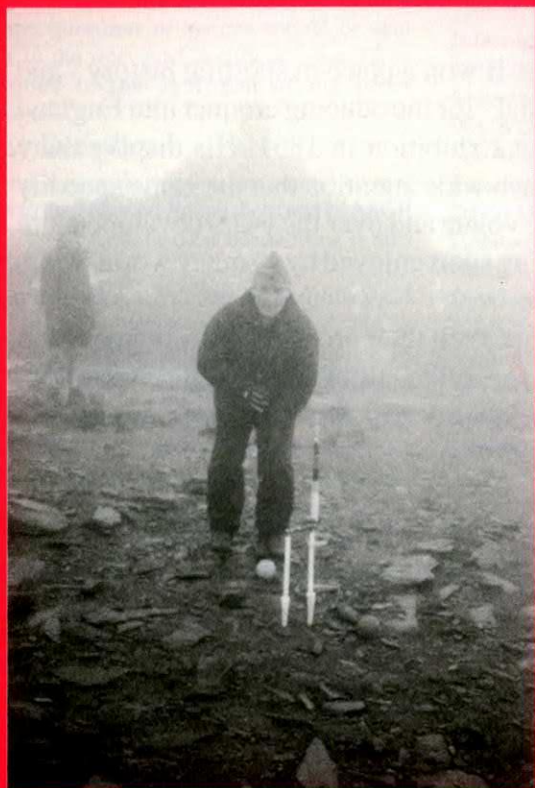


# *The Croquet Gazette*

*Issue 261*

*May 1999*



**Bob Burnett of Southport  
playing on 'Snowdon'**

**Hugh Smorfitt of Arlesford  
getting 'Snowdon' at Cheltenham**



## **IN THIS ISSUE**

**Editorial      Chairman's Column      News & Information**  
**Assistant Referees      Letters      Committee News      As It Was**  
**Reading Matters      Turfed Out - Bury St Edmunds**  
**CA Accounts 1998      Points Of Law      Talking Croquet**



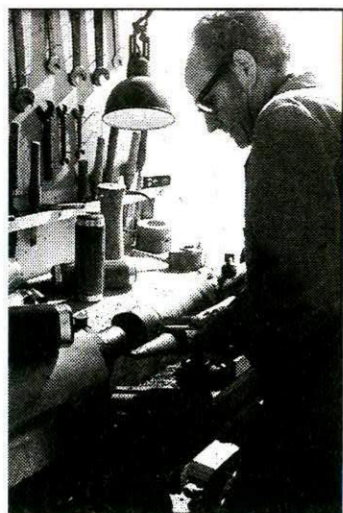
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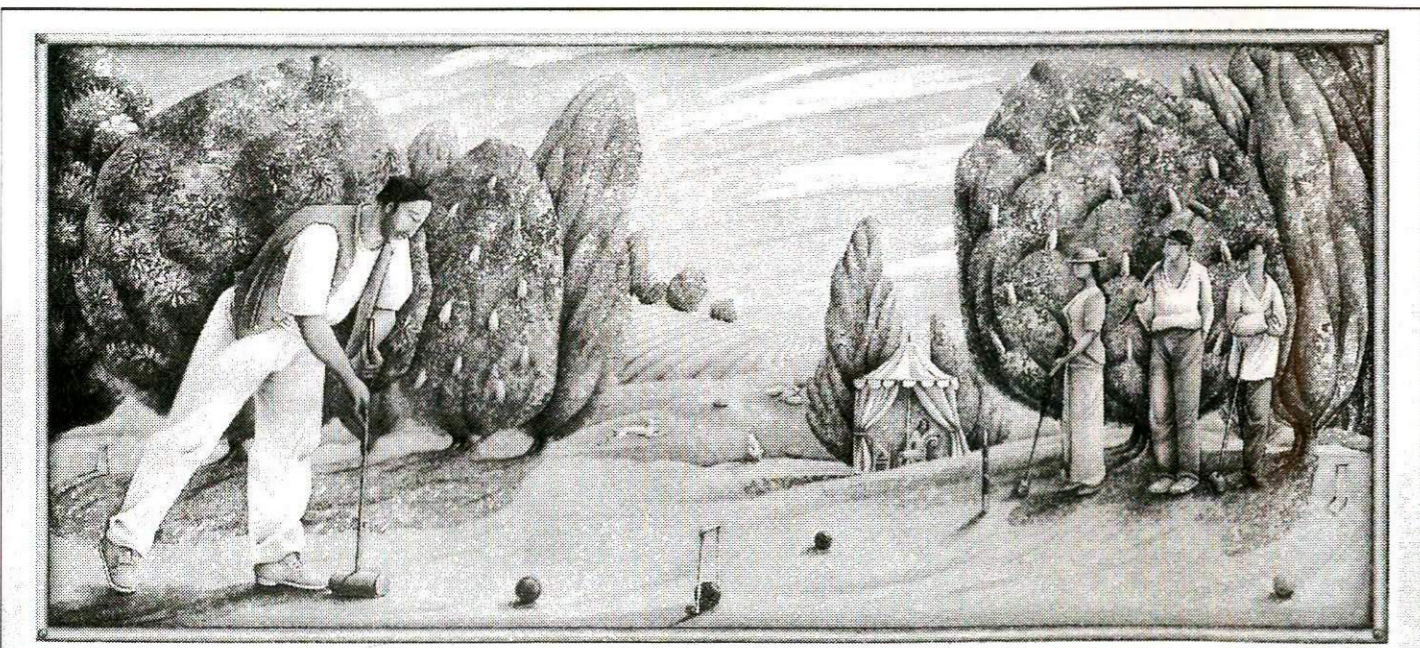


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**PUBLICATION DETAILS**

The Croquet Gazette is published six times per year in January, March, May, July, September and November.

**Publication Schedule**

Copy should reach the editor before 10th December, 10th February, 10th April, 10th June, 10th August and 10th October.

**Advertising**

Full details of all advertising rates and data are available at all clubs as well as through the Editor of the Gazette and the Secretary of the CA.

**Specific Questions & Queries**

Specific questions or queries should be sent direct to the relevant CA official, e.g. Laws questions to the chairman of the Laws Committee.

**Copy Details**

General copy and contributions should be sent direct to the editor on floppy disc (text or ASCII files). Typed work or clear handwriting is also acceptable.

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.

**Delivery Queries**

Queries regarding delivery of the Gazette to members should be directed to the Secretary of the Croquet Association and not to the Editor.

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**HURRY HURRY HURRY**

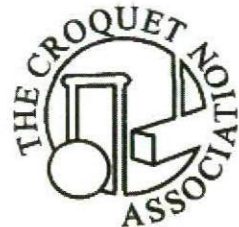


**ENTER GOLF TOURNAMENTS NOW**

**To Golf Croquet Players & Tournament Secretaries**

Help us to Help you to make 1999 a record year by sending in your entries now an avoiding disappointment of not getting in the events by your late entry. See the Fixture Book for events and costs  
Encourage your friends to play. The Golf Committee are doing their best to increase Tournaments and interest in the game - We want your support.

**THE CROQUET GAZETTE**



Issue 261 May 1999 £3.00

Front Cover: The highs & lows of croquet

Next Issue Published 14th July

Copy Deadline 10th June

**Disclaimer**

The opinions expressed in the Croquet Gazette are those of the editor and contributors. The Croquet Association is not responsible for statements other than those clearly defined as being made on behalf of the Croquet Association

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The Golf Croquet committee wishes to thank Keith Smith for the use of his golf croquet cartoon in the Croquet Gazette.

**Editorial**

In recent issues I have either spared myself the rigours of writing an editorial, or because of last minute copy have had to cut my efforts. This time I am determined not to work in vain, so woe betide any last minute entries this time.

In the last issue of the Gazette there was a notice placed for an editorial assistant to take over responsibility for the dreaded tournament reports initially, with perhaps a view to producing one full issue of the Gazette per year, or even taking on the editor's role for all six. (We simply neglected to mention the latter part in case it frightened off any prospective applicants.) The vacancy still exists, and I would appreciate hearing from anyone who has some spare time to help me out.

The season proper is now underway, and the early signs of reporting standards are good. Let's hope this continues. There are several new events in this year's fixture list. Norwich are offering a 14pt tournament as their first venture in the fixture book, Bristol have expanded their programme to include a much needed 'B'level weekend and Tyneside have returned after a year's absence with an over 50s handicap and a speed croquet team event.

I can't help but wonder at what point the fixture list will reach saturation point, in that the number of events outnumbers the players wishing to play them? Fortunately there seems to have been a move to more inventive formats in recent seasons, with the inclusion of several 14pt events, over 50's events, and speed croquet events, to name just a few. This innovation has been necessary for two reasons, namely to allow clubs with less than 4 lawns to compete with the larger clubs, and to give players value for money.

Whilst the evangelists of croquet would have people believe that croquet is a cheap sport in comparison to some others, this can only be true if one does not fall victim to the seductions of the tournament scene. Simple calculations of entry fees, travel costs, accommodation, meals



etc soon add up, and for most players the two or three tournaments can soon run into the equivalent cost of a summer holiday. Ok, so they could cut costs by sleeping on a floor somewhere, living on cheeseburgers and hitchhiking, but I doubt if that is everyone's ideal of a good time, and it is precisely that, 'a good time', that the majority of players want from their tournament experiences.

The larger clubs (i.e. those with four lawns or more) can easily accommodate the standard tournaments, whereas those clubs with two or three lawns have to be that much more inventive, both in terms of attracting players away from the more established tournaments, as well as being able to accommodate sufficient entries to make the event financially beneficial to the club. Some players are satisfied with two games per day, others prefer more and will not consider tournaments which cannot guarantee this.

If players get what they want from your tournament they will go back to their own clubs and the word will spread about your event. However, if your event did not come up to scratch, that news will also travel. Not because players deliberately set out to spread bad news, but because players generally ask one another what tournaments are like, if they have not been to that venue themselves.

So be warned, the tournament scene is becoming more competitive for entries, and players are looking for value for money, as well as 'a good time' - does your club offer visitors what they want, or will they be going elsewhere next year?

**CA Appointments**

**Secretary of the Croquet Association**

The Croquet Association are currently seeking to appoint a new Secretary to the Association

If you feel the position of Secretary of the Croquet Association may be of interest to you, please contact Bill Arliss, Chairman of the CA on 01273 728204

**Chairman's Column**

At last the waiting is over again, the nights are getting longer, the lawns are looking in superb condition and we are off again. Many clubs had their first tournaments at the beginning of April and Fixtures Secretaries are already arranging teams for first round matches in the many competitions. All our winter planning rounds are over and we can now get to what it's really all about, playing croquet and enjoying ourselves.

Unfortunately it can not all be play as I am sure all Club Secretaries will be fully aware that now is the time to start recruiting new members to our sport. My own club, Southwick and other local clubs, used a CA 'mini' mat in a shopping centre atrium as a croquet promotion. We took the attitude that if the general public will not come to croquet, then croquet must go to the general public. The interest we obtained was extremely good; we have now got to see if we can turn it into actual recruits to the game. We will report on our successes or failures in a later issue. If anyone finds any other new ways of recruiting, please let us all know about it.

Our web site on the Internet was launched in mid March. Visitors can now choose from details of CA and Federations, listing and details of all registered clubs, brief descriptions of the major formats of the game, laws of Association Croquet, the CA shop, the tournament calendar and the major national competitions (these will be updated as competition results are received by the manager), the Association Croquet rankings and finally a news page. Apologies to those clubs who provided 'How to find us' maps for use on the web site. You have not been forgotten, it will take a little more time to get sorted out.

Following the World Golf Croquet Championships last year in Leamington, golf croquet in England received a big boost in interest and I hope this results in a bigger entry in our various golf croquet competitions. Following on the heels of the 'Worlds', the CA will this year be sponsoring the European Golf Croquet Championships again at Leamington in October. There will be five or six places in this event for English based players and they will be chosen from results in the national championships and possibly a qualifier event if the golf croquet committee deem it to be necessary. The selection process will be defined later and will be published in the July Gazette.

Keeping on a golf croquet theme for the moment, I hope you find interesting the article, published in this issue, on the WCF rules that the CA is adopting on a trial basis in 99. I would remind you that copies of the WCF rules are now also available, in a pocket sized booklet, from the CA shop, priced at £1.50 plus postage.

Continued on page 17

**NEWS & INFORMATION**

**Seniors V Juniors**

A Seniors v Juniors match has again been arranged for 21/22 August this year. Don Gaunt will be the Captain for the Seniors Team. If any player 50 and over with a Handicap less than 3 would like to be considered for selection, please let him know.

Don Gaunt, 5 Rosedale Ave., Stonehouse, Glos GL10 2QH. Tel: 01453822507 email: dongaunt@compuserve.com

**Improved Pegging Down Sheet**

Don Gaunt has produced a much improved pegging down sheet. If anyone would like a master for photocopying, send me a SAE and he will post one to you.

Don Gaunt, 5 Rosedale Ave., Stonehouse, Glos GL10 2QH.

**Visit the British Open Championship 5 - 11 July 1999**

In previous years several clubs have organised parties to go to Hurlingham for the day to see some of the top players in action. Associate members are eligible for free entry to Hurlingham and this includes access to the

buttery and bar facilities, as well as an opportunity to visit the CA Office and Shop where you will receive a warm welcome. If you would like to discuss possible arrangements please ring Paul Campion on 0171 7363148.

**Millennium Working Party**

Don Gaunt, Vice-Chairman of Council, is heading a Millennium Working Party to co-ordinate special events next year. If your club has plans to celebrate the year 2000 do let us know. If it hasn't, you should not let this marvellous opportunity pass.

**CA Website**

Have you seen the new CA Website on the internet? It has been carefully created by Bill Arliss and is proving an excellent publicity asset, including as it does details of our affiliated clubs, lists of 1999 fixtures, a commercial spot for equipment and book sales and much more besides. The website can be found at <http://www.croquet.org.uk/>

If you don't have access to the internet and would like to see the site try your local library, or perhaps an internet cafe to gain access.

**~ Obituaries ~**

**Les Toye of Sidmouth Croquet Club.**

It is with great sadness that we record the death of Les Toye aged 78 who died in January this year. A keen croquet player and coach, Les joined Sidmouth Croquet Club in 1983. He played regularly for Sidmouth and often competed in tournaments at Budleigh Salterton and, in more recent years' played at Norfolk, Ireland and the Isle of Wight. He will be greatly missed in Devon as one of lifes most likeable people; always willing to offer help and advice - especially to newcomers to the sport.

**John R P Lansdown 1924 - 1998**

John's first career was as a Naval Officer. On leaving school he entered the Royal Naval Engineering College and, after transferring to the Fleet Air Arm, saw active service in Korea. He left the Navy to start a second career in Industry

and came to Cheltenham in 1960. Ten years later he embarked on yet another vocation, as a physics master at Cheltenham Ladies' College, retiring in 1988 because of ill health following heart attack some years earlier. He maintained close contact with colleagues from all his professions and was particularly active in several Naval Associations. He discovered croquet after retirement and immediately became addicted, reaching a very respectable standard. Few were aware of his previous health problems, as he never alluded to them, being a very unassuming and modest person. But he was universally popular and threw himself into Club life with the same enthusiasm that he had shown in all his previous activities. Moreover, he still had a fourth career to come - as a writer of the definitive account of the role of the Fleet Air Arm in the Korean War.

He was a devoted family man with 3 children and 10 grandchildren: he and Priscilla celebrated their Golden Wedding anniversary in 1997. His sunny personality and wise counsel are already being sadly missed at Cheltenham Croquet Club.

## ASSISTANT REFEREES

### Assistant Referee Courses

The following courses have been arranged for those who wish to qualify as Assistant Referees. The courses cover the tests of static and dynamic situations that a referee may be required to perform on court, with the laws and regulations appropriate to those situations. The course will last for one day. Candidates will not be examined at the courses but examinations will be arranged for a later date. There is no compulsion to take the examination, but preference on the courses will be given to those who wish to qualify. Those accepted on the courses should bring a current copy of the Laws of Croquet. Please note the new regulations for Tournaments published in the January issue of the Gazette. The Commentary on the Laws would also be helpful. Both the Laws and the Commentary can be obtained from the Croquet Association Office.

The courses will normally start promptly at 10.00am but please check with the organiser. A course fee of £5.00 will be payable at the course to help defray expenses.

Applications should be made direct to the course organiser.

May 15 Pendle  
Organiser: Chris and Colin Irwin, 5 Hawthorn Road, Plumley, Knutsford, Cheshire WA16 0UH Tel: (01565) 722556

June 20 Nottingham  
Organiser: Ian Vincent, 29 Thoresby Road, Bramcote Hills, Beeston, Nottingham NG9 3EN Tel: (0115) 9253664

June 27 Surbiton  
Organiser: Ian Bond, 16 Bond Road, Surbiton, Surrey, KT6 7SH Tel: (0181) 3993067

August 8 Colchester  
Organiser: Bill Lamb, 5 Bondyke Close, Cottingham, East Yorkshire HU16 5ND Tel: (01482) 840739

September 5 Parkstone  
Organiser: Mrs Peggy Nutland, 40 Beacroft Lane, Colehill, Wimborne, Dorset BH21 2PA Tel: (01202) 886523

# Letters...

### A year of possible change

Dear Editor

I understand that for the 1999 season the CA Golf Croquet competitions on a trial basis. The situation will be reviewed at the end of the season and any player who has views about any of the WCF rules, should make them known to the chairman of the Golf Croquet committee.

I agree with most of the WCF Golf Croquet rules. However I find the adoption of being able to score a hoop point in two or more turns, as opposed to the original one. I believe the new WCF rule gives an unfair advantage to the player who plays the ball within the jaws of the hoop, as there is little the adversary can do, other than try to dislodge the ball from the opposite side, or attempt a jump shot, which the new rules also allow. This fundamentally changes the whole nature of the game.

As a player I understand why the WCF rules relating to playing for the next hoop and penalty spots have been included as they aim to prevent players trying to gain an advantage and together with the jump shot to compensate the adversary, when a ball is under a hoop.

However I would contend if the old hoop scoring rule were to be retained the jump shot is unnecessary and should be outlawed.

If it were deemed necessary, to deal with players deliberately cheating by playing for the next hoop, penalty lines could be introduced, these would be in line with the hoop just played. Any ball nearer the next hoop, other than the ball which has just run the hoop, or unless knocked there by an adversary's ball, would be returned to the penalty line, in a position relating to its position on the court. If two balls need to be placed on the same spot, the ball playing last would not be positioned until after the other ball had played.

On balance I believe the inclusion of the old hoop running law, together with these other minor modifications into the WCF rules would create a better and much fairer game.

Running the hoop is the essence of the game, let it be seen to be fair to all players and run in a truesportsmanlike way.

S. R. Longbottom

### Is it time to call time on short croquet?

Dear Editor

Is it not time that the 'competitive' game of short croquet as we know it, was consigned to history? So far as one can gather, this form of croquet is only played in the British Isles, and is rapidly being overtaken by Golf croquet as an

introduction to serious competition.

There will always be a need for people to learn their croquet shots and develop their break-building skills on small lawns. Indeed for some players, croquet on an under-sized lawn is the only option available.

However due to the stringent wiring restrictions which dictate tactics in the 'official' game of short croquet, the beginner is forced to make shot selections and leaves which are artificial in the context of the Association game. Moreover, there have always been serious discrepancies in handicapping. So regardless of the size of the lawn, perhaps we all ought to abide by the laws of Association Croquet.

At National level, a range of competitions based upon fourteen point games and taking place on small lawns, could involve level play, if entry was restricted to those who's CA handicap fell within a particular band of handicaps. At club level, where it's not always possible to use the CA handicap as a benchmark for ability, an individual club would be able to introduce its own or for the Federation's method of handicapping, and arrange its competitions accordingly.

John Hansen.

### Why so quiet?

Dear Readers

Since February the usual steady flow of letters to this page has dried up. Have they got lost in the post I wonder, or is everyone so content with the world of croquet they have no need to write? Permit me to pose a few questions which might just slacken your grip on contentment.

Why, in handicap doubles events, do clubs apply restrictions to the combined handicaps of pairings? We don't stop long bisquers from playing together and taking full advantage of receiving bisques, so what right do we have to stop low bisquers from giving bisques if they wish?

If we really want to encourage junior players into the game why don't we offer free CA membership? Or how about offering incentives to players who enter the junior championship by say offering the winners free entries to the Open Championship & Men's & Women's?

Should the internet become the primary source of information in the CA, or would that allow only the required responses to be given?

If you can't or won't answer any of the above questions why not pose some new ones instead? The answers are out there, we just have to find them. Ed.

## COMMITTEE NEWS

### Development

#### It could be your club

New Lottery System May Benefit Small Clubs. The new lottery "Awards for All" scheme is geared to give grants to local groups. The application procedure is simple, they aim to make decisions within three months of application and pay the money for successful applications within one month. Grants within the range of £500 to £5,000. The money must be spent within six months of payment being made. The majority (perhaps all) croquet clubs would meet the organisational requirements. Applicants are expected to contribute to the project, but this can be in time, in kind, in transport as well as cash. Projects are not limited to capital schemes, and can include items such as training, publicity materials, equipment and travel. The scheme was started as a trial in the East Midlands. Several croquet clubs have applied and we await the results - due sometime in April with great interest. The clubs applied for grants ranging from £350 to £3,500. Decisions are, apparently, likely to favour millennium content plans. A bit of imagination is therefore needed to get in a reference to that date in the application. Applications should be made to your regional awards address, after discussion with your Federation Development Officer. It is not necessary to get the C.A. to back the application, but a referee is required. General enquiries about the lottery contact can be made to:- Department for Culture, Media and Sport, 2-4 Cockspur St, London SW1Y 5DH

Bill Sidebottom, Chairman Development Committee

### Publicity

#### The role of Clubs and Associates

In writing this article it came to me, in a blinding flash, that I am communicating not just with one audience but two; chairmen and other club officials on the one hand, individual members on the other.

So let me start with Clubs. This autumn you have the opportunity to send a delegate (or two) to a Publicity Workshop. Full details can be found elsewhere in this issue. I quote just one sentence here. "In a mixture of lectures and practical workshops, this daylong seminar will equip any croquet club with the necessary tools to gain that essential positive press coverage, time and time again." And as a result keep both your club and the sport in the public eye, thereby obtaining new members.

The publicity workshop will be run by Liz Williams whom I have got to know since becoming Chairman of the Publicity Committee. Apart from her PR experience Liz is herself a very charismatic lady and I am looking forward to our Workshop day with eager anticipation. It will prove a valuable investment for those clubs who want to increase membership. The price - £25 for one delegate or £40 for two - should prove a bargain since just one additional club member subscription will be enough to cover the cost. It is certainly a bargain in real life terms since the going rate for a commercial one day seminar run by someone of Liz's experience is over £250! So don't delay, reserve your place NOW since places are limited.

And so to individual members, the people who receive this magazine and hopefully read it. My message to you is simple: we (that is both the game of croquet and the CA) need your help.

I sometimes get the impression that many croquet players think that the CA, if not exactly awash with dosh, is comfortably off in money terms as befits a dignified sport now in its 101st year. Not so. The total Publicity budget for the year is £2,900, a trifling sum which would scarcely buy a lunch for the 20 European Commissioners in Brussels.

But this is the amount of money we have to cover all publicity (and marketing) expenditure for 12 months. So though it would be nice to advertise our sport in Saga magazine, bought by 900,000 leisured people every month, at £10,000 a page it is more than somewhat beyond our means!

What we do have are 1600 people interested enough in the game to become Associates. And to each of you I make this appeal: please recruit one new Associate this year. Do not make this resolution in an abstract sense, go down the list of your club members and identify the one person you are going to persuade to join the CA as an Associate. My own personal target is three. Two are in my main club, one is a member of new club. None of them play tournament croquet, so it is on the unselfish, 'good of the game' reason that I will be urging them to join. Not easy. So wish me luck and I will let you know, in a subsequent article, how I get on.

Tony Fathers, Chairman Publicity Committee

### Tournament

#### Looking to future seasons

Following the recent Tournament Committee meeting, members may be interested in some of the topics discussed and the reasoning behind our decisions. The discussion on the Fixture Book occupied a large part of the meeting as we endeavoured to ensure we will not have a repeat of this year's late publication. A schedule of dates, given below, has been agreed aimed at having next year's book ready for issue in January 2000. Clubs are requested to assist us in achieving these targets and getting the document out on time.

#### FIXTURE BOOK SCHEDULE

Notice of all new Tournaments to be received by CA office 30 August.

1st draft of club entries to be circulated to clubs by 12 September.

Corrected draft to be returned to CA office by 1 October.

Final draft to be circulated to clubs by 14 October.

Corrected final draft to be returned to CA office by 1 November.

Fixtures Calendar Published on CA web site by 1 December.

Final text of book ready for despatch to printers by 1 December.

Fixture Book printed and ready for circulation by 7 January.

The discussions also raised the subject of the internet and we have decided to put the Fixtures Calendar on the CA's web site as soon as all the dates are confirmed probably at the end of November. The question of publishing a condensed version of the book on our website in January after it has been circulated to members is being considered by the Executive Committee. How useful will this be to the membership?

Changing the subject to one of the CAs successes, the Inter Counties, we can report that the number of entries has increased to 23 which is one more than the number of teams we can accommodate at Southwick and Compton. The draw to resolve the situation, undertaken using the existing rules, resulted in Devon being the unfortunate county failing to obtain entry. This has caused some concern as a county within the CAs domain (England, Northern Ireland, Isle of Man, Channel Isles) had failed to gain acceptance whereas two entries from outside the domain have been accepted because they had played in previous seasons. The conclusion to our debate is a change in the rules so that commencing in year 2000 entries from counties within the CA domain receive priority over all others. Should the number of counties from within the domain fail to reach 22 the remaining places in the tournament will be filled by a ballot of the other entries received.

The present procedure when inviting clubs to bid for CA events is to circulate a list, annually, to the clubs some 15-18 months before the season concerned and make the allocations at our spring meeting so clubs get at least 12 months notice if they are successful. The committee have decided to revert next year to the system used some time ago whereby bids are invited for the following 3 years. We hope this will assist future planning by both the CA and the clubs as it will enable the committee to develop a rotation pattern for the 8s around qualifying clubs and an opportunity to allocate other events as the Veterans and

Peels for a 2-3 year period at interested clubs.

Attempts to develop a winter programme of indoor tournaments have in the last two years run into a series of unforeseen and unexpected problems. We hope these are now behind us and we are confident that next winter everything will go according to plan. The programme dates are as shown in this year's fixture book but the Bath University venue is no longer available and we have reverted to RAF Innsworth.

In our centenary year we ran a very successful club tournament at Cheltenham. It has now been suggested we repeat the event in the millennium year as one of several activities the CA are planning to celebrate the start of a new century. The early planning stages have commenced but any comments on how it should be organised would be most welcome.

*D W Trotman, Chairman Tournament Committee.*

## Coaching

### The Handicap-Setting Test

As Bill Lamb outlined in his article on page 15 of the March 1999 issue (number 260) of The Croquet Gazette, the CA is making compulsory the process for Setting an Initial Handicap to be used in CA Tournaments. The reasons for this are straightforward, being the need to bring some consistency into such settings, before the Automatic Handicap System takes over, and to ensure that newcomers to the tournament circuit from different clubs are treated equally.

Bill first published two articles in the May 1996 issue (number 243) of The Croquet Gazette describing the test, and how to build the four-ball break on which the test is predicated. However, please note that the diagrams were correctly printed in the July 1996 issue (number 244), so you should refer to both issues. In addition, the test and process is fully explained in the booklet Principles of Handicapping, available at all registered Clubs and from CA Handicappers, who are all now being encouraged to implement the new policy for newcomers and improving players. He has agreed that I update his article, to bring out the reasoning behind the exercise, and to encourage its use as a coaching aid and as a practice routine.

#### The aim of the Test

To enable a consistent approach to setting an initial competitive handicap, the CA has taken as a basis the ability of a scratch player to play a ball through all twelve hoops to the peg from a given starting position without the need for bisques. Maintaining a handicap level is based on four factors: the ability to play the four-ball break, the ability to set up the break using bisques, the ability to build a break without bisques, and the ability to play carefully when conceding bisques. However, setting the initial handicap requires only the first two. Adjusting the handicap as the player gains experience will bring all four factors into contention, with the addition of the vagaries of competitive play, and other conditions. So the test concentrates on getting the break started, and continuing it right through to a tidy leave, simulating the likely condition at the beginning of the game, playing the first ball round on Turn Five.

The exercise is repeated several times, with the number of bisques required to complete it each time recorded. An average is taken, one bisque taken from the average, the result doubled and rounded to the nearest whole number. The averaging is important, as is the need to take each attempt to the end no matter how many disasters strike along the way. The set handicap may turn out to be a couple of points too high, but this takes into account the pressure of competition, a possible strange court and a new opponent, for the first game to which the mark will be put.

Although a novice may be able to take advantage of the new handicap in the first couple of games, those beaten should not use this as an argument against the test. Because any reduction in handicap under the Automatic Handicap Setting requires a gain of five results, any improvement has to be consistent. If the consistency comes quickly, then it may be wise to resubmit the player to the test for a few more

times, to gauge whether the practice has paid off. But once any player is taking part in tournaments regularly, then the other two factors - no bisques left, and giving bisques away - will play a larger part in the match results, and the use of the test as a checking aid becomes less valuable.

If the player fails to improve, then using the exercise as a practice aid, especially in its encouragement of positive play, may be more appropriate. This will show the novice that the structure of the game can be learned, and that consistency of play will come with such application.

#### Details of the Test

The test starts with two balls about three yards apart on the east boundary, near to hoop four. The adversary balls are in a tice position on the west boundary, probably level with hoop six, and in corner two, as though in turn four the opponent has shot at the tice and missed. The player now plays to set up the four-ball break, using bisques, and takes the break all the way through twelve hoops, and finishes with a tidy leave putting the opponent into a little difficulty.

Let us assume you are playing black, and blue is nearer to corner four. Red is in corner two, and yellow is the missed tice. The most usual way of starting this exercise is to roquet blue, take off from this, moving blue into the court a yard or so, going to the red ball in corner two. Roquet this ball, and bring both balls out of the corner ensuring yellow on the west boundary is in range next. Where you can put red depends on your croquet shot capabilities, but it is important that you reach striking distance of yellow. After the third roquet, put yellow as a pioneer for hoop one, ensuring that you have a path back to beyond blue.

Before you play black off the court past blue, take stock of the position, because the choice of the rush after taking the bisque will depend on the usefulness of red, and the closeness of yellow to the first hoop. If red is into the court, having been croqueted past hoop two, then the bisque turn begins with a rush on blue past red, so that the croquet shot sets blue as the pioneer for hoop two, and red becomes the pivot for the four-ball break. You have achieved this using one bisque deliberately, with any others because of lack of accuracy.

If however, red is still near corner two, then the bisque turn rush with blue is to the south boundary. The croquet stroke this time is a drive, sending blue towards hoop two, and leaving black near yellow, the previously set pioneer. Make the first hoop using yellow, aiming to rush yellow towards the centre, taking off to red. The next croquet stroke sets red as pioneer for hoop three, because the hoop two ball is blue. If this is successful, then the four-ball break has come together in time for the third hoop.

In each case there are some shots that are testing whilst the break is being established. In either case, the take-off to red in corner two from the east boundary, then the choice of the next croquet stroke, and finally the accuracy of the move of yellow to hoop one. In the bisque turn, if red has been left in the corner, then the drive shot - blue to hoop two, black remaining near yellow - and the roquet of yellow towards the middle after running hoop one, rather than back towards the South boundary, are the critical ones. If the rush is towards hoop two, then the movement of

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The Manor House, 1 Barn Croft, Penwortham, Preston PR1 0SX

blue while getting to red after the initial rush is important, to ensure the break is starting nicely.

Once the four balls are set up, the standard approach is to put the ball out of one hoop as pioneer for the next-but-one, going to the pivot ball, while the next hoop already has its pioneer ready. The trick now becomes ensuring the hoop is approached carefully, the exit ball can be rushed forwards rather than away from the other balls, and that carelessness does not creep in. The difficult shots are usually those putting in the corner pioneers, while the black ball stays within range of the pivot, and ensuring the five, six, one-back sequence is negotiated successfully. Finally, the exercise ends with red and yellow placed in a disadvantageous position, possibly one near hoop two, and the other near hoop one, each between the hoop and the corner, whilst black and blue are left near the east boundary, with a favourable rush for blue.

Count the bisques required, noting why they were taken this time - was it the croquet shots, was it the hoop approaches, was it running the hoops, or was it poor distance judgement? In this way, adjusting your play to your strengths, and concentrating on improving your weaknesses, the exercise will become a useful coaching / practice aid, as well as the handicap-setting test. Tell the Club Handicapper how you are getting on, let him see one or two attempts, and then, put the theory into practice during a real game.

## READING MATTERS

### Arthur GF Ross, This and That: A Croquet Mélange (edited by Ashley Heenan)

79pp published by Phoenix Press

The modest presentation of this booklet, published privately in New Zealand, belies the giant stature of both author and editor, and the authority of its contents. Ashley Heenan, the author's son-in-law, has put together an annotated miscellany of Arthur Ross's occasional writings on croquet published during the years 1952-69 after his reputation as the dominant figure in New Zealand croquet during the first half of the century had long been secure.

Though some of these papers have little relevance in this country today, the strength of the author's charisma and supreme coaching skills generally sound loud and clear through the intervening years. It is arguable that A class players, having already clawed their way to success by application and the absorption of others experience, may safely ignore yet further advice. But it is unarguable that there is something important here for the rest of us. Take, for example, Ross' well chosen words on openings reproduced following this article. For anyone in search of a croquet guru, this little work could be the answer to a prayer.

Ross' early introductory manuals - Croquet and How to Play It (1930) and Croquet Handbook (1957) - rank among the best instructional croquet texts of all time, and are widely read in New Zealand to this very day. But his last word has yet to be said. Heenan, who inherited Ross's mantle as the leading figure in New Zealand croquet, is now at work on a complete biography of his father-in-law and offers this little anthology as a curtain-raiser.

I am able to supply this booklet directly at £6.00 inclusive of postage and packing. Cheque with order please.

David Drazin,

Roefield, The Green, Croxley Green, Herts WD3 3HJ

## ADVICE TO BEGINNERS AND OTHERS

(fifth in a series of articles reprinted from NZ Croquet Gazette 1989)

Some other openings. What is, after all, the best Opening was discussed in the previous section but there are others.

Take this one:- First ball is hit to a spot halfway along the Boundary between corners one and two. One frequently sees the second ball hit to near corner two, goodness knows why because that makes a present of the control to the player of the first ball, but that is what often happens. The obvious place for the third ball is over within a yard of the second so that there will be a rush up the lawn if the fourth ball does not hit in. If things are as given above when the time comes to put the fourth ball into play, there are two things open to the player of that ball:

- (1) to try to hit the first ball from a spot near corner one, or
- (2) to fire at the target made by the balls near corner two.

(1) may be taken as the safer thing to do but unless the long shot is hit the probability of control being handed to the first player becomes a certainty -- the logical result of the bad move when the second ball was played to the wrong place.

The players of the second and fourth balls should always remember that he should regard himself as the attacker and for that reason, if for no other, he must always play his first ball (second in the over all order) to a tice position on the opposite side of the lawn to that occupied by the first ball, and in case readers do not remember what a "Tice" position is, it is a spot that is close enough to a Baulk to make it probable for the fourth ball to roquet it with its opening stroke without giving the third ball a "sitter".

If the second ball is played to a tice position about ten yards from Corner Three, the third ball player is forced to fire at that ball in order to clear it from its dangerous position. Even if that roquet is successful, the most probable lay-out, when the fourth ball gets its turn, will be with the second ball between hoop two and the sideline and the enemy balls close together halfway along the side Boundary between Corners one and two. If the fourth ball hits in he has a party while if he misses, the enemy has quite a bit of work to do before a break can be established. With this Opening, it is impossible to avoid that period, when, the player can only wait and hope that number four ball will not gather in that perfectly safe shot that he has been given. Seeing that the strokes that one must make in order to Develop a break if number four's first stroke goes wide, will be very little easier to make than those that confront the player if he has opened in the manner given in the previous section. Why subject yourself to that period of strain?

One sometimes sees Openings in which the first ball is hit to a spot infield. One can have quite a lot of fun by doing this but I always compare this with putting money on a horse at the races, one can only succeed if your luck is in.

Sometimes an experienced [player] evolves a "bluff" Opening that succeeds for a time against less experienced opponents. Probably one of the best of these was the Clem Watkins' Opening. If he won the toss, he

*Continued on page 17*

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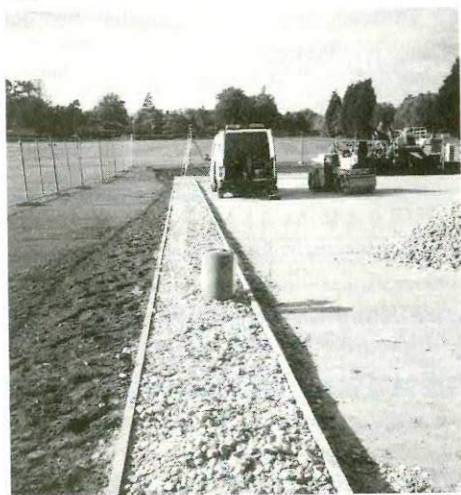
## From Start To Finish - Bury St Edmunds turfs out grass in favour of the first artificial surface court

Report & photos by Club Chairman, Brian Lewis

The project all started way back in 1989 when St. Edmundsbury Borough Council were approached, but although agreeable in principle there was never enough money to go ahead, until the Lottery came along, with funding possible from the Sports Council.

The political climate also changed in that the Borough went Labour, having been Conservative for many years. They instigated public meeting throughout the Borough, seeking opinions from residents as to what sporting facilities people wanted. We sent croquet players to all of these meetings and we always spoke up asking why no croquet facilities. This impressed the Leisure and Recreation Committee, so they included us in their overall plan for Borough Sport over the next few years. The next step was to meet with the Director of Leisure and agree where we should play and what strategy should be followed in constructing courts.

The Borough's policy was to develop the Victory Sports Ground so that it paid its way, and is used by as many sports and people as possible. We were allocated an area in the south east corner of the ground, very close to where we started life back in 1985 under the East Anglian Development Plan. It was also agreed that we should go for artificial surfaces, but since this would be a first in the UK, it would be prudent to only lay one to test the compatibility of such for croquet. This was to be paid for by the Borough, and if successful, then a further 3 similar courts would be laid but funded by application to the Sports Council.



So we then set about investigating what was available on the market and visited various places to try out the 'plastic grass', from Melton Mowbray, Letchworth, Walsall and finally Kilburn in north west London. The CA's Development Committee led by Derek Trotman

employed a specialist team of consultants to test the speed of the surface at Kilburn, which was used for 5-a-side soccer. This turned out to be what we had been looking for and, as a bonus, needed no sanding.

Whilst the Borough invited tenders to build the court to the criteria and standards set by the CA, the club was carrying out its own trials on how to construct a hoop that could be placed into and artificial surface, be easily removed, and also amenable to width adjustment; but above all, react when placed in concrete, as if it were in soil. In other words that there was some give when a ball hit an upright. The first one laid was not too successful, and players became uneasy at running this hoop because it required absolute accuracy. The second one using plastic inserts turned out to be more acceptable, and was tested by many players.

The part of the contract relating to

placing the hoops was given to Ron Rawden, who has done all the experimental work, made the trial hoops and their mplacement jigs.

There was much discussion between the Borough and the Contractor, En-Tout-Cas, over the detail in the contract, and we were asked periodically to comment when croquet expertise was involved. Even after signing up it was some time before the contractor eventually gave about 14 days notice to start. The great day arrived on 5 October 1998 when a team of 4 arrived with their digger and proceeded to level the sloping site. The speed with which an area of some 40 by 33 yds was levelled and then partly filled with limestone, and rolled flat can only be described as amazing. A laser theodolite was used to set the levels and the aim was to achieve a level throughout within 6mm. This was what we got



with the finished article, as checked by Professor Pidcock.

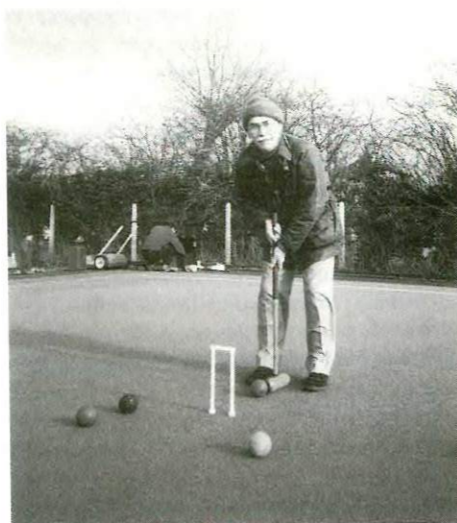
We had asked for a one yard wide area around the outside of the playing area, and in addition a one yard wide Macadam footpath all around that. We also requested that the boundary be woven into the carpet as an inch wide white line and this was agreed after some hesitation. Painting is not recommended.

The hoop emplacements were then set in small concrete blocks on site using the jigs

designed by Ron Rawden, who has a Patent pending for this intricate part of the construction. Accuracy of depth, alignment, width, and verticality are, of course, critical for hoops. We had a major hic-up when we discovered that the workmen had set the blocks at 90 degrees to the correct alignment, so they had to be dug out and put back in!

After the 40mm Macadam layer it was the turn of the Shock Pad, which is basically finely chopped tyre rubber, which sticks together, but allows water through. This is 10mm thick, and appears to be edible by squirrels which scratched away at it whilst still warm, and not set!

The carpet then arrived from Italy, in early December. There were 9 rolls of 4.1 metres by 26 metres which had to just lie there awaiting



three consecutive dry days. When, we asked during an English winter? This parameter arose because the glue for sticking the carpet to the shock pad does not work in the wet, or indeed with any moisture. So December and January passed, but early February saw the glue being sprayed all over the court, and the 12mm thick artificial grass rolled down.

The full size court can be divided readily into two short ones, and string defines the border between. We anticipate great savings since there will be no mowing, no fertilising, no moss, no watering, no rolling, no weeding, no fox/rabbit scratchings, and no mole hills. The life of the carpet is approximately 6 to 10 yrs for football, so we hope to perhaps gain at least 20 yrs of use. Winter snow can be swept off, and the drainage is excellent.

The hoops, corner flags etc were all fitted into their stainless steel tubes, and we awaited the official opening by the Chairman of the Borough's Leisure Services Committee. This he did by hitting a ball

with a mallet at a bottle of champagne. The Croquet Association did us proud with the attendance of the Chairman, Vice Chairman and Treasurer, on what turned out to be a glorious day. Several schoolchildren were given elementary coaching, and we had TV cameras from BBC, ITV and BBC 24Hr News; the actual showing being some 10 mins or so in total.

So now we look forward to learning how different, if at all, it is to play on. Doubtless there will be many who would wish to try it, but we would ask that they ring any of our members in the Associates Directory who have an address in or around Bury St Edmunds, so that they may be accompanied onto what is a private sports ground.

### AS IT WAS - days gone by as recorded in the Gazette

The eager player of 1949 had to wait until 9 May for the start of her first tournament, the Peels; and in contrast with so much else in croquet - which seems recognisably the same now as it was then - it is fascinating to see the extent to which the Calendar has since changed.

The Gazette of May 1949 lists a programme of 27 Official fixtures, played at 16 venues; this year's fixtures book lists some 160, at 46 venues. All the CA events have survived, though not all have an unbroken history: the Peels, the Opens, the Challenge and Gilbey, the All-England Handicap finals and the President's Cup (all played in 1949 at Roehampton, the CA's then Headquarters); and the Inter-Counties Championship and the Caskets (played at Hurlingham).

But there are only five survivors from the club tournaments: Budleigh in August (in 1949, it was the earliest of the five - in July), Cheltenham in July, Hurlingham and Brighton (as the tournament was then known, but played as now at Southwick) in August and Hunstanton in August/September. Of these, the Hunstanton event is sadly a shadow of its 1949 format so only four clubs preserve the tradition of a full week-long tournament. The Cheltenham week, to be held for the 83rd time this year, concedes only two years' seniority to Budleigh - first held in 1896 - which is the oldest of the four and one of the earliest tournaments of the Revival in the 1890s. Do not be misled by this year's Calendar, which boldly claims for Hunstanton its 99th annual tournament: the event is a young upstart first held in 1913, Brighton's 14th, Cheltenham's 16th and Budleigh's 18th year.

All these 1949 club events were week-long Monday to Saturday tournaments, with a typical format of singles - divided into up to four classes, with the top class Open, the second (if there were more than two) played level and the others played on handicap - unrestricted handicap singles (often XYZ) and handicap doubles. The programme filled the season from the Peels at the start of May to Felixstowe in October, with competing events only during the Summer months of June and July.

Of the clubs represented in the calendar in 1949, the tournament-holding survivors - in addition to those already mentioned - are limited to Parkestone, Ryde and Woking: gone from the list are Bedford, Buxton, Devonshire Park (a more recent casualty), Exmouth, Felixstowe, Leamington and Southsea. Weekend tournaments - that staple of modern tournament play - were an innovation still a few years off.

And what could better two seaside weeks in Devon? As Major G F Stone writes, in a letter to the Editor: 'It will be noticed that a tournament is being held at Exmouth on July 18th, the week following that of Budleigh Salterton. If anyone wants a good fortnight's croquet in Devon, it can be very easily done without inconvenience. Intending competitors can stay at the same hotel for both tournaments either at Exmouth or Budleigh Salterton - the two towns being only five miles apart. Also there is a good bus service which serves both clubs'

Convenience indeed!

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THE CROQUET ASSOCIATION BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 DECEMBER 1998

	1998	1997	1998	1997
	£	£	£	£
<b>Income</b>				
Subscriptions	30,125	26,367	3,860	650
Registration fees	17,888	16,218	10,000	10,000
Sports council grant	17,000	27,620	48,678	48,678
Levy	10,785	10,873		
Investment income	7,142	6,080	62,538	59,328
Sale of books, equipment, etc (net)	4,659	9,963		
Surplus on tournaments	4,617	3,858		
Advertisements and royalties	3,546	2,682		
Surplus on coaching	2,745	1,875		
Sponsorship	-	(1,325)		
	98,507	104,211		
<b>Expenditure</b>				
Staff salaries and national insurance cont's	29,017	27,714	100,374	89,703
Publications	22,324	20,401	162,912	149,031
Grants to clubs and federations	6,567	6,501		
Publicity and development	5,622	11,478		
Internation	970	3,186		
Office overheads	4,860	3,829		
Office services	4,787	4,826		
Council travelling expenses	2,797	3,203		
Accountancy charges	2,500	2,250		
Sundry expenses	224	1,257		
Centenary	-	2,596		
	(79,668)	(87,241)		
Surplus for the year before tax	18,839	16,970		
Tax adjustment for previous years	-	936		
Tax charge for the year	(1,421)	(1,785)		
Surplus for the year after tax	17,418	16,121		
Net transfer to special funds	(1,782)	(10,847)		
Surplus for the year transferred to general funds	15,636	5,274		
<b>Fixed Assets</b>				
Furniture and equipment at written down value			3,860	650
Trophies			10,000	10,000
Investments, at cost			48,678	48,678
			62,538	59,328
<b>Current Assets</b>				
Stock of books and equipment for sale				5,470
Loans to member clubs				6,731
Sundry debtors and prepayments				5,329
Cash at bank and in hand				72,173
			100,374	89,703
<b>Current Liabilities</b>				
Subscriptions received in advance				5,075
Accrued expenses				12,038
Taxation				1,314
			14,889	18,427
<b>Net Assets</b>				
Represented by:				
General Funds			148,023	130,604
Accumulated general funds as at 1 January 1998			60,439	55,165
Surplus for the year attributable to general funds			15,636	5,274
			76,075	60,439
<b>Other Funds, as per attached schedule</b>				
Life membership				1,360
International				14,759
Benefactors				25,032
Tournaments and trophies				3,010
Development				6,300
Duffield Bequest				19,704
			71,948	70,165
			148,023	130,604

THE CROQUET ASSOCIATION INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 1998

	1998	1997
	£	£
Income		
Subscriptions	30,125	26,367
Registration fees	17,888	16,218
Sports council grant	17,000	27,620
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Sundry expenses	224	1,257
Centenary	-	2,596
	(79,668)	(87,241)
Surplus for the year before tax	18,839	16,970
Tax adjustment for previous years	-	936
Tax charge for the year	(1,421)	(1,785)
Surplus for the year after tax	17,418	16,121
Net transfer to special funds	(1,782)	(10,847)
Surplus for the year transferred to general funds	15,636	5,274

THE CROQUET ASSOCIATION NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS AS AT 31 DECEMBER 1998

1. INVESTMENTS AT COST

Quoted Nominal Value	1998	1997
£	£	£
9,993.20	9,853	9,853
10,019.20	9,988	9,988
10,395.39	10,027	10,027
15,409.14	18,810	18,810
	48,678	48,678

(Market value at 31 December 1998 : £60,153)

2. OTHER FUNDS

	Life membership	International	Benefactors	Tournaments & trophies	Development	Duffield Bequest
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Balance at 1 January 1998	1,360	14,759	25,032	3,010	6,300	19,704
Add:						
Interest on invested funds (net)	-	707	1,293	-	-	638
Donations	-	-	915	-	-	-
Allocation from general funds	-	4,000	-	-	1,500	-
	1,360	19,466	27,240	3,010	7,800	20,342
Deduct:						
Allocation to general funds	(1,360)	(400)	-	(3,010)	(2,500)	-
Balance at 31 December 1998	-	19,066	27,240	-	5,300	20,342

ACCOUNTS AS AT 31 DECEMBER 1998

ACCOUNTANTS' REPORT

In accordance with your instructions, we have examined the books, vouchers and other records maintained by The Croquet Association for the year ended 31 December 1998 and obtained such further information as considered necessary. In our opinion, without having carried out an audit, the accounts as presented by The Association are in agreement with the accounting records for the year ended on that date.

MORGAN BROWN & SPOFFORTH  
Chartered Accountants

82 St John Street  
London  
EC1M 4JN

23 March 1999

Treasurer's Comments on the 1998 Accounts

The year under review is the last in which the CA was in regular receipt of a Sports Council grant. At first sight the transition from heavy reliance on external funding to self sufficiency seems to have almost been achieved, given that the bottom line of the Income and Expenditure Account shows a surplus of £15,636 compared to grant income of £17,000. But that surplus includes an exceptional transfer from special to general funds consequent on the closure of the Life Membership and Tournament & Trophies Funds (see note 2). There is thus still some way to go and it is likely that it will take several years to regain a healthy balance between income and expenditure.

Once again Associates and clubs are to be thanked for their continued support in the face of rising subscription rates. The increased revenue from these sources (totalling over £5,400) made a considerable contribution towards offsetting falls in income on other items, particularly the Sports Council Grant (drop of £10,620 and Sales (£5,304). The latter is a clear indication that the CA is not immune to market forces and it will not be easy over the coming years to maintain, let alone increase levels of income from several of the sources upon which the CA has come to rely.

On the expenditure side, Publicity and Development costs have been trimmed as a consequence of the fall in Sports Council funds earmarked for this purpose. Readers should not conclude from this that there will be similar cost cuts in 1999 since Council has decided that it must maintain a viable core of publicity and development activity.

A more detailed commentary on the accounts, which includes an explanation of the Income & Expenditure Account introduced this year, is available on request from the CA Office (please send an SAE). It will also be available at the 1999 AGM.

Roger Bray

## POINTS OF LAW

By Bill Lamb

### THE BASIS OF THE LAWS

It is important when considering the Laws of Croquet to remember the basis on which they were formulated. The laws as we know them today have their origin in a reconstruction and rearrangement in 1961 by Ian Baillieu, an Australian by birth and a barrister of some eminence (see p. 148 of *The History of Croquet*: DMC Prichard). They have been revised from time to time - the current version is the fifth edition - but always with the original intent in mind.

Remember that the game came first; the laws came afterwards. They serve both as a description of what happens in a game of croquet and as a framework for the game. They reflect the way the game is played and the trust that exists between the players. Croquet is a game where the normal progress is adjudicated by the players themselves: a qualified referee is only occasionally required to judge a difficult stroke or to advise on the laws when queries arise. The key to the interpretation of any law is to ask what is the purpose of the law? What is its intent?

The laws are intended for use by croquet players. They were not drawn up for perfectly logical aliens from another planet to be able to understand and interpret croquet. They are not axiomatic and it is a mistake to try to interpret them as though they are. A great deal of experience of the laws has accrued in the last thirty years or so and that is passed on to following players. No-one is expected to start from scratch

with a law book. Most players acquire naturally a basic knowledge of the laws from the coaching they receive in their first season of play and many do not need or want to dig deeper. If they do, then the normal progression is provided by laws courses where there is ample opportunity to discuss and learn how to interpret the laws. Prichard's Commentary on the Laws is a useful complement to them, covering as it does many of the points that have been emerged in discussion over the years. The laws are not perfect but the imperfections exist mainly in hypothetical situations which rarely occur in play.

The authority for the laws in any country lies with the laws committee of that country. Until recently, there has been a considerable amount of international agreement on the interpretation of the laws. The co-ordinating body is the ILM, consisting of representatives of the four MacRobertson Shield countries. The ILM occasionally issues international rulings, which in most countries are taken to have the force of law. In addition, an individual country can issue its own national rulings which are operative in that country. The most recent Croquet Association ruling was to affirm that the error laws cover genuine mistakes in play and do not permit a player to take advantage of them by deliberately playing a stroke in error. It was necessary because the Australian Laws Committee has recently rejected the traditional interpretation of the laws in favour of one based on their opinion of what the letter of the law says. The ILM has been trying to resolve these different attitudes but the arguments have become increasingly academic and based on equivocal assumptions. It may be that a complete re-write will be necessary and this could take years. Fortunately, in the meantime, the laws and interpretations are sufficiently robust for croquet to continue to be played without much practical difficulty.

The laws are a mixture of logic and practicality. Sometimes the latter is more important than the former and many of the laws are framed to make refereeing decisions easier or to enable the game to flow without requiring constant calls for refereeing. Take, for example, Law 14 - Hoop Point. 14(b)(1) states when a ball begins to run a hoop but 14(b)(2) does not state when it completes the running; instead, it gives a condition that enables a judgement to be made, i.e. the position of the ball at rest is used to judge whether or not a ball has run the hoop. It is a simple static position that can be easily tested. You can imagine the complications that would arise if the defining position were to be the dynamic one when the back of the ball clears the playing side of the hoop. A referee would be necessary for every hoop point just in case the ball were to run back into the hoop!

Further points of law will be considered in later articles in this series.

# Talking Croquet...

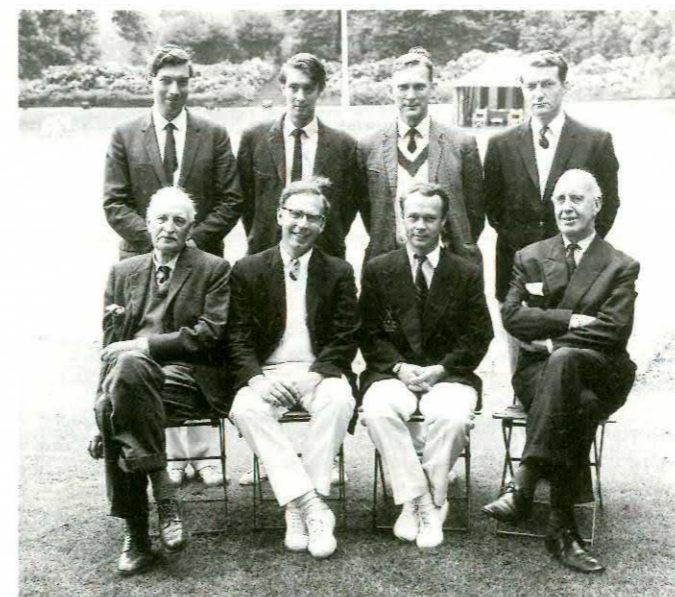
By Neil Williams

Many readers of the Gazette may not know any details about the careers or views of some of the people who have made a significant contribution to the game, in whatever shape or form. Our chances of seeing them, let alone talking to them, are necessarily few. It is hoped these conversations will bring them a little closer, so that we may benefit from their advice or experience.

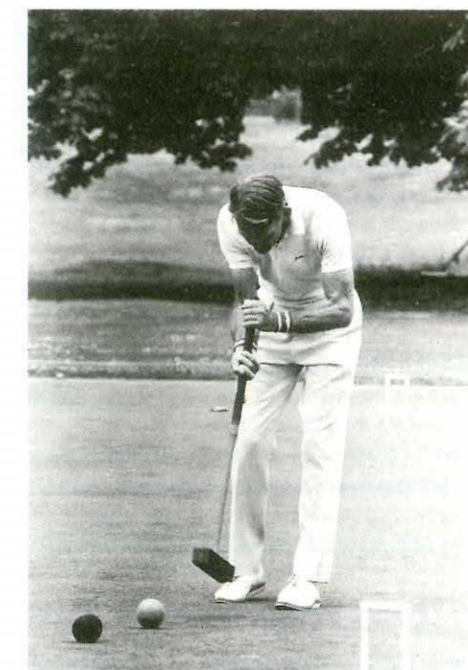
### No. 2 BERNARD NEAL

If you wanted someone who could speak with authority about croquet - about playing and players, managing, administrating, refereeing and development - someone who's been there and done that at the top level - Bernard Neal would be high up on a very short list. As Vice President of the CA, President of the Cheltenham Club, International, Championship and Examining Referee, and still, after nearly 40 years, an A class tournament player, Bernard would be hard to beat.

His own playing record includes winning the Open Championship (1972, '73) and the Men's Championship (1967), many appearances in the President's Cup, and three appearances in the MacRobertson Shield (1969, 1974, 1979), once winning 11 out of 12 matches and once (1979) captaining the side. Don't forget that during this time, Humphrey Hicks, Patrick Cotter, John Solomon, Nigel Aspinall and Keith Wylie were all at or around their peak.



The Test Team of 1969: Roger Bray, Nigel Aspinall, Bernard Neal, Douglas Strachan, Maurice Reckitt (CA President), William Ormerod, John Solomon, Dudley Hamilton Miller (Manager).



Bernard's interest in croquet began in 1961, when his distinguished lawn tennis career ended. That career had included playing for England against Wales and several appearances in the Doubles at Wimbledon between 1946 and 1952. Once, he reminds me, he and his partner actually made it to the second round, but only because the opposition had scratched.

His professional life was also blossoming. Educated at Merchant Taylors and Trinity, Cambridge, he worked for the Admiralty during the war, afterwards returning to Cambridge for a PhD and to work as a don. He then moved to Swansea for 7 years as their first Professor of Civil Engineering. He was still only 32. The Chair at Imperial College, London, followed and there he remained until 1982.

John Solomon says, "Bernard was the one to beat. He had the amazing gift - a lethal weapon - of not only always hitting the shots that mattered, but hitting them with total certainty."

The finest croquet Bernard saw during that period, however, came from Nigel Aspinall during that 1969 visit to Australia. "Nigel was totally unbeatable." The third member of Bernard's top three was Keith Wylie ("when he chose to play"), who also possessed "a touch of magic". Bernard emphasises that he does not see himself as ever reaching their level.

His praise of current players is generous. He is clear that the current vintage is, day and day out, clearly better than the players of 30 years ago. The difference lies, he believes, in the single-ball shots.

To back this up, Bernard describes a turn played by David Maugham in a Test Match. With 2 balls pegged out, his opponent (Bob Jackson) for 2-back and himself for the first hoop, Maugham hit a long shot on the East boundary, split to the first and second, ran the first hoop and continued to go right round.

BN "The break rested, I think, almost entirely on the ability to run long hoops with total confidence at a range of 5, 6 or 7 yards. Even from angled positions."

When I push him to choose one win in his own career that gave him particular satisfaction he doesn't hesitate about the choice.

BN "It has to be the first Open Championship win. That's the one you cherish if you're lucky enough to win one. And it leaves you with a strange feeling at the end. Instead of feeling elated, you feel like an exploded light bulb and you go sort of all limp. It takes a day or two to recover. You simply cannot believe it happened."

There are two big but unspoken questions at the back of my mind in our conversation. The first, which I have decided cannot be answered if put directly is "How is it done?" I want to find out what secrets there are in playing at that level. What can we learn from his

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## Golf Croquet in 1999 and the New Millennium

The World Croquet Federation have introduced a new set of rules and the CA have adopted them for the coming season so that players can use the rules and make comments upon them. CA Chairman, Bill Arliss, explains why the CA are supporting the trial use of the rules, while Tony Hall, Chairman of the WCF working party, explains the major rules changes and the reasoning behind them.

The Golf Croquet World Championships held at Leamington last year considerably raised the interest in golf croquet in England and gave great impetus to the introduction of what is now known as the WCF rules for this format of the game.

Although the CA has for many years played a very active and leading role in the development of the rules for Association Croquet, we have paid little attention to the rules for golf croquet although we publish such rules in our 'little red book'. This has led to the setting up of a working party by the World Croquet Federation (WCF) to formulate a new set of rules for golf croquet. Under the leadership of Tony Hall from Australia and representatives from all the major golf croquet playing nations, including ourselves, the new rules for this format of the game have been drafted and are now published world wide. Most croquet playing countries are either trying the new rules or already have adopted them for their play.

This has resulted in the CA through its Golf Croquet Committee having to decide which rules to follow for play in England during the 1999 season. As you now know we decided to follow the WCF rules for a trial period of one year.

Why did the CA decide to go along this pathway? I believe the answer is very simple. If we want golf croquet to grow and prosper in this country and I believe that must be our aim, good competition at national and international level must be possible and this can only be done with one set of rules.

By adopting the WCF rules for all our play in 1999 we shall have a vast playing experience at all levels to draw on and if we feel some modification should be made to the WCF rules, we can support any such changes from a strong position. We are a major croquet playing nation and have our representative on the rules working party.

I would like to thank Tony Hall and his fellow members of the rules working party for putting together at short notice the following article, which describes the major differences between the old and the new rules and the reasons for the changes. The Golf Croquet Committee will be circulating all clubs at the end of the season to get your views on the acceptability of the rules for play in the future.

Bill Arliss

The December 1998 WCF Golf Croquet Rules are to be used by the CA on trial in 1999. In Australia they have been introduced by Croquet Australia for the

Australian Championships (but each State Association will make its own decision on their use within the individual states). New Zealand has adopted the new rules for use throughout New Zealand. South Africa is testing the new rules over the next few months. It is expected that Switzerland will adopt the new rules on 1 May 1999. The new rules will be used in the first United States National Championship in May and the inaugural European Championship in October 1999.

There are a number of significant changes from the "traditional" rules contained in the little red laws book. Most of the changes were prompted by the experience gained from over fifty years of play in Egypt, where golf croquet has been the only version of croquet played since World War II. The changes, with explanations, are:

1. A hoop may be scored in more than one stroke. The frustration of having to retreat from a hoop has been eliminated. Both beginners and advanced players seem to appreciate this change. An argument that this change would eliminate some interesting tactics is invalid as the same tactics are brought into play after an opponent removes a ball from the jaws by entering the hoop from the non-playing side and remaining there. Although this does not happen as much as sticking in a hoop, it occurs often enough to require the tactics to be well understood. This change makes the rule the same as in Association and USCA Rules Croquet, with all the advantages of standardisation, particularly for beginners.

2. It is now permissible to jump the striker's ball over another ball or to do a jump shot to run a hoop. The jump shot is a spectacular and exciting aspect of croquet. The expertise required to execute a jump shot is rewarded. Experience from the US indicates that courts are unlikely to be damaged, even by beginners. To damage the court with the mallet is a fault and repeated damage will be penalised. The tactics of blocking a ball will be slightly different but blocking is still possible and rewarding.

3. A ball is now off the court "if half the ball is over the boundary". This is the same as in USCA Rules. It is particularly easy to judge if the boundary happens to be a cord, as the ball can't balance on the cord. In my experience it is also easier to judge when the boundary is a white line as the bulk of the ball can be readily seen to be on either one side or the other. There seem to be fewer problems judging whether balls are "in"

or "out" in the US, even though the nine-inch mark-in leads to many more close decisions being required.

4. A ball that goes off the court is now "placed so that its centre is on the inside edge of the boundary where it went off" instead of being "marked-in" a yard. This change is primarily for high level play and for simplification. There is no perceived need to have the ball placed any distance inside the court. It makes full use of the available space around a hoop and prevents a ball being rushed away from the vicinity of a hoop whilst the striker's ball stays close. In the case of cord boundaries the mallet will always strike the ball before the chance of catching the cord, although that is extremely rare.

5. The start has been simplified (the winner of the toss always plays blue and black) and continuation after the first game completely specified. This avoids communication problems where the players have no common language, and minimises opportunities for using gamesmanship.

6. The start is now from close to the fourth corner instead of from B baulk. The approach to hoop 1 requires better touch to achieve a good position than from B baulk. High level players could merely hit their balls over the south boundary from B baulk to be assured of a good position. The new starting position also eliminates some of the advantage of winning the toss, as players may either take position or hit opposing balls away right from the first hoop.

7. Balls may now be played towards the next hoop but one, but no more than half way without penalty. New and interesting tactics are introduced. The possibility of a player benefiting from his own "error" is eliminated.

8. Concepts such as a "stationary ball", "the state of the game" and "boundary ball" have been eliminated. This avoids the concept(s) being used where inappropriate and ensures that the rules are easy to read and understand. Cross references are avoided.

9. Non-striking faults have been introduced to assist in preventing unnecessary interference and to remove the need for the concept of a "striking period".

10. Playing out of sequence is forgiven, as before, but playing a partner's or an opponent's ball is a fault. This penalises really careless play

and facilitates continuation of play after an error. It removes the possibility of an opponent "helping" a player make an error.

11. Any touching of a ball with a mallet is now either a fair stroke or a fault. An "air shot" is neither a stroke nor a fault. The need for a referee to determine the intentions of the player has been eliminated. So if a player swings over a ball and touches it the referee is not required to decide whether it was a mistake (and thus forgiven) or an intentional stroke that was badly played. Players are encouraged to avoid mistakes.

12. The wording of the rule on faults is deliberately mostly identical to the wording in the laws of Association Croquet or the USCA rules, to assist understanding and for standardisation.

13. Rules on behaviour have been introduced to make clear exactly what is required and to avoid situations where gamesmanship could be used. The difference between a fault (something a player does not intend) and bad behaviour (within the player's discretion) is specified with precision. The penalties for bad behaviour (yellow and red cards) are formalised.

14. The duties of referees are listed as part of the rules so that everything affecting a match is included in the rules. It is assumed that a referee is appointed to a match and only requires the players to be joint referees in the absence of a referee. In that case the responsibilities are specified.

15. A new system of handicapping is introduced in which no point may be scored for the striker when taking an extra turn. This reduces the power of the extra turn which was previously overwhelming.

The WCF Golf Croquet Working Party was formed following the 1997 WCF world championship held in Cairo. Made up of a group of international players, its aim was to produce precise, unambiguous, consistent and understandable rules that reduce the possibility for dispute. The English, Egyptian, United States and Australian rules of Golf Croquet were all considered during the development. Comments are welcome and should be directed to Tony Hall at [tony1h@ozemail.com.au](mailto:tony1h@ozemail.com.au).

In summary, the working party think that the new rules govern everyone's actions more precisely and make the game more progressive and exciting.

(Complete copies of the new rules can be purchased from the CA shop priced at £1.50 +p&p Tel 0171 - 7363148)

## CROQUET ON THE WEB

by Dave Kibble

Minus players have a distinct advantage in handicap play and actually win 70-80% of games rather than the intended 50%. This is interesting since a lot of minus players decline handicap play because it involves pulling out bisques rather than playing croquet. Extra turns are more useful to a lower handicap player and the ability range below scratch is non-linear. Advanced tournaments generally offer a more satisfactory experience at this level and there are sufficient of them that the absence of low handicap players from handicap tournaments is well explained.

Alternative schemes to a handicap point is a bisque is a turn were debated. Time adjustments to the sides seemed a good alternative. Maximum allowable score differential and mandatory peels disrupt play so much that they are not popular options.

We were treated to a fascinating description of how the handicap system can give strange game results through non-transitivity: Imagine 9 players that always play to form so 1

beats 2 and so on. Now place these into teams where team A comprises 1, 6 and 8, B is 2, 4 and 9 and C is 3, 5 and 7. In a match players must play in order, so when A plays B 1 plays 2, 6 plays 4, etc. A will beat B 2 games to 1, B will beat C similarly but C will beat A! Now imagine that the 9 players are actually simple capabilities and the team is a person who has a set of these capabilities a simple handicap could never work! This could most easily be imagined if two players of the same handicap each won 50% of their games between themselves. Now, one of the players has good stroke play the other is a good tactician. Who would stand the best chance with bisques in hand against a lower handicap player and who in giving bisques against a higher handicap player?

The pegging of the handicap at 2 for theoretical reasons was challenged. The system supporters believe that unpegging the bottom end would lead to a gradual drift downwards because players tend to enter the game with a high handicap and leave with a lower handicap. It

seems more likely though that this would lead to a drift upwards. Looked at another way if the 2 players were removed from the system it would not take long for less able players to reach 2 so it is clearly not an absolute standard based on the conceptual scratch player (CSP). The idea of the free market enjoyed much support but the authorities resist tampering with the system regardless of the strength of argument. The CSP argument is not accepted by the majority of low handicap players, most scratch and below know they need bisques to stand a 50% chance against the top player(s).

Discussion also continued on how international handicap pools could be brought into line a simple stretching and sliding of the distribution curves had little opposition except from those who could enact change.

A comprehensive pegging down sheet is available from the UK croquet site.

Strangely no comment was made about the new CA web site other than to announce it, that's probably a compliment. It is a good resource.

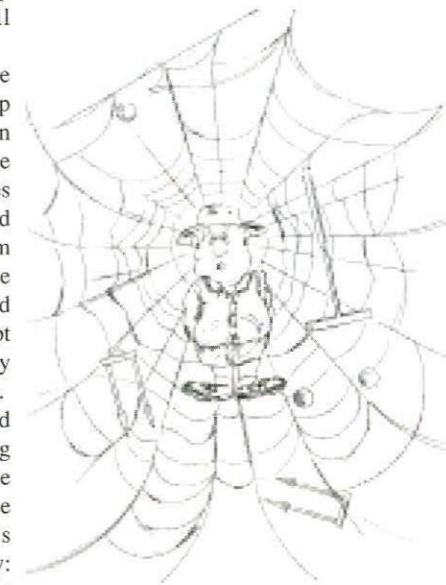
The 14-point game was promoted as a quicker game for middle to high bisquers but does not lead to a very interesting competition. It was invented to be a challenge to the top few since they rarely make mistakes between hoops in a break and a delayed triple peel is little challenge for them. It was held to be unfair to decide between players of greatly different ability (fewer opportunities to make mistakes) but it is a quicker test of skill for those closely matched.

There were the usual pedantic and tedious exchanges between those who believe in simple written laws with a spirit of the law to assist in their application vs. those who believe the letter must be enough. Once again no conclusion or agreement could be drawn.

A question was posed about whether a continuation stroke may be deemed before the balls have stopped moving. This is important in a timed ending where the striking of the ball is the critical moment since a player may have a further turn. An artificial end to the turn thus may defeat the clock. It was generally agreed that this was bad behaviour and should be penalised by loss of the turn as if time had been called before the player ended their turn.

Can a mallet be used as a marker? Yes as long as it is the strikers (not his doubles partners).

Seeding of knockouts was again discussed. It improves the better players chance of reaching the final which some see as unfair;



however, put another way, it reduces the possibility of a weak player getting a lucky draw in the same half as all the other weak players, i.e. it restores the better players chances.

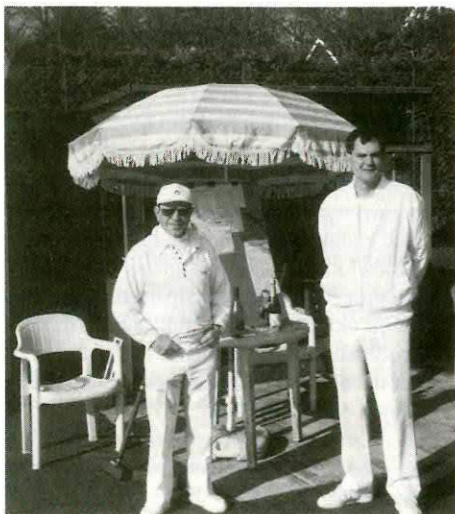
A suggestion was made that tournaments could try out modified laws as long as they were published in advance. One Australian tournament introduced 13 additional laws, mostly to encourage expedient play but some that bring about end of turn for balls going out or hitting furniture.

The truth of the statement men and women play croquet on equal terms was challenged. It was held that if women put in the same (obsessive?) effort as some men then they too could reach the high standard of our top players. One contributor suggested that a demographic survey would be helpful what you need is a list of players broken down by age and sex make your own mind up!

The most controversial item was the revelation that smoking and drinking is banned during play at golf croquet and at many American tournaments. In golf croquet there is a safety aspect since all players are on the lawn together. The helpful, relaxing effect of alcohol is more than offset by the loss of performance. An Australian player revealed that his croquet had improved following a heart attack and again after a second one. This was put down to the effects of beta-blockers, which are quite legal if prescribed by a doctor.

An association in Australia has officially endorsed the wearing of coloured club uniforms rather than white clothing for their tournaments. Perhaps we will be seeing white balaclavas on our lawns soon since recent research indicates that UV probably requires cloth rather than sunscreen to prevent sunburn.

Someone boasted that a two-ball (straight) triple peel had been completed but it seems several have already been recorded. A guess was made that it may be equivalent to getting two holes in one in golf but our best player took up the gauntlet and managed one after only 30 attempts.



Tom Weston and Lionel Tibble, wooden spoonist and winner respectively in the Winchester One Ball handicap event.

## IN TOUCH WITH THE WORLD CROQUET FEDERATION

*In a new, and hopefully regular column, the World Croquet Federation have been invited to publicise their activities and objectives to all levels of players.*

### Tony Hall nominated as next WCF President

### Five candidates for three Management Committee Vacancies

**T**ony Hall, Senior Vice-President of the Australian Croquet Association, will become the next President of the World Croquet Federation. He will serve for an initial two year term with effect from 1st August, 1999, and under WCF Rule 5(A), he may be re-elected as President for an additional two-year term thereafter.

Bill Berne, who is not standing for re-election as President when his term of office expires, will remain a member of the WCF Management Committee on retiring from the Presidency. As immediate WCF Past-President, under WCF Rule 5(B) he will continue to serve on the Committee until the next WCF General Meeting, or until the next election is held.

The WCF Management Committee consists of the President and six members. Members of the Management Committee serve for a four-year term, and three of them retire every two years in rotation. Management Committee members may be re-elected, with no restrictions on the number of terms they may serve.

It was agreed at the WCF Council Meeting at Carden Park in 1994 that Management Committee members are elected in an individual capacity, and not to represent their own national interests.

When nominations for the forthcoming WCF election closed on 31st March, there were five nominations for the three places on the Management Committee. The vacancies were caused by the retirement in rotation of Colin Irwin, Tony Hall and Antoine Ravez, who is not seeking re-election. The five candidates for the election are named here with their proposers:

- Dr Khalil El-Haj  
The Palestine Croquet Association
- Mr Ahmed Hamroush  
The Egyptian Croquet Association
- Mr Colin Irwin  
The English Croquet Association
- Mr Steve Johnston  
The United States Croquet Association

Mr Peter Payne  
The Swiss Croquet Association

A postal vote is being held to elect three of these five candidates to the vacant places on the Management Committee. The three other members of the new committee will be those members of the existing committee who still have two years to serve before they retire in rotation in July 2001: Chris Hudson (England), John Prince (New Zealand), and Rod Williams (Scotland).

The World Croquet Federation consists of 'Full' members and 'Observer' members. 'Observer' membership is open to any national croquet association, but to qualify for 'Full' membership, a national croquet association must meet a number of requirements.

There must be clear evidence of a national structure, with at least 5 clubs or similar subsidiary organisations, and the association must be able to produce audited accounts demonstrating the payment of membership subscriptions to it. In addition, the associations must play a version of croquet recognised by the WCF, and there must be clear evidence that the association is involved in promoting croquet and has an effective coaching scheme in place. The association must also have ultimate responsibility for the tournament calendar within its area of jurisdiction, and must have staged at least two national championships. The number of individual participants acknowledging the authority of the association must exceed 50.

Only 'full' members of the Federation are entitled to vote at General Meetings or in elections, and the number of votes to which they are entitled depends on the number of individual associates affiliated to them. If an association has less than 500 associates then it has one vote. An association with a number of associates between 500 and 1000 has two votes, and associations with more than 1000 associates are given three votes. The 'Full' members of the Federation, with their votes shown in brackets, are currently Australia (3), Canada (1), Egypt (2), England (3), Ireland (1), Italy (1), Japan (1), New Zealand (3), Scotland (1), South Africa (1), and the United States (3).

To cast their vote, 'Full' members are asked to select three out of the five candidates. Each candidate chosen then acquires the total

votes to which the 'Full' member is entitled, and the three candidates who attract the most votes are elected. Should there not be a clear result, then member associations will be asked to confirm the Management Committee's proposed solution.

Reg Bamford (South Africa) is acting as the returning officer for the election, and he and Rob Lewis will act as scrutineers. To be valid, voting papers must have been returned to the Returning Officer by first post, on 30th June, 1999. The result of the election will be announced on 31st July, and successful candidates will assume office on 1st August 1999.

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## Tournament Reports..... Tournament Reports..... Tournament Reports.....

### South African International Croquet Festival - Wanderers Club Johannesburg 7-14 February 1999

Report by Jeanne Ackerman

35 Europeans converged on the Wanderers Club for the first day of the tournament, coming from England, Brussels, Geneva, Jersey etc - - the other 25 entries came from various clubs in South Africa small ones like Port Alfred down on the south coast or from local clubs such as Bruma and from the oldest, most famous, and prestigious Johannesburg Country Club.

No rain and 10 days of unbroken sunshine in early February along with the excellent exchange rate has to be an incentive to visit South Africa.

Chris and Esther supplied a great deal of help and advice on air fares, accommodation and tourist trips before, during and after the festival, all 10 events were played to a finish although only 10 minutes before dusk on the last day.

It really was a meeting of enthusiastic croquet players, a croquet family - with fierce competition in the main events.

The ambience was pleasant consisting of a single complex of 8 lawns along with a lawn side pub supplying tea, coffee, drinks and sandwiches available all day. Full membership was included and all facilities were available for use which contained the Wanderers terrace restaurant, wonderful grounds and gardens, swimming pool and excellent dining room.

The huge Wanderers estate and the fine local shopping malls provided a very relaxed environment with no evidence of the problems

which dominate U.K. press reports on South Africa.

Local boy William Louw (- 1) beat Tony Moignan (- 1) Jersey CI in the final of the open singles (for the Riggall Gold Trophy). More information on the Festival is on the Nottingham E-mail: chrisbennett-croquet-SA-UK@yahoo.com

Our thanks to Chris and Esther for their enthusiasm and their organisation. Please do it again.

### Pendle Easter Handicap 2-5 April

Report by Ailsa Lines

It was with some trepidation that I contemplated entering this Easter tournament at Pendle. The fixture book stated that handicaps up to 24 could enter, and I had visions of pulling bisques for 3 hours whilst watching my opponents go round. However, having heard favourable reports from fellow club members, I decided to join them. Ah well, I thought, I'll let the high bisquers play in the snow and the rain. I could not have been more wrong. The sun shone and I discovered that the tournament, with 23 entries ranging from 1 1/2 to 24 handicap, was effectively split into two halves - one for the handicaps less than 10 and one for the higher handicaps.

The first day saw Sid Jones remove 5 balls from the lawn when he finished his game, and it was a little worrying that the players double banking took ten minutes to realise that red was missing! The next day, again glorious weather, saw two games go to two ball endings. The first was by accident, leaving Liz Fraser facing her first ever two ball end game. The third day ended with a very enjoyable tournament dinner at the Pendle Inn.



John Oxley & Jeanne Ackerman, the winner and runner-up in the Rainbow Trophy handicap singles.

The final day saw the defending champion mistakenly go for the wrong ball - pity about those tinted sunglasses making the white ball appear yellow!

As for the progress of the games, David Walters, David Pollitt and Philip Tidswell were performing well, but Philip proved the eventual winner - not losing a single game, which was pretty good for a 3 1/2 in a 4 day handicap event. Denise Hoyle and Brian Medley were battling for the wooden spoon. However, Brian avoided this honour after finally gaining his first win with his last game and obtaining his bronze award. Jamie Burch was going for the record number of games played - 13 in all and was awarded a special trophy. In conclusion, everyone had a thoroughly enjoyable four days, with excellent hospitality from the Pendle Club.

### Surbiton Handicap 2nd-3rd April

Report by Kevin Carter

"I can't be; you're joking". "No, Liz, you are playing the world champion in the first round". "Well, that's something I can tell my grandchildren". And so began the Surbiton



# STOP PRESS.....

## Public Relations and Croquet: How to get the best media coverage for your club

*Journalists throw away 97 per cent of the press releases they receive straight in the bin. Why?*

**Find out at the Croquet Association's 'Public Relations and Croquet' seminar.**

In a mixture of lectures and practical workshops, this day-long seminar will equip any croquet club with the necessary tools to gain that essential positive press coverage, time and time again. The seminar will also help clubs plan their PR activity for the year 2000.

Led by Elizabeth Williams, the seminar will not only provide the basic framework for understanding what good public relations can do for a croquet club, but also practical advice and workshops to provide the delegate with the skill to write good, effective press releases.

10 - 10.30am Arrival and Coffee  
10.30 Public Relations: Defining public relations and applying it to croquet

This opening talk will cover public relations in its widest sense and apply it to croquet clubs. What are the objectives of your club? The talk will show delegates how PR can help achieve these objectives and identify who to target as part of the PR strategy: councillors, MPs, the local media, and council sports departments. Helpful hints and tips on how to plan a year-round PR strategy, will be given.

11.00 How do the press know about events? How to approach your local newspaper.

We cover diary markers, what they are and how they are used. We will then introduce the press release, its structure and style. This will be

## Dyffryn on the ball

Dyffryn Croquet Club near Cardiff will stage its first One-Ball Competition on 7/8 August 1999, with £1000 total prize money on offer.

The competition, devised by club members, is designed to attract top players, many of whom will not have played at the Club before.

Chris Williams, Secretary of the Dyffryn Croquet Club said: "We decided to hold a one-ball competition as the club only has two lawns, and this would be a way to hold an event with a large and varied entry.

"We have already had considerable interest and we hope that it will prove to be popular," he added.

One Ball Competitions have increased in popularity over recent years, as shown by the interest in the Winchester One-Ball Championship and a further attraction is that this type of competition offers plenty of games over a weekend.

Dyffryn Croquet Club regularly hosts the Welsh Croquet Championships, which is only open to Welsh qualified players.

The One-Ball Championship, which has an entry fee of £10, is open to anyone, and those interested should contact Chris Williams, Dyffryn Club Secretary, 12 Earl Cunningham Court, Schooner Way, CARDIFF, CF10 4DX or by email: [chris@butedock.demon.co.uk](mailto:chris@butedock.demon.co.uk).

Further details will be given in the next issue of the Gazette.

followed by a practical guide to writing press releases and the top ten mistakes will be highlighted.

12.00 How to get TV and radio coverage.  
Can you TV along to your club? We will explore realistic possibilities and guidelines will be given for looking after TV crews trying to film croquet - few know the rules of the game!

1.00 Lunch

2.00 Workshop One - Diary Markers

Practical session on writing Diary Markers - We compare results!

2.45 Workshop Two - Press Releases

Practical session on writing Press releases: each group will have a different one to write.

3.45 Round-Up Session and Questions

4 - 4.15 Finish

The seminar will be given by Elizabeth Williams, professionally known as Elizabeth Larsson. An associate member of the Institute of Public Relations, Liz works for the largest PR consultancy in Wales. A specialist in crisis management, Liz has dealt with aircraft crashes, fraud investigations, and environmental incidents. Liz's clients include banks and heavy industries. She carries out all PR for Dyffryn Croquet Club and the Welsh Croquet Association.

## Application Form

### One Day Publicity Seminar for Croquet Clubs

A One-day seminar aimed at Croquet Club Publicity Officers will be held at the Royal Leamington Spa Bowling Club, Bartree Road (off Adelaide Road) Victoria Park, Royal Leamington Spa, on Sunday 24 October 1999. (For details, see article)

Cost: £25 for the first delegate or £40 for two.

Price to include morning and afternoon tea, lunch and seminar notes.

Please fill in the form and return it to The Croquet Association, c/o The Hurlingham Club, Ranelagh Gardens, LONDON, SW6 3PR

Name:.....

Club:.....

Address:.....

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Postcode:.....

Second delegate's name:.....

To reserve your place, please send a non-refundable deposit of £5 per head, with the balance to be paid by the 1 October 1999. Alternatively, the full cost can be paid when booking. Cheques should be made payable to The Croquet Association.