggy so both on 4 wins, Samir winning his last game to give him 4 wins and two other players, Rita Nunn and Penny Simmonds, both reporting wins to bring them also up to 4. It was impossible to apply the who beat whom ruling so a shootout at peg was the only way to get a winner. Everyone gathered around lawn 3 for an exciting finish to the tournament, the eventual winner being Penny Simmonds.

Crawley over 50's 5 - 6 August

The Crawley lawns have this year suffered severely from youths using them for football kickabouts. Crawley borough council, the owner of the land, has failed to control this misuse. The degree of damage was such that the tournament needed to be transferred to another club. The Southwick club kindly stepped into the breach and allowed the tournament to be played on their well maintained lawns.

The tournament attracted entries from Southwick, Dulwich, Crawley, Parkstone, Medway and Downham with a long waiting list.

This must have been one of the few events this year run in brilliant sunshine. The

format was Swiss, modified by the manager as appropriate! After the four rounds were completed, four players had won three games each. It was decided that the fairest and most entertaining way to determine the overall winner was to have a shoot out at the peg. The Nash trophy was then won by Pauline Davey, who was the only player to hit on her first attempt.

Guildford and Godalming open 8 - 9 August

Report by Richard Hilditch

A small but select group contested this traditional fixture at the G+G Rugby club and Ram cider house. We had international representatives from Wales (Dai Morgan) and Australia (John Wentworth) playing in their first open weekends. Both did well and earned handicap reductions.

The seeded minus players won through to the semi-finals where Chris Farthing beat his Opens doubles partner Chris Patmore in a rematch of their encounter at the Easterns. The other match pitted the fast improving Jeremy Dyer against local man Graham Gale. Jeremy was struggling with a spare mallet having had his stolen from the Surbiton equipment hut, and he dropped the first game. However Graham was also error prone and allowed Jeremy to advance despite quite a few chances.

The conditions were very hot throughout, over 30 degrees, and the shelter of a couple of umbrellas and the tent were essential. Despite this the lawns were not as fast as they could have been, being a bit spiky, although they were too fast for some of the players with only 1 TP done all weekend.

The final started with a scrappy game that Chris managed to win. The second game was more convincing as Jeremy started to wilt in the heat. Graham won the Swiss beating another improving player, Paul Castell.

Colchester Over 50's handicap 11 - 13 August

Report by Nigel Gray

Eighteen 'senior' players assembled at the restored Colchester lawns during some of the warmest days this summer for this mid-week tournament where handicaps ranged from 2 to 20. At the end of the day Colchester chairman David Haslam was joint leader with Michael Percival, both having 62 points. Below them were a group of four players including last year's winner David Jenkinson, on 54.

The second day saw David consolidating his position with good wins over Michael and Neil Chalmers.

On the final day David continued with his winning ways finishing with 8/8 and gratefully accepted the Franklin Bowl whilst thanking the many helpers, especially the catering ladies.

Harrow Oak handicap weekend 22 - 23 August

Report by Richard Hilditch

How do you define a good handicap tournament? Here are some suggestions:

- No one breaks a mallet after throwing it away after playing a bad shot (or their opponent playing a good shot).

- No one complains about the costs of the lunches.

- Everyone has as much or as little play as they wish.

- At least 5 games finish +1 (3 of those not on time).

- No one complains about the weather.

Oh well, we got 4 out of 5 as did our winner Jonathon Toye.

No monkeying about, no Gromit Parkstone week 24 - 29 August

Report by Graham Fowler

Popular culture's fascination seemed to have reached new depths, as amongst the entry - garnered from the immediate locality, the South West and rather few from farther afield - two competitors had entered pseudonymously. Arguably it was hard to better the appearance of the Teletubbies at the Men's and Women's, but here was Wallace. Claims that the reference was to a rather more dated popular culture (Gilbert and Sullivan) fell on deaf ears. The second pseudonym escapes me, but it left the question: where was Gromit?

With the early focus on handicap play, the issue of bandits was close at hand. John Gibbons had arrived from Watford without an alias but with a note suggesting his handicap needed to be reduced; it was from 16 to 14. It seemed that local player, Jane Mathews, was playing even better: she had four bisques remaining in defeating your reporter, and three at the end of Dai Morgan's game; she did not concede croquet in either game.

During the week, Mr. Gibbons continued unabashed, such that on Wednesday his handicap (now bordering on 12 as a result of 14 consecutive wins) was cut to 10. Shades, here, of Jeremy Marshall, who was similarly (and again summarily) reduced two years ago.

Oddly, Jeremy's handicap has remained much the same. However he was in contention in the B block, as were Peggy Nutland and Keith Parsons. The winner of the block, though, was Rowland Henderson, who had the same number of wins as Jeremy, but had defeated him. Looked at differently, four of Rowland's games going to time meant that his points difference was only +22 whereas Jeremy's was +37. A similar pattern emerged in the handicap C block, where Jill Lonsdale had a high points difference, but was destined to be second to John Toughy, even if John lost his final game.

Time was less of an issue in the A block, despite a best-of-three format and a seven and a half hour time limit. However there were some close games. The crucial ones involved Dai Morgan failing to finish from 4-back when I had left him the kind of opportunity which meant I was preparing for the second game, David Price hitting in when I was for peg and peg, compounded by my missing a rush to corner 3, to collect the peelee, after hoop five in the second game. The crucial game then became Dai against David. David was not at his best, and Dai finished with the only triple of the week. Alas this was not sufficient to win him the main prize.

In the handicap finals, time reappeared as a factor. John Gibbons, who had survived a difficult quarter final against David Price, met Keith Parsons, who had conquered Jane Mathews in the semi-final. John was two points behind, and just about to attempt penult, when time was called; he kept his nerve, acquired the lead, but his attempt to peg out his forward ball was destined to be unsuccessful - as everyone watching seemed to know, but John had forgotten at that moment. Keith was left a better prospect than he might have faced, but missed the shot and lost by one on time.

The doubles final was not a very exciting affair. For those who like to see the score in full, the result was 11-6 to Rowland and Vera Henderson; Beryl Saunders and Tony Doughty were both as doughty as the circumstances allowed.

There was a great deal more fun in an impromptu game of golf croquet on Friday evening, which folks thought was suggested by an unlikely source. In reality of course, there is nothing wrong with golf croquet, except it scarcely deserves the name croquet, perhaps la-hoop is a better alternative (reflecting the link to hoop-la, except the object goes to the hoop and not vice versa); there is a danger in taking the game seriously, as it might overshadow the real thing; we do not need reports of golf croquet - such as those in the last gazette - in the journal of association croquet, especially as space is short. But this week was about real croquet in pleasant and enjoyable surroundings. Unfortunately the intended manager, Bob Bailey, fell ill shortly before the event, although it was nice to see him make an appearance during the week. In his absence, John Simmonds proved a very sound deputy, managing with flexibility, warmth and humour despite having to go to work before croquet on most days. And then, of course, the East Dorset Club, who share facilities with tennis, have the added advantage of a bar open almost throughout the day and flexibility in terms of the catering provided by Cy, Jean and Jan. Thanks to all for a lovely event.

I think perhaps the opinions on Golf Croquet may just draw some comment, or at least I hope they do. Ed

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Pendle summer handicap**29 - 31 August**

Report by David Jenkinson

All manner of local records were established at the annual August Bank Holiday tournament at Pendle this year, not least that the mist and rain never once put in an appearance and all players who had the desire and stamina to do so got in their full seven or eight games quota in fine and often sunny and warm conditions. More to the point, a record entry of 24 (including the highest ever number of lady players for a Pendle event) from no fewer than eleven clubs were attracted to what turned out to be a most enjoyable and friendly weekend.

Regular visitors were intrigued to see what John Beech and his gang had done in less than a year when, having lost two of their former four lawns at the end of the '97 season, they were faced with creating new lawns from a former football field over the 97-98 winter, not to mention moving the whole pavilion to a new site 200 yards away! The general feeling was one of disbelief that the new three lawns had only been in existence for four months; they played amazingly well and give promise of even better things in the future. The whole set-up looked unbelievably well established and presents a great tribute to the hard work of the host club.

Play was enterprising too with handicaps ranging from 2.5 to 24. Manager John Beech adopted the Hands Egyptian format played from base of 6 and with a strict 3 hr time limit.

At the end of the first day Brian Durward of Edinburgh was leading, closely followed by Geoff Young, Ken Anderton and Sydney Roe.

Contagious high spirits at times bordered on hilarity - 20 yard roquets and impossible six foot hoops made with ease by the same players who were fluffing four foot and one foot equivalents. That said, however, the tight competition continued well into the third day until it was clear that Brian and Ken would have to play out a final round to determine the winner. In the event Ken reversed his earlier defeat by Brian to win by one rating point, but Brian still pulled off the award for the low bisquer group, while home player Peter Dowdall won the high group and was promptly reduced to 20.

All told, this was a thoroughly enjoyable and entertaining weekend thanks to the hard work and cheerful hospitality of all the Pendle members - not least their magnificent catering team.

Hunstanton 29 Aug - 1 September

Report by Andrew Bennet

Martin Kolbuszewski has got a lot to answer for. A very long time ago, he taught me to play. Almost as long ago, I visited Hunstanton as a supporter when he was playing for Cambridge, and I had been there only

twice since then. Time to re-visit, I thought.

Some things do not change. The lawns were in fine condition, even the rough end of number three, which had been vandalised earlier in the season. The competitors were in jolly mood (and one can't count on finding that everywhere nowadays). Sarah Hampson was in charge of the clubhouse. In fact, the only innovations I detected were the large number of pigeon feathers and the dead rabbit. Oh, yes, also - it wasn't blowing a howling gale and the rain did not come until the last day.

There was some good humoured heckling with the two Celias from Ipswich showing particular expertise. They were assisted by Johnathan Wolfe, who turned up because of a very strange coincidence: Martin had been best man at his wedding, then all these years later they just happened to be staying in adjacent hotel rooms in Hunstanton. Johnathan had to give up croquet ages ago to earn money and breed children, but we still hope to see him back.

George Noble did two TP's and a TPO but still did not win the A block, with that title going to David Magee. The hoop-setter, Nick Harris, was the runner-up. David Tutt proved to be a bit of a bandit in the B, beating Nigel Gray into second place, and I would like to thank David for allowing me to make four hoops, thus keeping my net minus score out of triple figures, and nobody will ever know what happened at the start of the game.

Ron Gosden was the clear winner of the C block, putting the manager into second place, and John Christmas won the D comfortably.

Johnathan Toye showed that all manner of shots can be played cleanly with one arm, and deservedly won the Egyptian. It must be those bananas he munches continually. Sarah, who is allergic to them, is making it a condition of entry next season that no banana is to be allowed on the premises.

The tournament finished on schedule, Sarah thanked all the hidden helpers as well as the visible. Martin has agreed to manage next year. George Noble presented some very impressive silverware to the winners - but where was my wooden spoon?

Cheltenham full bisque weekend 18 - 20 September

Report by Dab Wheeler

From 1pm on Friday, to 5pm on Sunday 20, using only six lawns and the Hands Ladder (Egyptian) system: 84 games were played to a finish with no time limits, each game finishing with a peg-out. Shouldn't this be the norm? It is one of the great benefits of the full bisque game.

There was a feeling that winning the toss, putting your opponent in, going round on the fourth turn with less than half your bisques and then finishing on the sixth turn was happening all of the time. In fact, when I collected some

statistics, it seemed to have happened only a few times. Two games on Sunday finished on the seventh turn. The answers to a questionnaire seemed to suggest that winning the toss was not significant.

The average of time for a game was around 2 hours so, obviously, there was no need for time limits.

The answer to the question, "Do you like the full bisque game?", had 13 of the 26 replies giving 'yes', 7 saying 'no' and the rest suggesting a base different from zero, ranging from 6 to 10.

Martin Kolbuszewski managed the tournament with his usual efficiency and cheerfulness.

The winner was Bob Burnett (4.5), of Southport, with a rating of 129 and the runner-up was Gerry Eccles (7), of Cheltenham, with 127.

South of England Championship Compton 18 - 20 September

Report by Terry Burge

Last big one of the season and then it is back to watching football all weekend. What a weekend it turned out to be! I saw some things that I thought I would never see if I lived to be a hundred. Firstly we will get the croquet out of the way. Main event won by David Maugham with a 3 - 1 victory over Pete Trimmer. The Swiss taken by Ed Duckworth with seven wins.

Some interesting morsels on the play: second game of the final, Pete runs 2-back and misses a 4 foot roquet. Not a good tactic against Mr Maugham, saying that there was some hoop blobs from Maugham. Away from the final the strangest occurrence was in a double-banked game on court 2. Burge picked up a break after a missed lift shot and is just about to approach hoop 1 when he realises he is playing with the wrong ball. Balls get replaced and just as oppo takes over there is a hold up in the other game. Don Gaunt has also played the wrong ball. Two games on the same court with a wrong ball being played within 30 seconds, one for the record books!

How would you feel if you lost a best of 5 match in which you only played 7 shots? Ask Chris Farthing. That was all the play he got against a red hot David Maugham in the semi-final. David won the third game with a fourth turn quadruple peel.

Now for the best part of the weekend. The thing that I thought I would never see was David Maugham and Keith Aiton dancing in a night club. The usual suspects were out, Burge, Patmore and Duckworth, but this time the numbers were bolstered with Jeremy Dyer, Graham Gale, the two aforementioned and, croquet's answer to Gene Kelly, Pete Trimmer. There was a bet struck before we got through the door that entailed Pete making a fool of himself on the dancefloor. Bit of a foregone conclusion really, a real safe money bet.

South of England week, Compton 21 - 26 September

Report by Graham Fowler

Although noticeably less strong at the top end than the excellent entry for the preceding Championship Weekend, the overall quality of entrants was very good. There were twenty-four competitors for the block events, with a few others playing only the knockout handicap or doubles. The manager, Roy Wallis, had arranged an ambitious schedule of play, which required that players in the three advanced blocks play each other twice. In passing, it is worth noting that one person seemingly disappointed with block allocation was not to be found later in the week. In this case, there appear to have been additional reasons - the Gazette still offers reporters rather less of an expense account than the cheapest tabloids, and so my investigation is incomplete - but in general players need to recognise that block allocation is subject to variation, even if indicative handicaps are given.

In the one handicap block, Sue Best was a clear winner in most games, losing only one game by one on time to Jill Carpenter. Jill did equal Sue's achievement of four wins, but could not garner the +36 she needed in her final game to avoid being runner-up.

The lowest advanced block featured a number of players 4-5, with handicaps rising to 8. In a close finish, Eileen Magee had a higher proportion of wins (7/9) than Rodney Parkins (6/9) who, as will become apparent, was too busy elsewhere to make a final late bid.

The middle advanced block saw Jolyon Creasey replacing Mike Hammelev, who was absent this year! But neither Jolyon nor other members of the block could prevent Peter Howell's ultimate victory. True, Peter had a few tight games, and true his method of play - rather lacking in breaks - was a little unexciting for opponents, but he remained undefeated.

In the top block, David Magee and Graham Fowler seemed to be moving away from the field. By the final morning, they had both lost once to each other, and David had lost once to Peter Nash. Then Graham lost to Peter. But David was unfortunate in hitting the peg when rushing to finish his first game against Paul Castell. Paul took the game by one, and the second game for good measure. This left Peter as runner-up, which in turn showed significant improvement from the Championship Weekend.

It was during that Weekend that I had received a hot tip for the main handicap event. Yet the odds were unlikely to have been as great as those offered during the Weekend for 'extra-curricular' activities. Anyway, by the time I had recalled that David Mumford had a good chance, he had already reached the semi-final, where he defeated David Collins. David Mumford was the only player in the event not connected to either Kent or Sussex or linked to Cheltenham. I don't think this accounted for the misnaming

of David as 'Mumsie'; Freudian slip according to partner, and more revealing of the commentator no doubt. Regardless, there was no stopping David, Peter Nash had no real opportunity in the main handicap final.

Unusually in doubles, Roy Wallis and Sue Edwards had a very clear, very speedy win with 1.5 bisques remaining. However, their form was not quite so strong in the final, where Jolyon Creasey and David Collins (earlier narrow victors over Roger and Sue Best) were successful.

Conditions during the week had improved. It was sunny from Monday to Friday, albeit there was a chilly breeze early in the week. So, conditions became more difficult, helped by the excellent hoop setting of David Magee (R-o-T). The only triple involved the first peel going to 1-back, leaving the 2-back pioneer at 3, and a second peel at penult to get free of the hoop; rover was neat though!

Unfortunately, the very good weather did not quite last throughout the tournament. Most players were largely unaffected, as the heavy rain did not appear until after lunch on Saturday, when most were ensconced in the pavilion, watching the Y final, which I have been asked/challenged to report in detail. Rodney Parkins was my opponent. The fourth turn was interesting: briefly it involved me running hoop 1 from 3 yards to the North boundary, and hoop 3 from 6 yards to the South boundary, where I carelessly missed the reception ball corner side of hoop 1! Rodney took two of his five bisques to set up the break, but no more in getting to the peg. After a missed shot, Rodney began with the second ball, but the bisques only lasted until hoop 4.

I pegged out Rodney's rather previous peg ball, whereupon a little careful negotiation took place, at the end of which Rodney (now for hoop 5) took a position on the South boundary, wired from my ball for hoop one (just out of corner 2). So I joined up with a wired rush. It was a rush of a different sort - blood, adrenaline - which came into play: Rodney ran hoop 5, ending about 4 yards from my balls on the North boundary! A very bold shot looked like giving Rodney the match, until he missed a return roquet after 4-back.

I picked up a break but was unable to hit partner after 3 (a feat I managed to repeat after 1-back). Rodney had a similar mishap after penult, but rectified the problem by turning round and hitting my ball on the North boundary! He then played his one weak hoop shot at rover. A little wiring and hiding gave me the innings and a chance to finish. Coming out of penult poorly, I declined the roll to rover, joining wide on the boundary by hoop 1, with Rodney close to third corner. He missed. My rush to rover was poor. I went for a wide join close to corner 3. Rodney not only hit the thirty yard shot, but clipped the ball the necessary five yards into the corner. He finished to acclamation with less than a minute of the 3 hours remaining. About as interesting as handicap play in the rain can get; who says croquet isn't a natural for television! (But what about the other games - say the X final?)

Anyway a grandstand finish to a really enjoyable week. Thanks to all involved. There are many people who help a club like Compton run a week tournament, looking after the bar, providing refreshments; additional food and drink options remain available in the nearby Saffrons. Finally, special thanks to Roy for compiling an exciting programme and seeing it through - often into the gloaming - and to Barry James who took over when Roy had the odd speaking engagement in the evening.

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Tournament Results

NOTTINGHAM 10 - 15 AUGUST

Manager: Ian Vincent
 Robin Hood Gold Cup: R Edlin-White bt J Death
 Open singles: J Death bt R Brown
 B level: P Hallett bt D Brydon
 C level: J Handy bt J Hansen
 D H'cap: R Taylor bt R Edlin-White
 Handicap Doubles: D Harrison-Wood & R Gold
 bt C Bennett & Miss E Jones
 CA Award: Bronze - Roy Taylor, Rob Edlin-White.

EDINBURGH 17 - 22 AUGUST

Manager: Fergus McInnes
 Open singles: J Beech
 Adv singles 4+: B Durward
 Adv singles 8+: F McInnes bt J Kay
 H'cap singles 11+: S McCraw bt J Seddon
 H'cap Doubles: R Goudie & P Smith bt J Beech & G Cuttle
 H'cap singles (x): P Thompson bt J Seddon
 H'cap singles (y): A McKendrick

SOUTHWICK AUGUST TOURNAMENT

17 - 22 AUGUST
 Manager: Bryan Teague
 Abbey Challenge Cup - Paul Castell
 The Scott Cup - Mrs C Constable
 The Daldy Cup - J Davies
 The Monteith Bowl - K Mason
 The Douglas Jones Cup - J Isaacs bt J Davey
 The Sussex Vase - Mrs D Miller bt Mrs P Jackson
 The Howard Austin Cups - J Low & Mrs E Weitz
 bt Mr & Mrs J Davey
 The Harveys Trophy - David Mumford bt J Davies
 The Sussex Salver - B Kitching bt Miss K Kendall
 CA Awards: Bronze - Nigel Graves, Mrs Pat Jackson, Silver - Ken Mason, David Mumford, Jack Davies.

HUNSTANTON 98TH AUGUST TOURNAMENT

Manager: Martin Kolbuszewski
 A block: David Magee
 B block: David Tutt
 C block: R Gosden
 D block: J Christmas
 H'cap Egyptian: Winner - J Toye Runner-up - M Kolbuszewski

NORTHERN CHAMPIONSHIP 28 - 31 AUGUST

Manager: D Maugham
 Round 1: D Goacher bt W Arliss +23TP +25, P Cordingley bt C Dent -12TP +26TP +17, C Irwin bt J Hilditch +20 +26, D Harrison-Wood bt C Wild +26TP +26, I Burrigge bt I Maugham -17 +9 +17, K Aiton bt M Grainger-Brown +2 +26TP, J Hawkins bt D Nicholson +8TPO +11, D Maugham bt J Sheraton-Davis. Round 2: R Fulford bt J Guest +25SXP +2, D Goacher bt P Cordingley +18 +8TPO, D Harrison-Wood bt C Irwin +26 +12, M avery bt A Linton +15 +10TPO, S Comish bt C Willimas +7TP +16TP, K Aiton bt I Burrigge +21TP +10TPO, D Gaunt bt P Trimmer +13 +9, D Maugham bt J Hawkins

+26 +1. Qtr-finals: D Goacher bt R Fulford -5TP +26TP -17 +12OTP +8, M Avery bt D Harrison-Wood +1 +3TP +17TP, S Comish bt K Aiton +26 +23 +26TP, D Maugham bt D Gaunt -17 +3TPO +15TP +4 TP. Semi-final: M Avery bt D Goacher -24 +24TP +26TP +17TP, D Maugham bt S Comish +17TP +4TPO +17TP. Final: D Maugham bt M Avery -16 -26TP+26TP +26TP +26TP.

Plate Event:
 D Goacher bt W Arliss +23, C Irwin bt D Gaunt +16, D Harrison-Wood bt J Guest +26TP, R Fulford bt J Hawkins +14.
 D Goacher bt C Irwin +25, D Harrison-Wood bt R Fulford +13TP.

D Harrison-Wood bt D Goacher.

PENDLE SUMMER TOURNAMENT

29 - 31 AUGUST
 Manager: John Beech
 Tournament Champion: Ken Anderson
 Runner-up (-10) Brian Durward
 Runner-up (+10) Peter Dowdall
 CA Awards: Bronze - Peter Dowdall, Sydney Roe.

CHELTENHAM ADV WKND 29 AUG - 1 SEPT

Manager: Roger Jackman
 Block 1: 1st Dave Kibble, 2nd Ed Dymock, 3rd Paul Smith
 Block 2: 1st Tal Golesworthy, 2nd Paul Pristavec, 3rd Kismet Whittall
 Block 3: 1st Alan Bogle, 2nd Alison Thursfield, 3rd Niall Carter
 Block 4: 1st Bernard Weitz, 2nd Craig Edwards, 3rd Peter Leach.
 CA Awards: Gold - Ed Dymock

RYDE HANDICAP WKND 4 - 6 SEPTEMBER

Manager:
 Format: Swiss
 Winner: R Tillcock
EDGBASTON B LEVEL 5 - 6 SEPTEMBER
 Manager: H Fellows Format: Swiss
 Winner: Ben Ellwell

SIDMOUTH HANDICAP WKND 5 - 6 SEPTEMBER

Manager: J Toye
 Format: American
 A block: Jane Babbage
 B block: Brian Smith
 C block: Johnathan Coombs
 D block: Vera Henderson

SOUTHWICK MIDWEEK 8 - 11 SEPTEMBER

Manager: Bryan Teague
 Format: Swiss
 1st David Mundy, 2nd Simon Miles, 3rd John Davey
 CA Awards: Bronze - Simon Miles. Silver - John Davey, Marion Hilton.
BUDLEIGH SALTERTON 11 - 13 SEPTEMBER
 Manager: Ron Selmes Format: Egyptian
 1st: D Haslam, 2nd E Bevan & D Clarke, 3rd Miss J Horsley.
 CA Awards: Bronze - E Owen, Miss J Horsley, Silver - R Clarke, R Newnham.

WOKING 11 - 13 SEPTEMBER

Manager: Peter MacGowan Format: American
 Winner: Roger Bell Runner-up: Mick Belcham

NEWPORT 12 - 13 SEPTEMBER

Manager: Don Cornelius
 Format: Egyptian
 1st Roger Ivill, 2nd Johnathan Toye.

CHELTENHAM FULL BISQUE

18 - 20 SEPTEMBER
 Manager: Martin Kolbuszewski
 Format: Egyptian
 1st Bob Burnett, 2nd Gerry Eccles, 3rd Keith Roberts.

SOUTHPORT ADV WKND 19 - 20 SEPTEMBER

Manager: Mark Saurin
 Semi-finals: A Saurin bt P Taylor +11TP +6, S Tudor bt A Linton +10TP +2.
 Final: Adrian Saurin bt Sam Tudor +13 +26TP.
 Swiss: Rob Callingham.

NOTTINGHAM H'CAP 18 - 20 SEPTEMBER

Manager: P Death Format: KO & Swiss
 Winner: R Berkeley Runner-up: D Brydon
 Swiss: J Allen

SOUTH OF ENGLAND CHAMPIONSHIP,

COMPTON 18 - 20 SEPTEMBER

Round 1: D Maugham bt E Duckworth +17TP -25TP +26TP, L Tibble bt G Fowler +2 +14, C Farthing bt A Mrozinski +26TP +17, G Gale bt K Aiton -26TP +10TP +26, P Trimmer bt D Openshaw +26TP +17TP, D Gaunt bt B Hallam +14 -10 +2, J Dyer bt C Patmore +26 -10TP +17, T Burge bt C Clarke -5TP +21TP +16TP.
 Quarter-finals: Muagham bt Tibble +17TP -40TP +14OTP, Farthing bt Gale +9TPO +21TP, Trimmer bt Gaunt +19 -17 +12, Burge bt Dyer +17TP +16TP.

Semi-Finals: Maugham bt Farthing +26TP +26TP +26QP, Trimmer bt Burge +15 +26TP +25TP.
 Final: Maugham bt Trimmer -20TP +17 +26TP +26TP.

Consolation Swiss: E Duckworth

SOUTH OF ENGLAND WEEK,

COMPTON 21 - 26 SEPTEMBER

Ionides Cup: G Fowler
 Devonshire Park Salver: P Howell
 Luard Cup: Mrs E Magee
 Trevor Williams Cup: S Best
 Anna Millns Salvers: J Creasey & D Collins bt R Wallis & Mrs S Edwards
 Gilbert Spoons: J Lindfield & S Berry bt M Paton & M Buist
 Devonshire Park Cup: D Mumford bt P Nash
 Brittain Porringer: R Parkins bt G Fowler
SOUTHWICK 26 - 27 SEPTEMBER
 Manager: Bill Arliss Format: KO & Swiss
 KO: D Gaunt bt P Smith
 Swiss: L Tibble

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Handicap Alterations

Colchester over 50, 12 August

David Jenkinson 9 to 8
 David Haslam 9 to 7
 Michael Percival 2 to 1.5
 Mrs I Brazier 16 to 18

Dyffryn Club, August

Mrs S Mackay 18 to 16
Nottingham, August week
 Roy Taylor 15
 Rob Edlin-White 18 to 14

Southwick August Tournament

Ron Atkinson 10 to 11
 Jill Carpenter 16 to 18
 Paul Castell 1.5 to 0.5
 Jack Davies 7 to 6
 James Barry 4.5 to 4
 Brian Kitching 14 to 12
 John Low 3 to 2.5
 Ken Mason 14 to 11
 David Mumford 10 to 9
 Bernard Weitz 8 to 9

Edinburgh 17 - 22 August

G Cuttle 2.5 to 3
 Dr B Durward 4 to 3.5
 P Thompson 4.5 to 4
 Mrs C Townsend 4.5 to 5

Harrow Oak 22 - 23 August

John Hall 9 to 8

Ladies Week 26 - 30 August

Mrs K Priestley 4.5 to 4
 Mrs B Harris 3 to 3.5
 Mrs F Ransom 2.5 to 3

Southport & Birkdale Club August

Mrs B Haslam 4 to 4.5
 Mr R Burnett 5 to 4.5
 Mr A Thomas 20 to 18

Northampton 28 - 30 August

J Anstey 0.5 to 1
 P Stansfield 4 to 3.5
Northern Championships 28 - 31 August
 F I Maugham 0 to 0.5
 J Sheraton-Davis 3 to 3.5
 D Harrison-Wood -1 to -1.5

Hunstanton 28 Aug - 1 Sept

A Bennet 4.5 to 8
 Mrs H Carlisle 3 to 2.5
 J Christmas 12 to 11
 C Davies 18 to 16
 M Kolbuszewski 11 to 10
 J Reeve 7 to 6
 J Toye 11 to 10
 D Tutt 5 to 4.5

Parkstone August Tournament

David Price 1.5 to 1
 John Gibbons 16 to 10
 Jill Lonsdale 18 to 16
 Les Butler 3.5 to 4
 Jane Matthews 14 to 12
 Rowland Henderson 6 to 5
 Newton Tweedsdale 11 to 10
 Doreen Parsons 16 to 18

Pendle 29 - 31 August

P Dowdall 24 to 20
 B Durward 3.5 to 3

S McKendrick 5 to 4.5
 G Young 14 to 12

Cheltenham Club August

U Atter-Martin 14 to 16
 M Blackwell 2.5 to 2
 P Crowe 11 to 10
 G Eccles 9 to 8
 Mrs S Edwards 6 to 5
 C Edwards 11 to 10
 Mrs M Godson 9 to 8
 T Golesorthy 4.5 to 4
 M Kolbuszewski 12 to 11
 Mrs E Magee 6 to 5
 D Morgan 1.5 to 1
 Mrs J Powell 12 to 14
 M Ranshaw 4 to 4.5
 P Smith 1 to 0
 S Tudor 0.5 to 1
 G Weir 11 to 10
 Mrs B Widdows 6 to 7

Cheltenham 29 - 31 August

T Golesworthy 4 to 3.5
 B Hewitt 2 to 2.5
 M Macbean 4.5 to 5
 D Moorcraft 2.5 to 3
 P Pristavec 3 to 2.5
 F L Whittaker 1.5 to 1

Hurlingham 29 - 31 August

R Knapp 9 to 8
 L Nash 11 to 10
 R Pennant-Jones 4 to 4.5

Sidmouth Club August

Roger S Adams 18 to 16
 Paul Whittall 7 to 6
 Johnathan Coombs 11 to 10
 Graham Dodd 14 to 12

Southwick Club August

Mrs P Arliss 11 to 14
 J Solomon -0.5 to 0
 Mrs D Gaitley 8 to 9
 A Mayne 14 to 12
 Miss P Shine 14 to 16
 M Pullin 14 to 12
 Mrs M Gosney 7 to 6

Bowdon Club August

M Grainger-Brown 1.5 to 1

Ryde 4 - 6 September

R Tillcock 10 to 8
Edgbaston 5 - 6 September
 T Sparks 5 to 4.5
 D Mooney 4.5 to 5
 J Lovett 7 to 8

All England area final

Colin Hemming 10 to 11
 Richard Smith 18 to 16
 Mark Homan 11 to 10
 John Giddons 10 to 9
 M Fawcett 12 to 11
 R Bretherton 9 to 8
Sidmouth 5 - 6 September
 Mrs A Price 10 to 11
 J Coombs 10 to 9

Nottingham Club September

Mrs B McGlen 2.5 to 3
 Mr I Hill 8 to 7

Parsons Green Club September

Nicholas Parish 16 to 14

Mrs P Healy 3 to 3.5
Bath Club September
 Daniel Mills 14 to 12
 John Blunden 14
 Mrs D Johns 14 to 12
 Derek Stoaing 9 to 8

Hurlingham 8 - 10 September

M Gardner 14 to 12
 N Graves 16 to 14
 D Cross 4 to 4.5
 P Quinn 9 to 10

Southwick 8 - 11 September

David Mundy 11 to 8
 Simon Miles 11 to 8
 John Davey 7 to 6
 Ted Robinson 11 to 12
 Alison Thursfield 6 to 5
 Diana Brothers 8 to 9
 David Mumford 8 to 7
 Pauline Davey 11 to 10

Selectors Weekend 11-13 September

Bill Arliss 0.5 to 1
 David Coates 0 to -0.5

Budleigh Salterton 11 - 13 September

E Bevan 16 to 14
 I Birdseye 14 to 16
 Mrs J Birdseye 20 to 22
 Mrs B Carter 12 to 14
 D Clarke 14 to 12
 D Haslam 7 to 6
 Miss J Horsley 16 to 14

Newport 12 - 13 Sept

Roger Ivill 7 to 6
 Johnathan Toye 10 to 9

Cheltenham 20 September

R Jackman 0.5 to 1
 B Burnett 4.5 to 4
 D Clay 10 to 9
 G Eccles 7 to 6
 K Saunders 11 to 10
 P Watson 4 to 3.5
 G Weir 10 to 11

Preston Club September

Pat Jackson 20 to 18
South of England Championships
 R Stephens 2 to 1.5

South of England Week

P Castell 0.5 to 0
 S Best 9 to 8
 D Mumford 7 to 6

Nottingham 18 - 20 September

P Pawson 4.5 to 4
 J Allen 17 to 14
 K Garrad 8 to 9
 R Berkley 10 to 8
 Mrs J Ackermann 11 to 12
Parsons Green Club September
 Mrs P Healy 3.5 to 3
 Mrs S Davies 7 to 8
Rapid Improver
 John Gibbons 16 to 10

AROUND & ABOUT



A rare photograph of Cheltenham's head chef, Eileen Magee, wielding a mallet instead of a wooden spoon.



Richard Hilditch telling the world that Colchester lawns are back to their best and well worth a visit.



Some of the 58 competitors, who took part in the Croquet North Federation Club Championship for the Armada Trophy, resting after a hard day's play.



Ian Burridge's leave after taking his first ball to peg and therefore giving contact. Manager David Maugham and ROT Colin Irwin look on. Ian's opponent, Chris Dent, was too bemused to be photographed, apparently.



Colin McDonald and Steve Reynold, the winner and runner-up in the Roger Russell Golf Croquet Trophy.



Sarah Burrows, Pauline Healy & Louise Bradforth, the joint runners-up in the Barlow Bowl, trying to arrange how they might share the trophy.