

The Croquet Gazette

Issue 271 ~ January 2001

CYRIL J. MILLER,
the AUSTRALIAN
TEST MATCH TEAM
Captain,
who won the
ROEHAMPTON
CHALLENGE
CUP.



E. M. HUNT,
of the
AUSTRALIAN
TEST MATCH
TEAM.



Inset:
state of Ball after



being hit by the
above player.

Below.
J. C. WINDSOR
who has represented
AUSTRALIA in TEST
MATCHES for years.



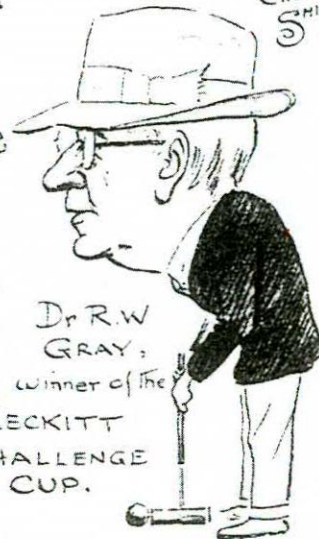
Miss A. B.
MORRISON
of the
AUSTRALIAN
Test Match
Team

LT. COLONEL
C B
GRICE HUTCHINSON
D.S.O.,
Winner of the
GILBEY CUP.

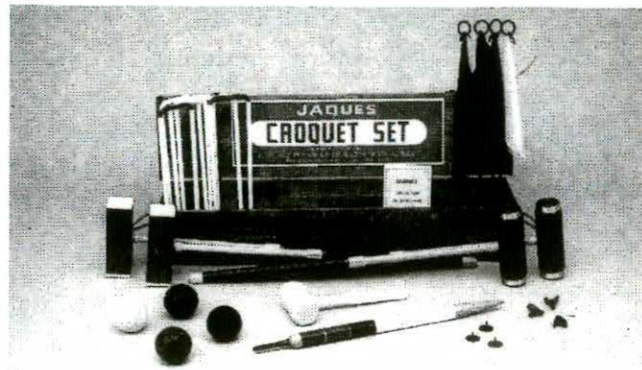


THE
CHALLENGE
&
GILBEY
CUPS
1937.

Dr R. W.
GRAY,
winner of the
RECKITT
CHALLENGE
CUP.



K.F.
ROWTHEN
SMITH
37



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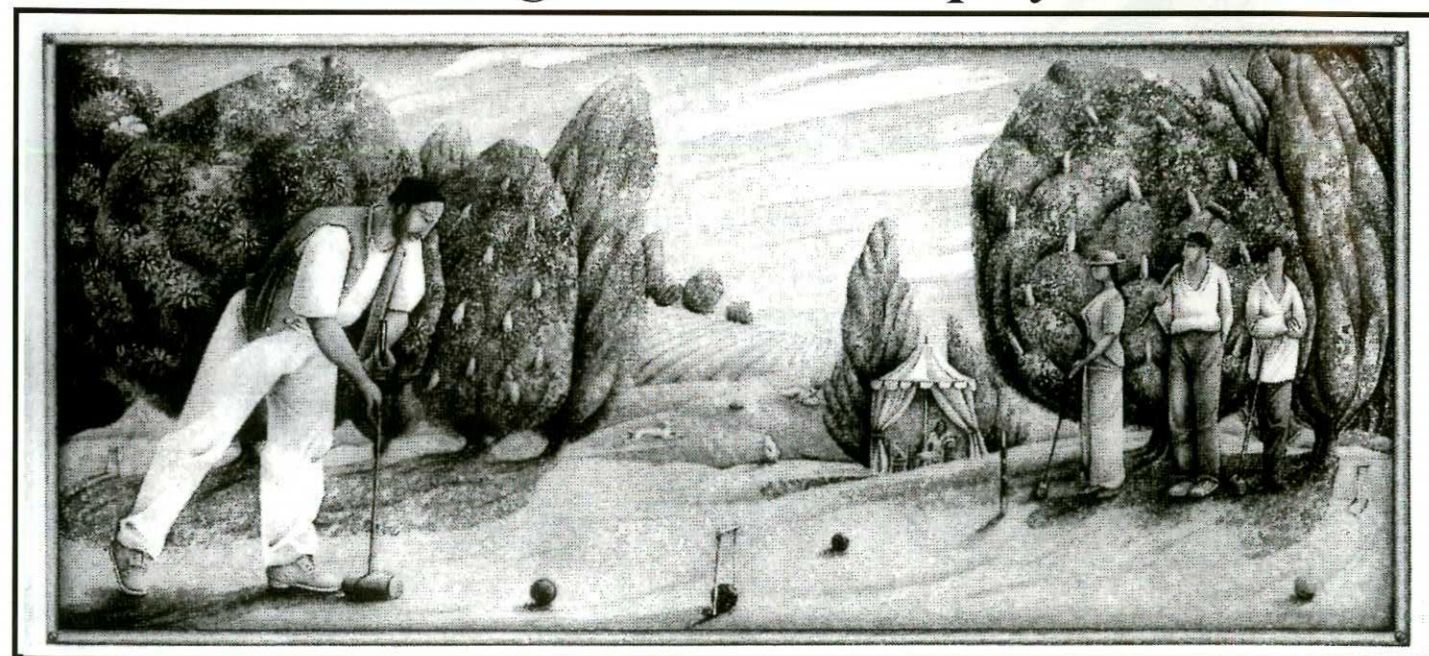


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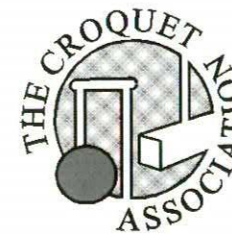
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Specific questions or queries should be sent direct to the relevant CA official, e.g. Laws questions to the chairman of the Laws Committee.

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Photographs are always required. Both black and white or colour prints can be used. Slides are no longer accepted. Photocopies of pictures cannot be used. If using digital photography please send me a jpeg or tif format file. Prints of digital photos cannot be scanned. 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 tournament return sheet.

Tournament reports should be written and sent to the editor within FOURTEEN DAYS of the completion of a tournament. Failure to comply with this guideline will result in reports failing to be published. Hand written reports are no longer be accepted.

Delivery Queries

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Front Cover: The illustration from the supplement to the *Croquet Gazette*, 27 August 1937, used to illustrate the history of the Challenge and Gilbey by Alan Oldham

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Disclaimer

The opinion 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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CHAIRMAN'S COLUMN

So another season ends. By the time you read this we will once again be in the depths of winter and longing for the new season. As I write this however, the season has only finished a few weeks ago and the AGM has not long passed by.



It was at the AGM that I learned of the terrible news about Hunstanton. The destruction of any clubhouse is bad but I have personal fond memories. I first started serious croquet when I moved to Ipswich in the late 70's. My first tournament was, naturally at Ipswich club where the redoubtable ladies Edith and Nan Zinn showed me croquet tactics. It was only later that I found out that these tactics were virtually Aunt Emma! However, I progressed, along with two young lads by the names of John Walters and Mark Avery. Soon I was travelling further afield to places like Colchester with its superfast lawns, and Hunstanton.

I still have a cutting sent to me by Sarah Hampson recording the fact that I won a handicap event on my birthday. I have many other memories too. Richard Hilditch partnering "The Professor" who always wanted to peel his partner; being sextupled by Keith Aiton; Playing in a one-ball decider against Richard again - I had never played one-ball before and Richard kindly showed me the rules, which I repaid by using my bisques to beat him!; playing with snow streaking horizontally across the court. Come on Hunstanton, rise like a Phoenix from the ashes.

My son, ever the web surfer sent me two addresses he thought would interest me. One is an advert for my "Teach yourself Croquet" and the other a weird one from Italy warning everyone to beware of the "Night Gaunt" So you have been warned. For inveterate surfers, the addresses are:-

http://www.nightgaunt.org/gaunt_e.htm
<http://www.opengroup.com/srbooks/034/0340565284.shtml>

I said earlier that the season was over, but of course many clubs now run winter leagues. Two of the clubs I belong to, Cheltenham and Jersey do so. It occurs to me that maybe those clubs who run winter events could publicise them and allow those less fortunate to play - perhaps a "Winter Fixtures" published in the Gazette?

On a happier note regarding communication, I was pleased to hear that Budleigh Salterton have started up a newsletter. Good fortune to them.

Tailnote - written in December. Faith & I have just got back from Spain, which is why the above part of this was written much earlier. Although sunnier and drier in Spain, everywhere seems to have suffered with the weather. All the way through France there were floods and trees down and even the stream outside our apartment in Mojacar which is normally dry as a bone, had water flowing in it. Let us hope that things improve or we are in for a soggy season! Don.

EDITORIAL

I always like to start the New Year by taking stock of the old year and planning for the new. Accordingly, fingers crossed, a new editor will be taking over the challenge of producing the Gazette. I will shortly be entering my sixth year at the keyboard and I don't want to enter the seventh - my original idea was two years maximum. I know there are lots of people out there who have just been biding their time, waiting for fate to hand them an opportunity such as this. If you would like to know more please get in touch with Bruce Rannie.

We have much to look forward to this year with lots of new events happening all over the country. A good summer with lots of sunshine would, I am sure, be much appreciated to enjoy these and other events to the full. Without doubt the highpoint of the year should be the World Championships to be held in London during July. It has been some time since the top players from around the world have gathered in this country and I am sure the event will be well supported by those hungry to improve their own game.

Gail Curry

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NEWS & INFORMATION

WCF World Singles and CA Open Championships

Dates: 29th June - 8th July
 Event Director: David Openshaw
 WCF Organiser: Colin Irwin
 Manager: Richard Hilditch
 Referee of the Tournament: Ian Vincent

The WCF World Championship and British Open Singles will be played as one event. A maximum of 80 entries will be accepted. Players will be drawn into one of 8 all play all Blocks. The top four from each block will be drawn into a 32 player best of 3 knockout to decide the winner.

40 places in Singles will be allocated to players nominated by the WCF. The CA has decided that 32 of its places will be allocated, in order of CGS grade (with a minimum of 1800), to entrants who have competed in a C.A. Fixture during the past two years. The further 8 places will be allocated to players nominated by the C.A. Organising Committee (players wishing to be considered for nomination for these eight places should inform the CA secretary). Entries close on 31 March.

For the Block stage of Singles, players will be drawn so as to give blocks with similar distributions of CGS grade and to minimise the chances of players from the same country being in the same block. The eight highest graded players as at the closing date to finish in the top two positions of their block will be seeded in the Knock-Out stage.

Entry Fees will be as follows WCF and British Open Singles: 50 pounds and British Open Doubles: 10 pounds per player. This will include entry to the players barbecue on Sunday 1 July.

World Championships Bulletin - Help required

If any associate in the London area would like to provide accommodation for an overseas competitor in the world championship in July would they please contact Phil Cordingley on 020 7609 3040 or email phil.cordingley@virgin.net

If any associate would like to help with the organisation of the event for example putting together a players information pack, producing a programme for the event, producing some new scoreboards, helping to organise social events and many other activities then please contact David Openshaw on 01494 680321 or by email david@open123.demon.co.uk

Laws seminars arranged

The following seminars have been arranged to

introduce the new laws: they are expected to last about two hours (though that may depend on the number and difficulty of any questions!). Although primarily intended for existing referees, other players with an interest in the laws are welcome to attend if space is available.

Please contact the CA office if you wish to come to one of these, indicating your preference(s). The host clubs for those asterisked hope to provide lunch afterwards, in other cases those attending may wish to continue discussion in a local hostelry.

- Bowdon CC: Saturday 3 February, 10:30am
- Bury St Edmunds, Black Boy: Saturday 27 January, 10:30am
- Cheltenham CC: Saturday 10 February, 10:30am
- East Dorset LT&CC*: Sunday 25 February, 10:30am
- Nottingham, Cripps Computing Centre: Saturday 24 February, 10:30am
- Surbiton CC*: Sunday 21 January, 10:00am
- Sussex County CC: Saturday 10 February, 10:30am

*to be confirmed
 It is hoped to arrange additional seminars for the North-East/Scotland and Ireland.

Changes to Tournament Regulations

A new set of Tournament Regulations are in force for the 2001 season, which are published in the new "Calendar Fixtures and Tournament Regulations" book, to give it its full title. Previously, the Tournament Regulations were published in the Laws book, but now only those required for refereeing are printed there.

Historically, the Tournament Regulations have been difficult to change, partly because amendments require approval by the full Council, but also for the practical reason that the Laws Book is rarely reprinted (and having just gone through the process, I now see why!). As a result, a set of General Conditions, published in the Fixtures Book, grew up to supplement, or in some cases, override them. This somewhat untidy situation has now been resolved by incorporating the changes back into the Regulations.

The other changes have either arisen from recommendations of the Disciplinary Working Party which reported to the Management Committee last year, or are attempts to bring the regulations more into line with current practice, reflecting social and technological changes over recent years. Thus, for example, last minute telephone or e-mail entries are now permitted: previously, an entry could only be accepted if the entry fee was paid prior to the date of the draw. Some specific provision for Golf Croquet

events has also been made.

The enumeration of the new Regulations may seem somewhat obscure at first sight, so a word of explanation is in order. They are divided into Sections, each identified by the initial (capital) letter of its title. The regulations within each section numbered from 1 upwards. Clauses and sub-clauses within regulations are identified by lower case letters and digits respectively, thus P3(a)(2) refers to the second sub-clause of the first clause of the third regulation in section P, Players. Those familiar with the Laws (either old or new) will recognise all but the initial letter of this scheme. The reason for choosing it was to minimise the amount of renumbering of cross-references that would be required if regulations were subsequently inserted or deleted, and to allow the refereeing regulations to be printed in the laws book before the others were finalised.

If it is any help, the sections are ordered so that those most relevant to players come first, followed by those needed by tournament officials and finally by those that apply to clubs or other tournament organisers.

The main changes of substance (compared with the combined effect of the previous regulations and conditions) are:

Players:

- Prize limit raised from 2,000 to 5,000 pounds per annum.
- Gambling now regulated
- Misconduct to be reported to CA Secretary
- Entries may be accepted without fee being paid.
- Disqualification for playing off wrong handicap no longer mandatory

Managers:

- New duty to keep players and spectators informed
- Disqualification for lateness or practising no longer mandatory

Formats:

- American blocks no longer to be decided on net points by default
- Progressive and Flexible Swiss and Egyptian formats defined.

Clubs:

- Reason for refusal of an entry must be given on request.
- Electronic reporting of results permitted.

Appendices:

- New conditions for Championships and Event Titles.
- Hoop setting regulations changed in light of comments received.

Looking ahead, it has been suggested that the regulation governing American Blocks should be enhanced to deal with the case of unfinished ones and that the terms "Opening" and "Closing" dates should be changed to avoid

Continued on page 10

VISIT
 THE CROQUET
 ASSOCIATION
 WEB SITE @
<http://www.croquet.org.uk/>

Letters...



Refurbishing hoops

Dear Editor

Well, here we are at the end of the 2000 season which opened with our Big Issue - the best way, value-for-money, to re-furbish hoops; powder-paint or spray paint? After careful examination and comparison of our 24 older, spray-painted hoops with our 6 new powder-coated hoops, the answer is - we are not sure. Both types have stood up much better than previously to the seasonal bashing of balls through hoop wires and much hammering of the crowns on top and underneath.

If we had to agree a national protocol (specification) here and now, then I would submit the following. It includes the essential points from the comments which I received after my original letter. (I offer my belated but sincere thanks to all, especially Mike Galindo). Much depends on the treatment process prior to painting and very little, it seems, on the type of top-coat. The condition of the hoops when presented for re-furbishing is obviously critical - old, battered hoops eventually come to a stage when they are not worth spending more money on (like me, come to think of it). A minimum of three quotations should be obtained from local metal-finishing companies, each quote being based on exactly the same specification:-

1. Check and straighten each wire using a jig etc. (Cast iron hoops may succumb to this treatment).
2. Thoroughly clean off all the old paint and any rust by blasting. This may be soda, sand, grit, shot or bead-blasting or a combination or succession of these types, depending on the condition of the hoops. The resulting surface should be finer rather than coarser.
3. 'Plate' the bare metal with zinc by a hot chemical process or by spraying with a zinc-rich primer. (This provides a porous and flexible foundation for the subsequent paint layers).
4. Immediately after 'plating', apply a yellow, acid-etch primer coat, preferably a two-component pack. (Subsequent coats of paint will not adhere to the zinc without the acid etch).
5. Apply the white finishing coats. This may be either sprayed or powder-coated (subject to the quotes received). If powder-coating, it should be the polyester type or acrylic type, NOT epoxy type because that has less resistance to UV light. East Dorset has no clear preference between spray paint or powder-coating because our comparisons were not strictly like with like (i.e. the powder-coated hoops were brand new

whereas the spray-painted hoops were much older and had had considerably more wear).

R. Sharman.

Time for change?

Dear Editor

The AGM of the Croquet Association is always held in the South-East of the country i.e. Hurlingham. It could be held on a rotational bases in Bristol, Nottingham, Manchester / Leeds and Hurlingham. This would enable more members to attend and get a better feeling for the workings of Council, also giving them the opportunity to ask questions. New ideas to improve our sport and attract new participants would surely emerge by doing this.

John Haslam

Selfish editorial?

Dear Editor

Reading your Editorial in the November edition of the Croquet Gazette, I find the fact that you brand "the majority of croquet players" "very selfish people" quite offensive. Your column is no place to pontificate on people's behaviour, particularly when linked with the inspiring example of those receiving the CA Diplomas 2000.

In my experience, there will always be "Staff and Line". The attitude you are getting at is certainly not confined to 'Croquet' and it could be better than having too many "Chiefs"! With leadership by people such as the Award Winners there will always be active club members; one is certainly not going to encourage support with twenty five lines of nagging!

Ian Birdseye.

I have had two responses to my editorial in the November issue. One printed above, the other was made personally to me by a lady who had decided to offer her services as secretary to the club - isn't it strange how different people react to the same words. Ed.

Accommodating disability

Dear Editor

My best wishes to Blewbury CC for including the disabled in their lottery application. Having watched the Paralympics on television, the range of different wheelchairs seems endless.

Croquet players obviously wouldn't use the same type of chair as are used for sprinting events. Chairs with wide tyres would seem more

suitable to croquet lawns. Low sided vehicles would be another necessity.

The artificial limbs made nowadays are very different to that which that Sir Godfrey Style would have used. It would not be difficult to adapt a device for a one armed croquet player.

Blind people could play croquet doubles. The partner, sighted, could inform the blind player where the hoop was - 1 o'clock, 4.15 etc, and the weight of the shot. Deaf people can play croquet but there are a few snags. Double banking is tricky, and also at clubs where there is a chance of a lot of noise, such as the trains passing at Southwick.

Miriam Reader

Dear Editor

I am only too well aware that you do not like verse. However I note that you printed some in July, so perhaps you will take pity on an 80 year old by printing the enclosed.

R.S. Eades

I do not dislike verse, I just enjoy being blackmailed by 80 year olds. Ed.

Henley 2000

I'm eighty now and time is running short For sprightly games upon the croquet court. The active years that blazed the summer through Are autumn now: yet whilst the beaded dew Still shows the early morning shots that go astray With escalating handicap I'll try To make a further hoop or two.

The old warm up chestnut

Dear Editor

Is it not about time we totally demolished all these false ideas and folklore about practising before a game of croquet. There are many club members who ardently believe that there are laws that prohibit practice before the start of any game and particularly on the lawn on which the game will be played. In fact the only written reference to practising is in the Tournament Regulations which allows a Manager to disqualify a player who practises without the Manager's permission; a very necessary rule to allow a Manager to control the use of the lawns.

I am sure the vast majority of tournament players would take issue with anyone who claims that our game is not a sport, then for heaven's sake let's start treating it as such. Nobody will deny that to play good competitive croquet, the

body must be relaxed and warm to ensure that strokes are smooth and true. This is particularly important to those of us who are passed the first flush of youth. It is ludicrous to suggest that a player can sit in a car for over two hours before an away match and then his first contact between ball and mallet is for real. In the more advanced games it is often the first few shots that decide the outcome of the game.

I have heard the various arguments from the opponents of practice about advantages gained from gauging the speed of the lawn during practice but I would totally reject these. Any player worth his salt will judge the general speed of the lawn when he puts his first ball on. However these same opponents of practice forget about the very distinct advantage a home player has from playing on the same lawns previously. I would therefore suggest that by allowing players a short warm up period before a game, a lot of inequalities of a game would actually be removed. At the recent World Golf Croquet Championships in Egypt, a 5/10 minute warm up period was allowed before the start of each and every game.

So clubs, when you have a home fixture, why not offer everyone a short warm up period before you start to play and tournament managers, why not schedule the first 10 minutes of a day for warm-up: you may find games are over that much quicker and you save time overall.

Bill Arliss

~ OBITUARIES ~

Air Commodore Jeaffreson Greswell C.B.C.B.E. D.S.O. D.F.C November 2000

The Parkstone and Burley Croquet Clubs have lost a real gentleman who greatly enjoyed his croquet during a long and happy retirement from the Royal Air Force. Playing off handicap 4, he was a long standing Parkstone member and Chairman of Burley. Affectionately known as "Jeaff" his quiet manner and charm belied a brave

and distinguished career in the R.A.F.

He spent much of the second world war with Coastal Command, and was the first pilot to use the Leigh Light, a powerful airborne high intensity torch which directly illuminated enemy U-boats on the surface at night. Jeaff flew in numerous operations during the Battle of the Atlantic (1942-4) when U-boats were strangling Britain's lifeblood and supplies, and he played a major role in the development and use of the light designed by his colleague Wg. Cdr. Humphrey de Vere (Sammy) Leigh. Historians believe that the Leigh Light equipped the Wellington crews of Coastal Command, played a vital role in the Turning of the Tide and the outcome of the war. Over 40% of these crews perished, and whilst acknowledging how fortunate he had been to survive he campaigned to the end of his days for true recognition of the bravery and skill of the Wellington crews of Coastal Command.

To listen, as a mouse in the wall, when Jeaff would sit beside the croquet lawn at Parkstone, together with Wg. Cdr Allen, and at times my cousin William Paterson "rolling back the hangar doors" was truly a humbling and unforgettable experience.

Jeaff would then step on the court allowing for a tail wind and produce a near perfect take-off, then for his gently stroked 4 yarder, allowing for a side wind and the curvature of the earth, he would hit his target.

He was a devoted family man, and is survived by Gwyn his wife and companion for over 60 years, and two of their three daughters.

We remember you Jeaff, one of a rare breed, a gallant officer and a true gentleman.
Lillian Ormerod

James Gordon Young (1904-2000)

Members of croquet teams who have played matches against Phyllis Court will be sorry to learn of the death of James Young who regularly represented his club. James was Honorary President of the Croquet Section and his remarkable skill at the game, even in his mid-nineties, won the admiration of both Phyllis Court members and those of visiting teams.

James maintained a handicap of 7, which is believed to be something of a record in the annals of the game for a 96 year-old. Although he first

learnt to play croquet as a boy before the First World War it was not until he retired to Henley some 20 years ago that he began to play seriously. His handicap soon came down to single figures and his name appears on many of the Phyllis Court trophies. Only last year he and his partner won the Handicap Doubles Trophy. James also helped with coaching.

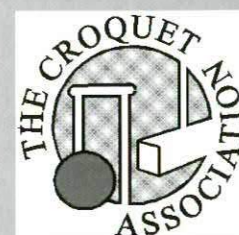
His success at croquet and incidentally at snooker too in the winter may be explained by his lifelong love of sports. He first learnt to sail and row as a naval cadet at Dartmouth. At Trinity College, Oxford, he represented his college at rowing and tennis. In the holidays in Scotland he became a crack shot and keen fisherman. Subsequently, in the Sudan he played polo and came second in the Sudan Grand National. Then, as an insurance broker at Lloyds, he played golf and was a member of the Roehampton and Temple golf clubs, where he won the Victory Challenge Cup in 1924.

During the war, James served with the Royal Navy, mainly in the Mediterranean where he met his wife-to-be, Mo, who was touring Italy with ENSA. They were married in 1947 and set up home in London. Their son Nick was born in 1949 and their daughter Sarah in 1953.

Squash and alpine skiing became favourite family sports. A yacht was acquired and based at Lyminster. James sailed it all around the south and west coasts and even up the Thames to Henley Regatta. The Regatta had always been a family fixture where James was a member of the Stewards for over 50 years. A trophy was presented to Henley Royal Regatta in memory of his son who had sadly died in 1981 following a motor accident. In later life James also took up curling.

James had an exceptionally good eye for a ball and a strategic mind. As a result he maintained his croquet handicap of 7 right up to this year and was often hard to beat. James understandably could not be bothered with handicap cards and each year the handicap committee felt his handicap ought to be reduced but did not have the heart to do so. James died on 21 August following a short illness.

Brian Bucknall (Chairman - Phyllis Court Croquet Section)



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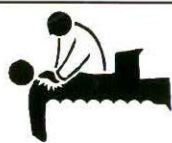
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SPORTS INJURIES FOR CROQUET PLAYERS

By Bob Burnett, Dip RGRT, MSCP,
SRP Chartered Physiotherapist



Bob Burnett is a Chartered physiotherapist who has specialised in sports injuries at his Private Practice in Southport for the past 20 years. He has been playing Croquet for three and a half years, is currently handicap 3.5, a Grade one coach and an assistant referee.

In this series of articles he will be outlining the most common injuries affecting croquet players, their management and treatment. They are not written for medics and do not contain a lot of detail. Their purpose is to give the non-medical player an insight into what may be wrong and the course of action to be taken. It must be remembered however that if diagnosis is unsure or if symptoms persist a medical opinion should be sought.

4. MUSCLE INJURIES

Pathology

Muscles control almost all the body's movements. To give us a better understanding of how they injure we must first understand how they work.

A typical muscle has tendons at each end which are connected to the bone. The bones have a joint in the middle that moves when the muscle contracts.

The muscle pulls both ends in towards the middle. If movement is only wanted at one end, different muscles have to hold or "fix" the bone at the opposite end. Muscles can only contract or "pull", they cannot "push". If we disregard the effects of gravity for the moment, for the joint to return to its original position another muscle, which performs the exact opposite movement of the first, has to pull it back again. For a simple, one directional, action to take place a muscle has to contract, another has to relax and another has to fix. A further complication is that muscles do not work alone they work in groups. There are four muscles in the *Quadriceps* group on the front of the thigh, for example, this group of muscles straightens your knee.

The muscles that do the pulling and cause the movement are called the *Prime Movers*, the opposite group that simultaneously relax are called the *Antagonists* and those that fix one end of the *Prime Movers* are called *Fixators*. There is also a fourth set of muscles involved in this group action, they are called *Synergists*. They position the various moving parts to allow the *Prime Movers* to work in the most efficient manner. A good example of this is to clench your fist tight. You will see that your wrist has moved back into extension, it is the *Synergists* that have positioned your wrist.

There are three different types of muscle contraction, *Concentric*, *Eccentric* and *Static*.

Concentric muscle work is where a muscle group shortens against resistance work, e.g. bending your elbow with a croquet ball in your hand. The *Prime Movers* that bend your elbow are shortening against the resistance (weight) of the ball.

Eccentric muscle work is where a muscle group lengthens against resistance, e.g. straightening your elbow with a croquet ball in your hand. The *Prime Movers* are "paying out" and lengthening against the effects

of gravity (resistance) that are pulling on the ball.

Static muscle work is where there is no change in the overall length of the muscle and a joint is held in one position.

When we perform any voluntary movement, for every joint that moves all four muscle groups are working in one of the three types of muscle work.

We have looked at how the muscles work in groups and how they co-ordinate together to produce movement at the joints. What we must do now is consider what happens within an individual muscle and see how it contracts to the length required.

Within each muscle are thousands of individual muscle fibres, each with its own blood and nerve supply. These fibres are arranged in long strips, bound together in bundles all lying parallel to each other and enclosed in an envelope of connective tissue. When a fibre receives a nerve impulse it contracts fully, it cannot shorten halfway, it is an all or nothing affair. The fibres that make up the strings are therefore of various lengths and because there are so many of them, whatever length the string needs to be overall there is some combination of fibres that when contracted fully will produce the required length. If the string needs to lengthen, some fibres switch off and some slightly longer ones switch on. If it needs to shorten some switch off and some slightly shorter ones switch on.

You can see from this that the contraction of a muscle is a highly complicated affair. Add to this the complexity of the group actions discussed earlier and it is a miracle that they get it wrong and injure themselves as infrequently as they do.

Muscles do injure themselves, they try to contract when there are no forces opposing them that they cannot control. This results in tears of the fibres and the connective tissue, and produces bleeding and inflammation within the muscle. The causes may be sudden body movements, for example whiplash in the muscles around the neck and shoulders, tiredness due to prolonged activity to which the muscle is not accustomed causing unco-ordinated contractions either within the muscle itself or between groups, or simply asking the muscle to perform some work before it has been stretched and warmed up.

Tears, sprains, pulls, strains, tweaks are all terms heard in relation to muscle injuries. They all mean the same thing in various degrees of severity. Each one's place in the hierarchy is highly subjective and I will not attempt to put them in order.

Treatment

Treatment can be divided into three phases.

Phase one. 0 - 36 hours post injury

This is the acute inflammatory stage where the blood vessels that have been ruptured are spilling blood into the muscle. Tissue fluid is seeping between the fibres and bundles of muscle tissue, and laying down problems for the future. This is the critical period and what happens during the first quarter of this phase will effect the recovery time and eventual outcome more than any other phase of treatment. The aim of the treatment is to limit the amount of bleeding and inflammation. An

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easy way to do this is to remember the word **RICE**, this stands for **Rest**, **Ice**, **Compression**, **Elevation**.

Rest - keep the muscle still. Contractions of the muscle will pump more blood from the ruptured vessels and hinder recovery.

Ice - cold compress, ice packs, freeze sprays, etc. will cause the blood vessels to constrict and limit the amount of bleeding. Limit the ice to about 15 mins per application, allow 10 minutes between applications and do not apply ice cubes directly onto the skin, use something to form a barrier to prevent an ice burn.

Compression - strap the injured muscle with a crepe or elastic bandage. By applying external compression you are countering the internal forces trying to swell the injury.

Elevation - lift the injury higher than your heart. Use gravity to hinder the blood flow to the muscle rather than help it. If the injury is in your leg, lie down and put your foot up.

Phase two. 36 - 72 hours

The bleeding has now stopped but will start again if the range of movement is too great or contractions are too strong. Gently move the joint that the injured muscle controls, (there should be no resistance applied to this action). If it is a weight bearing muscle, i.e. calf, thigh etc. perform the movements sitting or lying down. Increase the range and strength of contraction as comfort allows. The muscle will feel stiff and sore but you should not move it to the point where you feel a sharp pain.

Phase three. 72 - ? 3weeks

If everything has gone according to plan, this is the stage where you will gradually increase your level of activity until you are fully recovered. There are four things to bear in mind during this phase. Range of movement, strength of contraction, speed of contraction and duration of activity. Each one of these should be gradually progressed daily until normal function has been achieved. Keep the progressions small and even, don't be tempted to move too fast. If each days exercise is only slightly harder than the previous ones you will not do any damage. Don't move in gigantic leaps, jogging around the block one day and running a marathon the next is not the way to do it.

Next issue - Joints

Publications available from the CA Shop

Know the Game £4.95

Croquet - The Skills of the Game by Bill Lamb £10

Croquet by John Solomon £9

Plus One On Time by Don Gaunt £10

Expert Croquet Tactics by Keith Wylie £14

Croquet Management by Gaunt & Wheeler £11.50

Croquet Coaching Manual £11.50

The Principles of Handicapping by Bill Lamb £2.50

Challenge & Gilbey book by Alan Oldham £3

Tissot 'Croquet Girl' all purpose cards, 8 inc. envelopes £4.50

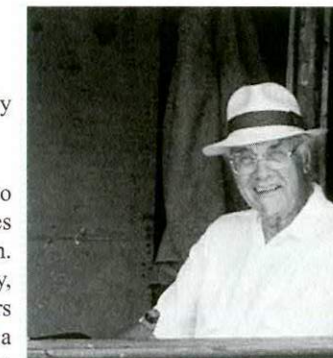
All prices include P&P to UK addresses

READING MATTERS

The Challenge & Gilbey Tournament: A Short History

by Alan Oldham

16 pp, illustrated, published privately
Reviewed by David Drazin



As we may sometimes try to convince ourselves, shares can go up as well as down. And so with the Challenge & Gilbey, which has languished in recent years but must surely have potential as a recovery stock. In this slim booklet Alan chronicles its wonderfully convoluted history in lucid detail and prays for a tonic to restore its youthful vigour.

It is timely in the centenary year of this honoured event to reflect on its chequered history. Shortly after its foundation in 1900 by the Sheen House Club, the first home of the CA, it was adopted by the Association and soon came to be targeted at rising stars. So true was the aim of the tournament committee that over the years it attracted entries from such luminaries as Lord Tollemache, DD Steel, Humphrey Hicks, John Solomon, and Pat Cotter. But, whether because of or in spite of a series of experiments and changes of format, or perhaps because of some early want of parental bonding or the disposal of some of the original trophies, it seems to have lost its way. At its height in 1923 it attracted 265 entries. In recent years it has come to be regarded as just another twin handicap event.

Next year the tournament will be held at Budleigh Salterton from 30 August to 2 September, the weekend after the August bank holiday. Let us join with Alan in the hope that between now and then the powers that be will hit on a winning formula. Could they, perhaps, heed our President's advocacy of the 14-point game? More games, less sitting-out time, and the challenge of bringing home a lovely piece of silverware.

Copies of Alan's history, complete with photographs of the trophies and other illustrations, may be obtained from the CA office, price £3.00 including inland postage, proceeds to the CA. Order now while stocks last.

A Fun Way to Learn to Play Croquet - A Self Help Guide for New Players

Compiled by John Prince

Published and distributed by Gillian Dixon, 24pp.

Reviewed by Graham Beale

International croquet legend John Prince and croquet enthusiast Gillian Dixon have combined to produce a publication aimed specifically at the needs of players new to the game of croquet.

This booklet introduces the basics of croquet with simplicity and steps the novice through the full range of croquet shots by combining clear and concise description with photographic images of many of today's leading players. The booklet has an international flavour, including players from all around the world.

The authors have devised a logical sequence of skills for the beginner, from 'Starting with Style' (obviously John Prince!) through to the more difficult croquet shots. Also included are some options for fun games

such as 'Scarborough' that allow the reader to not only develop skills in isolation but also to utilise these directly within a game situation.

John Prince has also enhanced the booklet by including diagrams to clarify points made within the text.

The booklet is written in a straight forward manner by an author who has spent many years at the top of international croquet. I recommend this as an excellent publication both for the individual player or as a resource for coaches looking to develop programmes for players new to croquet.

The cost per copy including postage to the U.K. is £6.00. Orders plus payments to Gillian Dixon, 84 Joy Street, Christchurch 6, New Zealand. For orders of 6 a further free copy is provided and for orders of 12, two free copies.

News & Information, continued from page 5

confusion. Please send any suggestions for these or other changes to Ian Vincent, but for the moment please note that the opening date is when entries are opened and any selection or ballot takes place (not when you should start to think about entering!); the closing date is a backstop until which entries will be accepted only if the event is undersubscribed.

CA NEWS

C. A. Grants.

Federation, Club Development and Schools Development Grants are available for the 2001 season.

Applications for grants will be considered by the Development Committee at their meeting on the 10th February 2001. For a decision to be made at that meeting applications should reach the C.A. Office by the 29th January. Applications received after the committee meeting will be considered if the budget allowance has not already been allocated. The applications are dealt with in order of receipt.

All applications should be prepared in conjunction with the appropriate Federation Development Officer.

Grants to clubs for development are limited to a maximum of 500pds. Loans for larger sums will be considered. In the past, the maximum grant given to support schools projects has been about 150pds, though a larger sum will be considered if the scale of the project justifies it. Four Kiwi Croquet type sets will be available for loan to clubs for schools initiatives, though two have already been spoken for.

Following the success of Croquet North in obtaining a grant for a mini-carpet, the C.A. owned mini-carpet used by Croquet North is available for transfer to another area. The mini-carpet has been used very successfully by some clubs. Any takers? A decision will be made at the Development Committee meeting on the 10th February.

A priority of the C.A. is the encouragement of clubs to develop their facilities and encourage young people to take up the sport. Grants to Federations are made to provide support to clubs and to help with the establishment of new clubs. As much money as possible is made available, and the last thing the C.A. wants is for the allocation not to be fully applied for.

NOW is the time to take action for the 2001 season.

Bill Sidebottom, Chariman Development Committee

The CA Web site

In a recent check with the CA database, it was found that nearly one

third of our members have now registered an email address with the CA office. If one considers that there are likely to be a number of members who have not updated their records as yet, then the total number will probably be quite a bit higher. Assuming that this trend is typical of the general public then we have in the web site, a very useful aid for spreading the word about croquet and we must ensure that all our information on the site is as up to date as possible.

At present I am undertaking a housekeeping exercise on the web site and have discovered that whilst a number of clubs decided to have their own individual pages on the site, they have not asked me to update the information. Several clubs originally asked for their subscription rates to be shown but they are still at 1999 rates so please let me know what is the latest information. A new feature that we are now including on the club listing, is a link to a street map web site that will rapidly bring up a map of the area or a local street map if requested. To make this work we do however need the postcode of your club and I regret nearly half of our registered clubs have not provided this information to the CA office.

I accept that some Club Secretaries may not have access to the Internet but I am sure that in most clubs you have members who will have access. Please ask them to check the site and email me at webmaster@croquet.org.uk with the changes you would like to make.

Whilst talking to several new users of the internet, I have heard of the difficulties some of you are having in finding the site. Generally this is because the viewer has been trying to find our site through a search engine by typing in the word 'croquet'. We are likely to appear with many thousand other entries. The best way is to use the FILE/FILE OPEN button and type in <http://www.croquet.org.uk> when requested. You will then be with us in a few seconds. It is also quite easy when you are looking at our site to add our site to your favourites and you will not even have to enter the correct address next time.

We are always keen to develop the site and would be pleased to hear your suggestions about further developments we might make.

Many of our members with internet connection hope to find the latest information about all croquet competitions and events available on the site. We cannot do this without your input of the information. Dave Kibble, our News Desk Editor, can only maintain an active site if you let him have your news promptly.

Bill Arliss, CA Site Web Master

Marketing and Publicity

Membership

The essential thing (have I said this before?) is "more club members". I was pleased that the Chairman devoted so much time in his report at the AGM to this vital topic.

Earlier last year I sent out a form to all CA affiliated clubs asking them how they did in terms of members in 2000. No fewer than 26 clubs completed the form and to all of them I say a heartfelt thank you for doing a very boring job.

Boring, but I believe, useful and indeed encouraging.

Results (for 26 clubs in total):-

Numbers at start of season	1,213	
New members recruited	239	+19.7%
Members lost	116	-9.6%
Net gain	123	+10.1%
Numbers at end of season	1,336	

6 clubs out of the 26 lost members, the worst being a net loss of 25%. Best result was Bowdon with a net gain of 21 members (+26%); the club now declares that its "membership is full". Budleigh also did well thanks to the mini carpet with 40 new members, 13 lost members for a net gain of 27 members at 25%.

An overall net gain of 10% is an excellent result. If replicated across all clubs we would have membership approaching 4,000. Even if true,

this figure must be put into context since total lawns are 320 which, at 25 members per lawn, gives us a total possible membership of 8,000 so go to it everybody, recruit more members.

Pensioner Publicity

For me the idea started with Ian Scott (thank you Ian). He wrote "I am a Guinness pensioner and receive their Pensioners' magazine. Many

CA members will be pensioners of companies running pensioner magazines and if we have good copy or photographs we could submit them for publication." Yes, indeed and Michael Hague has proved the point by having his article published in PENNANT, A 50,000 circulation retirement magazine published for retired service people.

So let's get cracking, we retired folk.

Tony Fathers, Marketing Committee.



4TH WORLD GOLF CROQUET CHAMPIONSHIP CAIRO: 19TH - 26TH OCTOBER, 2000

Salah Hassan Regains World Title. Stephen Mulliner mounts strong challenge, but Egyptians take first three places

Report & Photos by Chris Hudson

Salah Hassan emerged a worthy winner when the 4th World Golf Croquet Championship came to a conclusion last week at the Gezira Club in Cairo. The Egyptians again showed their superiority at this version of the game, placing five players in the top eight. Heading the challenge from other countries were England's Stephen Mulliner, who finished a creditable 4th at his first attempt, and two players from the United States, Sherif Abdelwahab, who came 6th, and Mik Mehas (7th).

This year's format comprised 8 preliminary blocks of 6 players. Those who came 2nd and 3rd in these blocks were then drawn into four qualifying blocks of four players, with the top two in each qualifying block joining the winners of the preliminary blocks in the top 16 knockout. The bottom two players in the qualifying blocks then joined the bottom three players in the preliminary blocks in the knockout for places 17 to 48.

Preliminary block winners were Khalid Younis (Egypt), World Champion on two previous occasions; Yasser Esmat (Egypt); Nahed Hassan (Egypt); Ivor Brand (England), who won his block match against this year's eventual Champion; Nader Al-Shanti (Palestine); Stephen Mulliner (England) who lost his block game to Marwa Mustafa, the young Egyptian Ladies' Champion, but took the block from her on points difference; and two losing finalists in previous championships - Walid Salah (Egypt) (1997), and Mik Mehas (USA) (1998).

Those who joined these eight players in the top 16 as a result of the qualifying blocks were the Egyptians Salah Hassan, Mohammad Anan, and Marwa Mustafa, who had beaten Stephen Mulliner in their block match; three players from the United States, Mohammad Kamal, and the two Abdelwahab brothers, Ihab and Sherif; Simon Williams, from Ireland; and Gianpietro Donati (Italy) who has a good record in these championships.

As in Cairo in 1997, Salah Hassan and Khalid Younis met in an early round in a match that was probably going to decide the championship. First match on court in the morning session, this was a very close encounter, with Salah winning by the narrowest of margins, +1, +1. Mik Mehas, still recovering from a motor accident earlier in the year, put up a good performance against Stephen Mulliner in the same round, eventually going out +4, +2. This round also saw a marvellous match between the



brute strength of Walid Salah and the delicate style of Marwa Mustafa, an encounter that Walid eventually won -4, +4, +4.

In the semi-finals, Yasser Esmat beat Walid Salah, and Salah Hassan put paid to Stephen Mulliner's challenge. When asked how he felt about it, Stephen had no excuses - "Salah was the better player".

The final started in front of a large audience, although a little smaller than the 700 present on the previous occasion - perhaps due to the fact the Nile Sport TV had three cameras covering the event live throughout the championship week. Scheduled as a "best-of-five", Salah only needed four games to take the title, running out the winner with a very competent performance +4, -2, +1, +3.

The closing ceremony and prize-giving included mementoes for all those who had taken part, and emphasised yet again the hard work put in by the Egyptian Croquet Association and its organising committee under their President Ahmed Hamroush. Videos were produced of the Opening and Closing ceremonies, and the final match.

It was a wonderful week, with all the players being accommodated in the Marriott Hotel, a few minutes walk from the Gezira Club. Side trips were organised to the Cairo Museum and the Pyramids, and the championship dinner on the final night was held on a boat cruising down the River Nile. In his speech at the closing ceremony, WCF President Tony Hall thanked the Gezira Club for their hospitality, and paid tribute to the hard work of the Egyptian CA in staging the championship - a tribute with which all players will concur.

RESULTS PRELIMINARY BLOCKS:

Block "1"

5 wins: Khalid Younis (Egypt) beat Derek Old (England) +4; Carl von Schmieder (Ireland) +4; Norman Eatough (Switzerland) +5; George Mabassa (South Africa) +4; and Khalil El-Haj (Palestine) +4. 4 wins: Khalil El-Haj beat Derek Old +2;

Carl von Schmieder +2; Norman Eatough +2; and George Mabassa +4. **3 wins:** Norman Eatough beat Derek Old +4; Carl von Schmieder +2; and George Mabassa +3; **2 wins:** Derek Old beat Carl von Schmieder +5; and George Mabassa +3. **1 win:** Carl von Schmieder beat George Mabassa +4. **0 wins:** George Mabassa.

Block "2"
5 wins: Yasser Esmat (Egypt) **4 wins:** Sherif Abdelwahab **3 wins:** Simon Williams **2 wins:** Richard Brand beat Don Reyland +1; and Said Abu Ramadan +7 (w.o.). **1 win:** Don Reyland beat Said Abu Ramadan +7 (w.o.). **0 wins:** Said Abu Ramadan (did not play).

Block "3"
5 wins: Nahed Hassan (Egypt) **3 wins:** John Moore (8 net points) **3 wins:** Victor Dladla (8 net points) **3 wins:** Ken Mason (6 net points) **1 win:** Yvonne Marrinan **0 wins:** Marion Hof.

Block "4"
4 wins: Ivor Brand (England) **4 wins:** Salah Hassan **2 wins:** Ihab Abdelwahab **2 wins:** Evan Newell (-3 net points) **2 wins:** Rana Al-Alami (-4 net points) **1 win:** Grahame Tomes.

Block "5"
4 wins: Nader Al-Shanti (Palestine) **4 wins:** Mohammad Kamal (USA) (14 net points) **3 wins:** Mohammad Anan **2 wins:** Chris Sheen **1 win:** Tony Falcon-Uff (-15 net points) **1 win:** Vernon Tomes (-22 net points)

Block "6"
5 wins: Walid Salah (Egypt) **4 wins:** Gianpietro Donati **2 wins:** Soha Akl (-6 net points) **2 wins:** Jamieson Walker (-8 net points) **1 win:** Bill Arliss (-8 net points) **1 win:** Jonathan Lamb (-13 net points).

Block "7"
5 wins: Mik Mehas **4 wins:** Hossam El Laban **3 wins:** Morgan Power **2 wins:** Tony Hall **1 win:** Meshack Mazibuko **0 wins:** Elda Cairoli.

Block "8"
4 wins: Stephen Mulliner (England) (14 net points) **4 wins:** Marwa Mustafa (Egypt) (8 net points) **3 wins:** Don Beck **2 wins:** Kevin Garrad **1 win:** Andrea Pravettoni (-4 net points) **1 win:** Grace Atalia (-16 net points).

QUALIFYING BLOCKS:

Block "A"
2 wins: Mohammad Kamal (8 net points) **2 wins:** Marwa Mustafa (4 net points) **1 win:** Norman Eatough (-6 net points) **1 win:** Soha Akl (-6 net points).

Block "B"
2 wins: Ihab Abdelwahab (8 net points). **2 wins:** Sherif Abdelwahab (3 net points). **2 wins:** Hossam El Laban (2 net points). **0 wins:** Victor Dladla.

Block "C"
3 wins: Mohammad Anan **2 wins:** Salah Hassan **1 win:** John Moore **0 wins:** Don Beck.

Block "D"
2 wins: Simon Williams (5 net points) **2 wins:** Gianpietro Donati (5 net points) **1 win:** Khalil El-Haj (-3 net points) **1 win:** Morgan Power (-7 net points)

PLACES 1-16:
 Marwa Mustafa (Egypt) beat Nahed Hassan (Egypt) +3, +2; Walid Salah (Egypt) beat Ihab Abdelwahab (USA) +2, +1; Sherif Abdelwahab (USA) beat Ivor Brand (England) +1, -1, +1; Yasser Esmat (Egypt) beat Mohammad Anan (Egypt) +3, +1; Stephen Mulliner (England) beat Mohammad Kamal (USA) +2, +3; Mik Mehas (USA) beat Simon Williams (Ireland) +3, +1; Khalid Younis (Egypt) beat Gianpietro Donati (Italy) +5, +7; Salah Hassan (Egypt) beat Nader Al-Shanti (Palestine) +3, +3.

The John Hobbs Mallet
 Stephen Mulliner won the Opens with his

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 Email Hobbsmall@aol.com

FINAL POSITIONS (1-16): World

Champion:
 Salah Hassan beat

Runner-Up:
 Yasser Esmat +4, -2, +1, +3.

3rd: Walid Salah beat

4th: Stephen Mulliner -1, +4, +2.

5th: Kahlid Younis beat

6th: Sherif Abdelwahab -2, +2, +2.

7th: Mik Mehas beat

8th: Marwa Mustafa +4, -3, +3.

9th: Mohammad Kamal beat

10th: Nahed Hassan +1, +2.

11th: Mohammad Anan beat

12th: Nader Al-Shanti +2, +2.

13th: Ihab Abdelwahab beat

14th: Simon Williams +6, +1.

15th: Ivor Brand beat

16th: Gianpietro Donati +3, -1, +1.

FINAL POSITIONS (17-32):

17th: Chris Sheen beat

18th: Don Reyland +2.

19th: Hossam El Laban beat

20th: Tony Hall +3.

21st: Derek Old beat

22nd: Don Beck +4.

23rd: Norman Eatough beat

24th: John Moore +1.

25th: Andrea Pravettoni beat

26th: Jonathan Lamb +5.

27th: Kevin Garrad beat

28th: Khalil El-Haj +3.

29th: Victor Dladla beat

30th: Soha Akl +2.

31st: Evan Newell beat

32nd: Jamieson Walker +2.

FINAL POSITIONS (33-48):

33rd: Meshack Mazibuko beat

34th: Bill Arliss +1.

35th: George Mabasa beat

36th: Yvonne Marrinan +1.

37th: Ken Mason beat

38th: Morgan Power +7.

39th: Grace Atalia beat

40th: Richard Brand +3.

41st: Grahame Tomes beat

42nd: Carl von Schmieder +2.

43rd: Rana Al-Alami beat

44th: Marion Hof +5.

45th: Vernon Tomes beat

46th: Tony Falcon-Uff +2.

47th: Elda Cairoli beat

48th: Said Ramadan +7 (wo).

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GOLF CROQUET REVIEW

by Bill Arliss, Chairman Golf Croquet Committee

The Way We Play the Game

Last season showed a very significant increase in the number of golf croquet events run by the CA and also the number of players taking part. We saw the introduction of the new Open Golf Croquet Championships and of the Golf Croquet Inter Club competition and more teams took part in the longer Inter Counties Championship. More club sponsored tournaments included golf croquet events and new tournaments such as the Pendle and Ramsgate Opens have started, purely for golf croquet. We have seen players from our 'Mac' team entering the national championships and other events but it is simply a welcome back for players like Stephen Mulliner who figured prominently in golf croquet a decade ago.

One is therefore tempted to ask what has caused this renewed interest in golf croquet in England. I think most players would agree that the World Championships that were staged at Leamington Spa in 1998 was probably the starting point. This event showed that Golf Croquet could be a game in its own right and not simply a stepping stone to Association Croquet. Quite advanced tactics could be employed and of more importance, the layman spectator could understand what was happening and what players were trying to achieve. It was thus much more able to attract new players into our sport. The need for extremes of accuracy in shooting from great distances to remove balls from in front of a hoop was demonstrated time and time again and at the same time produced an exciting and watchable game. The European Championships in 1999 reinforced this general interest in the game.

It was shortly after the world championships that the new rules for golf croquet were issued by the WCF. It has been said that the Egyptians had an overriding influence in the formulating of these new rules. However, having now seen them play on their home turf, I would very much doubt that they are responsible for the major changes of a hoop in more than one turn and the jump shot as these shots are not part of their normal game. The new golf rules were a consensus view of several countries that included England, Syd Jones who was the Golf Croquet Chairman at that time being our representative.

As you all know the CA Golf Croquet Committee recommended that the WCF rules be used for competition in 1999 and conducted a survey at the end of that year as to how the new format of play had been received. The results of our survey showed that there whilst a slight majority favoured the new rules, there was still a substantial number who wanted to play in the traditional manner. We therefore decided that our only option was to issue a new set of laws that recognised both the WCF method of play and the old traditional method as described in the 'red' book. We knew that the 'red' book was about to become obsolete and could no longer be used as a bible for the 'traditional' game. We had no wish to change the basic format of the game from that described by the WCF rules and our only changes to the WCF rules we made in our laws arose from three sources:-

- (a) The WCF rules were written for world championships where referees were plentiful whereas most of our events would be club event where the players would have to be their own referees.
- (b) Many players had commented that the behavioural rules should be part of the regulations for tournaments and we accepted this point of view.
- (c) Most games would be played on lawns also used for association



Tyneside CC, winners of the first Golf Croquet Inter-Club competition. (L to R: Gail Curry, Colin McDonald, John Moore & Brian Kennedy.)

croquet, governed by those who also govern association croquet and were very familiar with association croquet. We therefore considered we must use identical wording to the association laws whenever possible. (d) There were a few minor points in the WCF rules which had already caused problems during tournaments and which we addressed in our laws. We also adopted some wording changes that the WCF had indicated they would be making.

It has been said to me that the use of two sets of laws at the same time is confusing. Sorry but I must disagree. Our laws were issued for very good reasons as I have explained above but they in no way changed the basic game or its tactics. I don't think any of our team in Cairo had the slightest problem in changing to WCF rules for the event. There were more problems with the Egyptians interpretation of the WCF rules.

I know there are a few points some of you have raised about the toss and choice of penalty points. These are noted and will be discussed. Wherever possible our aim will be to work towards the total integration of the two sets of laws but we must ensure that whatever laws/rules are accepted they must be fully suitable for all levels of play. It is our intention to run further laws clinics around the country if there is a demand from clubs. Although we foresee some changes in wording and possibly minor changes in intent may arise from our internal discussions and meetings of the WCF working party when this eventually restarts, these are unlikely to become effective until the end of next season and the yellow book as published April 2000 will remain in force for the full season.

The Handicap System

As you know we accepted the WCF proposals for handicapping other than we altered the numbers involved in setting initial handicaps from strokes taken for three laps round the course. There is still some argument

as to whether we went far enough on these numbers but I believe a far greater problem is the range of handicaps we allow. My own personal experience this last season is that the present system of 0 to 6 very much favours the better players and I feel that some of our top players who are theoretically scratch should be giving away at least two or three extra bisques. We are therefore proposing that the present handicap system be extended to allow handicaps down to -3 or -4. I have no doubt that the use of minus handicaps will be questioned but it has two distinct advantages in that it means only the better players handicaps will change and we can stretch the system further negatively if we find it necessary.

The present method of setting initial handicaps is simply not suitable for the minus ranges as the ability to shoot accurately from a distance becomes far more important than placing a ball which is the basis for the WCF method. For all new players who should be in the minus range, a system of linking to the association handicap will be proposed. I can only point out that whatever method we use for setting initial handicaps, it is only a starting point and that handicaps must be adjusted depending on results. Whether this is done by an automatic system or a club handicapper is irrelevant.

If we are to obtain a countrywide standard for golf croquet handicaps on an automatic basis, it is vitally important that all the games played in the major tournaments are used in the system. As most of these are played level the handicap system must respond to level games as does our association system. The proposed new system will describe how this is to be achieved. A description of the proposed system will be available during December and be shown on our web site. Copies of the system together with handicap cards will be sent to all clubs with the February mailing from the CA office.

Refereeing

We established a training and qualification course for golf croquet referees during the last season and three sessions were held, two in the south and one in the Newcastle area and now have 26 players who are qualified as CA golf croquet referees. Each session has comprised a morning review of all the laws, an on-lawn demonstration of faults, the expected duties of a golf croquet referee and the refereeing policy to be adopted in England. This has been followed in the afternoon with a written test on the laws and a practical test on fault recognition. Players who are already association referees or assistant referees are excused the practical tests.

We intend to run more courses in the new year as required. All our qualified referees are listed below.

Abdul Ahmad	Jim Mortell	Brian Kitching
Brian Teague	Don Mears	Ron Welch
John Hobbs	Peter Howell	Harold Niblett
Jim Martin	Mavis Buist	John Cossier
Daphne Gaitley	Pat Taylor	Geoff Taylor
Eugene Brady	John Moore	George Farmery
Pam Arliss	Bill Arliss	Derek Trotman
Alan Oldham	Len Hawkins	John de M Jeffrey
Les Kershaw	John Lovett,	

My apologies to all above that I have not got your qualification entered on the CA database as yet. This will be rectified.

Coaching

A member of our golf croquet committee is working with the Chairman of our Coaching Committee to produce a module for the CA coaching manual specifically for golf croquet. This should be available for the new season. Our intention is also to train players how to coach golf croquet and to give recognition to those who are qualified to coach.

Ranking System

During this last season we started to collect the results of all golf croquet games played level in England and started a ranking system similar to that used in Association croquet. It is still early days for this system and

it will probably need another full season before we have enough results to issue a full listing. However there is probably enough data available to allow the top 20 to 30 places to be published later this year without serious anomalies.

The World Championships

These were held during October in Cairo. As a right we had three places but additional places became available due to other countries not having players available and we finished with a squad of nine. All our players were picked by a selection committee formed by the CA. A qualification of playing in at least two ranking events, one being the open or national championships was a necessary criterion. Congratulations to Stephen Mulliner who finished fourth


2001 Season

I know many clubs have been quite successful in obtaining new members through golf croquet and have requested backup literature from the CA office. Unfortunately much of the existing literature is outdated and a new tri-fold leaflet is being prepared at present and will be available for the new season. A similar update of the association leaflet will be available at the same time.

We have taken note of your comments about the Open Championships and in 2001 they will be held over a long weekend with doubles on the Thursday and singles Friday to Sunday. This year the event will be at Budleigh.

Because there is a strong lobby for the 'traditional' method of play, the CA will be sponsoring two tournaments, one in the South and one in the North to the alternative game as defined by law 15 in the CA laws. Full details will be published before the start of the new season.

Gold croquet is growing rapidly and I hope will continue to do so in the new season. Please get in touch if you have specific views on any parts of our programme.



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SWINGS & ROUNDABOUTS

A CLOSE LOOK AT THE SWINGING OF A CROQUET

MALLET

by Neil Williams

Why is it that most golfers of all levels of ability find it necessary to take lessons right through their playing lives, but most croquet players once they have "got started" rarely or never see a need for further tuition? I accept that croquet outside the USA has no equivalent of the golf club pro, there every day in his shop ready to dispense advice and give lessons. Nonetheless, help and advice are now easily available in croquet.

Nationally, the CA Coaching Committee has established a comprehensive coaching structure, covering all levels. It has also produced written materials. The CA Office holds stocks of an impressive array of coaching books, catering for the beginner and the 'A' class player and all points between.

Regionally, the Federations have Coaching Officers willing to supply the clubs with the coaching expertise they may lack. As far as individual clubs are concerned, all the ones I know go to great lengths to welcome and teach beginners in a structured fashion. But once they are established, the majority of players call it a day as far as coaching is concerned.

If most of us are never coached after the early stages, what about practice? I doubt if many of us take that seriously, either. There was a time when to be seen to practise a sport was ungentlemanly (and certainly would be considered most unladylike). Practice was for second-raters - at least in fiction. First-raters should be able to perform brilliantly in their Finals exams in the morning, saunter over to the cricket ground after lunch and score a classic century in the afternoon. There was still time to sparkle at the dinner table that evening.

Does that kind of view still influence us? Or does not practising suggest that we think croquet too easy or too silly to warrant it?

Croquet certainly looks as if it *ought* to be easy - the big clumpy mallets; the big, shiny blue, red, black and yellow balls. It all looks like a brightly-coloured children's game. Come on, there can't be any need to practise that. All you have to do, after all, is clout those balls through those hoop things. No sweat.

For many, friendly games are the main or only form of practice, even though, as Robert Fulford has pointed out, you can have about six times as much play in an hour's solo practice as you can in a 3-hour game. And do we really learn much from playing the same few players at our clubs on a regular, friendly basis? Friendly games - the foundation blocks in the life of a club - are opportunities to put our skills into action. There is no chance to replay shots or try alternatives or to concentrate exclusively on aspects of our own play that need attention.

Even if we agree that we do need to practise, we shall probably have very different views on what we should practise and how much. For example, in his recent Gazette interview (No.267), David Openshaw, the GB Captain, revealed that he practises 3-ball breaks and the "little" shots

such as hoop 2 from corner 2; hoop 1 from the south boundary; hampered shots around the hoop; little jump shots; split peels, etc.

Robert Fulford (Gazette No.263 interview) works harder: "I need an hour's play on my own every day, whatever friendly games I might then play....You should practise whatever you find difficult....In practice I'll try to tinker with things if they're not working. For example, I might think, 'I'll concentrate on the pause at the top of the backswing'."

So what and how should we practise? Might the golfers have something to say to us?

Most of the endless number of books on golf that fill the sports section in my local library (compared with the one or two books on croquet, squashed between bulky Cricket and Cycling sections) concentrate on the actual business of striking the ball. In other words, they deal with the infinite complexities of THE SWING.

I was interested to read recently that the mathematical essence of the golf swing has finally been captured by Professor Alan Turner of the Thermo Fluid Mechanics Research Centre at Sussex University. The equation is 14 lines long.

Most books on croquet, on the other hand, concentrate heavily on TACTICS. Admittedly, tactics play only a small part in golf and a big part in croquet. But surely the swing in croquet deserves serious attention. It is, after all, the technical bedrock of our play, as it is in golf. All the great players agree on that. Solomon, Aspinall and Fulford all speak of the "natural" swing and of the rhythm of the swing. A properly-founded swing is the key to building the whole repertoire of shots and tactics we need to be able to deploy. Without that foundation, nothing.

So how should we stroke/strike/hit a croquet ball? I offer the following for your consideration, not as the last word.

I shall concentrate on the hoop-stroke. But before I do, here are two extracts from a recent exchange on the Net between players in the USA about hitting in:

"In croquet: stalk the shot, aim, swing the mallet, and nail the ball. In pool: stalk the shot, place down the cue, aim, and nail the ball. It doesn't help to over-analyse. Muscle memory and the experience of play over time will be enough to improve accuracy...shot-making should be subliminal." (Garth Eliassen)

"Just keep your head down and swing with your forearms and keep a smooth backswing and pray. Bingo you hit it!" (Jane Simonds)

Anyway, here is my experience of being coached in and practising the hoop-stroke.

Late one season I found I was having a lot of trouble running hoops. In a handicap game against an 'A' class player, with my first ball already round, I was nicely To be

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positioned in front of hoop 1 with a good break laid. Not only did I miss the hoop but I went on to lose the game badly, my hoop-running deteriorating even more.

Roger, my opponent, a low-handicap golfer as well as a rising croquet-player, gave me some advice. He had seen that I was, in my anxiety, trying to force the ball through the hoop, and in the process my upper body was lunging forwards. One touch on my shoulder while I played a demonstration hoop for him was enough to make me realise how I was actually playing the shot, as opposed to how I thought I was playing it.

"Keep your shoulders still," he said. Roger then added a second point: the notion of **acceleration**.

We often come across the expression "following through" on the shot and "hitting through" the ball. The first of these, "following through", is something I have always built into my own teaching of beginners. What I mean by it is not to play the hoop-stroke as a stop-shot or stab, but to let the mallet head come through to about the height of the hoop in one continuous forward stroke, thus imparting forward spin to the ball to carry it through the hoop.

"Hitting through" is something else, however, and this is where the acceleration idea comes into it. "In all sports," said Roger, "you should accelerate through the shot on the forward swing. Try taking a shorter backswing and accelerating on the forward swing." Immediately, the notion of hitting through the ball makes sense - and "following through" then becomes inseparable from the rest of the stroke.

The next time I went out to practise, I did show improvement in hoop-running. Even better, my lesson had a few unexpected value-added spin-offs.

The first was obvious: if you accelerate through the shot, your ball will travel further through the hoop. Perhaps one of the reasons for not really hitting through the ball is the fear that, once through, it will go too far and you will lose control of the break.

You must, therefore, adjust your hoop approach. The stop-shot approach, used most of the time by 'A' class players, becomes essential, since it puts the croqueted ball well forward, where you want it.

Of course, not all coaching or practices are as fruitful as this one, but once I'd started making discoveries about my own play and really concentrating - in the best sense of that maligned word - I went on to make a third discovery. Perhaps, like the first two, it was really a rediscovery. Either way, it was for me a finding of that which was lost. And it felt like a real discovery.

The next find was this: if I keep my shoulders still, as Roger advised, and if, as I know I should, I keep my head still - oh, yes, and my feet need to be firm on the ground - ah, I see (or, rather, I feel), only my arms should be moving - not the fingers, not the wrists, not the elbow joints, but the arms from the shoulders. Now that really *is* a croquet swing. In a perhaps unnecessarily roundabout way I had come back to first principles.

During practice, the rediscovered swing felt a bit stiff to begin with, but the shots were truer and my timing better. My confidence rose and I could feel myself moving around the lawn more purposefully. Consequences were flowing.

As a result of these experiences, I believe there should be two developments in croquet coaching. The first is much greater concentration on the croquet swing. Are the views expressed at the beginning of this piece the last word? I would welcome something like a coaching clinic where players could have their play monitored.

A second area that looks ripe for development cannot, in my view, be separated from issues like shot-making and tactics. In other sports this area is called the "inner" game. In the hope that others more expert will put me right I would like to say what I think it's all about.

EQUIPMENT NEWS

EQUIPMENT: BALLS AND (REVOLUTIONARY) NEW HOOPS

Report by Alan Pidcock

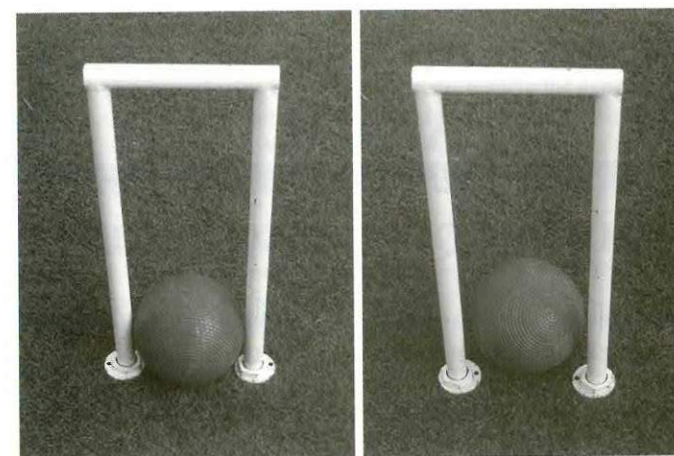
Readers may be aware that the CA's Equipment Committee tests and, where appropriate, issues Championship Approval of croquet balls: at present Barlow GT, Dawson 2000 International and Jaques New Eclipse have Approval. Since the WCF adopts the Approvals awarded by the CA, our tests set the standard for competition balls worldwide. At the time of writing (December), the Jaques ball continues development and is expected to reach its production form early in 2001.

A similar system for CA Approval of Hoops has now been agreed: purchasers of Approved new designs can be assured of high standards of accuracy and quality of construction and of their acceptability for use in CA tournaments and championships. Full details of the tests appear on the CA website. Standard Approval may be given to hoops of unstressed upright separation 3 11/16" to 3 13/16", and both Championship and Standard Approvals to those with separation in the range 3 11/16" to 3 3/4". The Championship range provides for a 1/16" clearance on all Championship Approved balls and the different upper limit of the Standard range accommodates 1/8" clearance. By stressing the hoops in the ground it is expected that most designs will produce both 1/16" and 1/8" settings at ball half-height; the rules for Approval also aim to cover hoops of fixed width such as may be more suitable for use with artificial surfaces.



The simple spanner adjustment can be performed easily and quickly.

The first hoop to receive (Standard) Approval is the easily-adjusted Omega* hoop designed by Tal Goleworthy and successfully trialled on lawn 7 at Cheltenham during much of the 2000 season. Instead of the arduous and time-consuming trial and error methods that are required for the accurate setting of conventional hoops, the new design permits the upright spacing to be varied over a 6 mm range simply by rotating the carrots (using a spanner) whilst the hoop remains set in the ground. This has been achieved by offsetting the axis of rotation of the carrots



from their central axis, and by using teflon packing in well-machined threads to ensure firm connections with the uprights. A final tap on the top to ensure firmness in the ground and the setting job is done in a fraction of the normal time and with much less labour.

Production models of the Omega* hoop will have a narrower upright spacing to conform with the Championship and Standard Approval range and will be available from January 2001. Contact Tal Goleworthy on 01684 292767 (e-mail: enquiries@edtltd.co.uk or visit www.edtltd.co.uk/omega.htm).

* The Omega hoop is the subject of UK patent application No. GB 0001405.0

COACHING IN 2001

By Bruce Rannie, CA Coaching Committee Chairman

For this year, the Coaching Committee and Federation Coaching Officers have again organised weekend Coaching Courses, covering both Handicap and Advanced play, from Gold to Improvers. There is another "Club Coach" course, and two week-long Schools, in Southwick and Southport. Full details are in the new Calendar & Fixture Book, will be on the CA Website, and are also available from your local Club or Federation.

CA Gold Course

After another excellent course given by Steve Comish and Robin Brown in 2000, we have arranged another Gold Course, open only to Associates. Unfortunately Steve is not available this year in May, but another well-qualified expert will be found to run this year's course. The Handicap Range is usually 1 to 5, but, as before, those with the appropriate skills who want to learn the techniques will be accepted.

The aim is to equip you for all facets of the Advanced game, including openings, leaves / contacts, and how to complete Triple Peels and therefore qualify for the Gold Merit Award (first Triple Peel, winning the game). This intensive CA Course covers triples in all their forms for two full days, including TPO.

You will be already be a reasonably experienced Advanced Player, now wishing to climb the Rankings and win Advanced Tournaments. It will be on 12-13 May at Wrest Park, price £42.

CA Silver and Silver/Gilt Courses

There have been two types of Silver Course in the past to cover the next level of training. For 2001, we are looking at the requirements for players, and one course will be run, open only to Associates.

The Handicap Range is approximately 6 to 11. The aim of this course



Last years coaches and coachees at the Southwick Summer School

is to equip you to gain your Silver Merit Award (12-point break, without bisques, winning the game). It teaches break management and hygiene in the Handicap Croquet game, and concentrates on how to compete when giving away bisques. It covers leaves, and the endgame, with Rover Peel and Double Peel being included. If required by applicants, aspects of the Silver Gilt course may be included, to equip you to start to play the Advanced game seriously. It may cover the Advanced Rules with leaves and contacts, the different principles of the start, and early consideration of the leave. The Triple Peel may be discussed to show how it fits into the game, but there is no expectation that you will attempt one in competition at this stage.

You will be an experienced improving Handicap Player, wishing to continue developing in Handicap Tournaments and/or starting to play Advanced games, and are used to spending time practising and learning new skills. The course will be at Southwick on 5-6 May, and the lead coach is Bryan Teague, one of our most experienced coaches at this level. The fee is £32, and any follow-up day later in the summer would be £16.

Whichever direction you are wishing to go, better Handicap results, or breaking seriously into the Advanced game, this intensive course will make a big difference.

Handicap Ranges Exceptions

If you are outside the handicap ranges specified for the CA course you fancy, you may still be considered for inclusion if you have the written approval of your Club Handicapper or the Federation Coaching Officer, certifying that you are likely to reach the required standard for the Course. The final decision on whether anybody is accepted onto a Course lies with its Lead Coach, who will take into account the requirements of all participants, and the aims of the Course.

Federation Courses

Bronze

One Federation has arranged a Bronze Course, open to Associates, and to any player who is a member of a Club affiliated to any Federation. The Handicap Range is usually 12 to 18.

The aim of this course is to equip you to gain your Bronze Merit Award (10-hoop break, with bisques, winning the game). It teaches the shots and tactics necessary to complete four-ball breaks in the Handicap Croquet game, and includes use of bisques in beginning a break, during the break, and on concluding the break.

You will have already competed in several singles games, either in Clubs or in Tournaments, and are now prepared to practise techniques, and learn new skills.

The course is priced at £20, on 12-13 May at Dulwich, with David Collins. Other experienced CA coaches will be assisting.

Improvers

There is an Improver Course arranged by the South East Federation at Southwick on 28-29 April. This is also open to Associates, and to any

player who is a member of a Club affiliated to any Federation. The Handicap Range is usually 18 to 24. The aim of the course is to help you make progress after the induction course at your Club. It teaches basic techniques, understanding of strokes, the Laws and etiquette of Croquet, tactics, and break play in the Handicap and Short Croquet games.

Much of this material may be covered in larger Clubs as they encourage and support new players, but this Course is aimed at those who cannot get such local help, or who want the formal, concentrated teaching such a course gives. The Federation Course is intensive - the material is covered in two full days - and it is based on the CA standard approach.

You will be encouraged to consider taking part in competitive or tournament play following completion of the course, and it is a good pre-season refresher if you are starting your first or second full season.

The course is priced at £18, and the Lead Coach is Bryan Teague, one of the CA's best coaches at this level.

All of these courses offer a one-day follow-up session later in the season to reinforce lessons learnt and covering problems you have found putting the theory into practice. Follow-up courses are at the same venue, and are half the price of the original course.

Club Coach

Following a successful one-day pilot course run by Don Williamson in the North-West Federation in 2000, Michael Hague is taking the principles forward with a two-day course at Surbiton on 21-22 April. The aim of the course is to ensure that potential Coaches understand how to plan the course, how to deliver the course material, and how to maintain the enthusiasm of the students, all of which is as important as understanding what has to be taught. Following last year's course, Don put forward names of nine people to be considered for a new qualification "Club Coach". Unfortunately, the rail chaos has meant that the Coaching Committee's November meeting had to be postponed, at which the content and standard approach would have been ratified, as would the formal introduction of this new level of qualification. That meeting is rescheduled for January, and the formal proposal will be put to the Management Committee after that meeting. In the meantime, any small club who does not have a Grade I coach amongst their members, but who does have a keen volunteer who takes charge of beginners and early improvers, should consider whether attending Michael's course at Surbiton would be of great benefit. Full details from him, including cost.

Summer Schools

This year's Jersey School will not follow the previous format, but Don Gaunt has been asked to cover similar subjects as will be included in Michael Hague's course, i.e. how to teach, rather than only what to teach. Details from your normal Jersey contact.

The Southwick Summer School run by the South-East Federation continues again in 2001, this time from 23-27 July. Details from David Collins as usual.

A new initiative is being launched this August by Southport Club, with Gail Curry as Lead Coach. Details will follow in the March issue.

Conclusion

Among all these initiatives there must be something for you, so think about how you might start the 2001 campaign with a CA or Federation course, or if you think the sun on your back is better, then what about one of the summer schools?

Any changes will be publicised on the Website, and in the CA Club Newsletter.

CROQUET ASSOCIATION A.G.M.

THE CROQUET ASSOCIATION

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held at the Hurlingham Club on Saturday 14 October 2000

Present: JW Solomon (President)-in the Chair
DL Gaunt (Chairman of Council)
RQ Barrett (Vice-Chairman of Council)
Dr RW Bray (Treasurer)
AJ Oldham (Vice-President)
Prof BG Neal (Vice-President)
NR Graves (Secretary)

and 61 Associates

Apologies were received from Pauline Healy, David Hopkins, Norma Rayne, Mike Sharp and the Plymouth Club.

OPENING ADDRESS

The President welcomed all those present to the Meeting and thanked them for their support. Before the start of formal business he invited Judy Anderson to report on the fire which had destroyed the clubhouse at Hunstanton during the night of 28 September.

1. MINUTES

1.1 The Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 16 October 1999 were signed as a true record of that Meeting.

2. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

2.1 The Chairman presented his report to the Meeting. This was published in issue 270 (Nov 2000) (*The Croquet Gazette*).

At the end of the Chairman's address Tony Fathers, Chairman of the Marketing Committee, rose to report the outstanding success of Budleigh Salterton Club, who by dint of imaginative use of the mini-carpet had recruited an additional 48 members.

3. ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR TO 31 DECEMBER 1999 AND TREASURER'S REPORT

The Treasurer presented the Accounts for the year to 31 December 1999, and gave a brief report.

The Accounts were approved nem. con.

4. ELECTION OF TREASURER

There being no other nomination, Dr RW Bray was duly re-elected as Treasurer.

5. ELECTION OF AUDITORS

The Treasurer explained that now that the CA receives no external funding, it was no longer necessary, or even appropriate, to incur the expense of a major accounting firm to act as auditor. He had therefore invited members of the CA who were prepared to act as Reporting Accountant for an honorarium and expenses to make themselves known to him.

Accordingly, DL Gaunt proposed, and Dr RW Bray seconded, that John Knight & Co, Chartered Accountants be elected as Reporting Accountants for the current financial year. The motion was carried nem. con.

6. ELECTION OF COUNCIL MEMBERS

There having retired under Rule 18(a)(i) Messrs DL Gaunt, RWB Judson, DW Trotman and Mrs TW Anderson by rotation, and Messrs DJF Gurney and DJ Hopkins who had been chosen to fill casual vacancies under Rule 24(a), and there being two further unfilled vacancies, the number of vacancies on Council was eight.

All retiring members sought re-election under Rule 18(a)(i), and Mr RF Hoskyns had been proposed by Mr CB Sandford and seconded by Mr IPM Macdonald.

There had been no further nominations, no election was necessary, and the meeting declared these seven persons elected to Council.

7. BENEFACTORS' BOOK

The Secretary read the names in the Benefactors' Book.



James Mackay receives the Apps Bowl from CA President John Solomon.

8. PRESENTATION OF THE APPS MEMORIAL BOWL

The President made the presentation of the Apps Memorial Bowl to James Mackay (Dyffryn) as the most improved male player of 1999.

It was reported that the Steel Memorial Bowl for the most improved woman player had not been awarded this year, as no suitable nominations had been received by the closing date.

9. PRESENTATION OF CROQUET ASSOCIATION DIPLOMAS

The Secretary announced the award of the Diploma to the following:

John Airey	nominated by	Swindon Croquet Club
Anna Giraud		Zeneca Croquet Club
Nigel Gray		Letchworth Croquet Club
Ronald H Rawden		Bury St Edmunds & District CC
Enid Ross		Sussex County Croquet Club
Pat Shine		Worthing Croquet Club
Bill Simpson		The Lym Valley Croquet Club
Honor and Ernest Smith		Belsay Hall Croquet Club
Roy Taylor		Woodhall Spa Croquet Club
Dab Wheeler		Cheltenham Croquet Club
Dr F Lawrence Whittaker		Leicester Croquet Club

The President presented the Diplomas to those recipients who were present.

10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

In response to the news of the fire at Hunstanton Hamish Hall (Bristol) took the opportunity to remind the meeting of the Equipment Insurance Scheme available to member clubs of the CA through Perkins Slade Ltd. Michael Evans (Beverley) drew attention also to the Public Liability Insurance available from the same source.

12. PRESIDENT'S CLOSING ADDRESS

"Ladies and gentlemen, we now come to an item which has often given me much concern, in that you will, I am sure, expect me to deliver a message of interest, perhaps of initiative, and possibly of some wisdom. I am sure you would expect the latter, considering my name!

As an aside, when I first went to Charterhouse at the age of 13, my house would assemble every evening at 9 o'clock for house prayers; we would all line the dining room, the monitors would troop in and the duty monitor would read a couple of prayers and a passage from the Bible. Within my first couple of weeks the passage selected was "Consider the lilies of the field, they toil not, neither do they spin, and yet I say unto you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these". I knew that 65 pairs of eyes were fixed on me and my face must have gone very red. During my 5 years there I suppose that passage was read 10 or 12 times, but after that first experience I was able to endure the situation with complete aplomb. When I became a monitor myself I discovered that the Bible used was liberally marked with what were considered to be suitable passages, which one scanned briefly in the minute before entering. Needless to say I never selected that passage myself.

As I said, I have often had recourse to much heart-searching to find a suitable theme for this address, but on this occasion I have absolutely no problem at all. During this current season I have heard many comments from players that they do not like playing 3 games a day, each of probably three and a half hours. I also heard a few similar comments last season. We all play croquet for a number of reasons, I suppose principally because we love it, for enjoyment, for the friendship and camaraderie, for the competition and the hope that we will win. But, surely, above all, for FUN.

I know that many people do not believe that starting at 9.30 in the morning, playing 3 games a day, most of which seem to go to time, having about 40 minutes for lunch and 20 minutes for tea, and finishing well after 8 o'clock, is FUN. By the time the third game is half way through they are losing all enthusiasm, and some perhaps wonder why they ever entered the tournament.

I believe there is a simple answer to this and that is to play the 14

point game. I make no apology for returning to this issue, it has been a hobby horse of mine for some years. We only have 6 hoops - why do we have to make them twice? There are those who will say that croquet has hardly changed in the last 100 years. This is not so. In 1902 the Willis setting (that which we use today) was first tried instead of the Hale setting with 2 pegs. Soon after the first world war, the sequence game was abandoned for the either ball game. In the early 20s the lift after 1-back was introduced in level play and in 1946 the second lift and contact became the norm. So change is no stranger to croquet. We have sought to adapt when it has been thought desirable.

The 14 point game, by which I mean of course playing the first 6 hoops and the peg, has a number of advantages.

The order of the hoops is easily explained, and absorbed, by complete beginners. Once you have to start describing 1-back and the rest, a glazed look comes over them.

A game can be played in a maximum of one and a half hours, probably less.

It plays equally well as a handicap or as level advanced play.

My personal preferred version is to play for one hour, after which each side has 6 Wharrad turns. In my experience most games finish within the next 20 minutes or so. As an additional factor I would hope that games could be played on a full bisque basis. In that connection I hope we can abandon the practice of playing to a base of 10, or even 12 I believe I have seen. When this practice was first introduced it was to a base of 6, but this seems to have crept up. I believe there should be no base. Those that cry out that this is not fair, do so only because they are not prepared to use their bisques. How often does one see the better player on penult and peg when the long bisquer realises he has to take his bisques, but it is then too late. If those in receipt of a number of bisques used them from very early on, they would be on penult and peg and the lower bisquer would begin to think he had lost the game.

It may be hard for longer bisquers to see their handicaps going up 2 or 3 bisques if they fail to use them, but they will surely learn that that is the way to win. The argument for using your bisques early on is even more powerful in the 14 point game because there is much less time to hang around. You have to get on with it.

At the advanced level the game poses serious problems for the best players aiming to do triple peels. With lifts after 3 and contact after 4 it is not at all easy to achieve a triple. If you can peel through 4 going to 1 it solves most of the problems, but that is not easy to arrange. There is more of a probability that it will have to end up as a straight triple, no more difficult than the straight triple in the full game, but how often is that achieved?

I have been heartened to see that quite a few clubs have held 14 point tournaments during this season. Cheltenham notably had a large one a couple of months ago which was hugely attended, whether because it was billed as a millennium event or not, I don't know but I had enthusiastic reports from some of those who played there. Five games a day and still finishing around 6 pm can't be bad.

The President has no power other than to preside at this meeting and, exceptionally to act as a court of appeal if anyone has a grievance against the council. But I have expressed my opinion and the hope that players will go back to their clubs and suggest, nay, urge them to try more 14 point tournaments in the coming years. I would like to see the time when the short game becomes the norm, and I believe it will attract new members to clubs. I am quite happy that prestigious events such as the MacRobertson Trophy, the Opens and the President's Cup should continue on their present basis, but these events are for a few exceptional players. Let us consider the interests of the average club player. There seem to be fewer young players entering the game in recent years. Such a move may help to reverse this trend.

I want to thank Don for his excellent Chairmanship of the Council during a difficult time, and all the Committee members for their contribution. The fact that the accounts have turned out so satisfactorily, despite the loss of a substantial grant from Sport England, is to be commended and our Treasurer has played a large part in this.

And finally a big thank you to all of you who have taken the interest to attend what is, after all, your meeting. I hope you have as quiet, or as busy a close season as you will wish and that you return refreshed for the year 2001."

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 12.15pm.

Our President has made a strong plea for the 14pt game. What do YOU think? Write to Gail and let us know. Your Council is always ready to respond to the membership's wishes and if there is a strong feeling that the 14pt game should be promoted, the Tournament Committee will see what it can do.
Don Gaunt

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NATIONAL C.A. COMPETITIONS 2000



Roehampton's winning Longman Cup team. L to R Mike Hann, David Mooney, Mark Fawcett and Peter Siddal. (Photo by David Magee)

THE LONGMAN CUP

Handicap play for players of handicap 3.5 and above. Teams of four players whose gross team handicap must be at least 24.

Preliminary Round: Pendle bt Tyneside 4 - 3, Nottingham bt East Riding 4 - 3, Bury bt Southport 6 - 1, Hurlingham bt High Wycombe 6 - 1, Watford bt Harrow W.O., Norwich bt Colworth 5 - 2, Sussex County bt Woking 7 - 0.

Round 1: Nottingham bt Pendle 4 - 3, Bowdon bt Bury 5 - 2, Dyffryn bt Cheltenham 5 - 2, East Dorset bt Aldermaston W.O., Zenmet bt Walsall 6 - 1, Bristol bt Harwell 4 - 3, Hurlingham bt St Albans 5 - 2, Parsons Green bt Watford 4 - 3, Roehampton bt Reigate 4 - 3, Ealing bt Surbiton 5 - 2, Newport bt Hunstanton 5 - 2, Norwich bt Ipswich 5 - 2, Northampton bt Wrest Park 4 - 3, Colchester bt Letchworth 6 - 1, Medway bt Sussex 5 - 2, Guildford bt Compton 4 - 3.

Round 2: Bowdon bt Nottingham 7 - 0, East Dorset bt Dyffryn 5 - 2, Zenmet bt Bristol 5 - 2, Parsons Green bt Hurlingham 4 - 3, Roehampton bt Ealing 5 - 2, Norwich bt Newport 4 - 3, Colchester bt Northampton 5 - 2, Medway bt Guildford 5 - 2.

Quarter finals: East Dorset bt Bowdon 4 - 3, Zenmet bt Parsons Green 4 - 3, Roehampton bt Norwich 7 - 0, Colchester bt Medway 6 - 1.

Semi finals: East Dorset bt Zenmet 4 - 3, Roehampton bt Colchester 4 - 3.

Final: Roehampton bt East Dorset 6 - 1.

MARY ROSE

Advanced play for players with handicaps of 1 and above. Teams to consist of four players.

Preliminary round: Pendle bt Dyffryn 4 - 3, Bowdon bt Cheltenham 4 - 3, Nottingham bt Colworth 7 - 0, Bristol bt Southport 4 - 1.

Round 1: Pendle bt Woking 4 - 3, East Dorset bt Roehampton, Surbiton bt Medway 5 - 2, Bowdon bt Sussex County W.O., Nottingham bt Hurlingham 7 - 0, Tunbridge Wells bt Northampton 4 - 3, Bristol bt

Colchester 5 - 2, Wrest Park bt Letchworth 5 - 2.

Quarter finals: Pendle bt East Dorset 5 - 2, Bowdon bt Surbiton 5 - 2, Nottingham bt Tunbridge Wells 6 - 1, Wrest Park bt Bristol 6 - 0.

Semi finals: Pendle bt Bowdon 5 - 2, Nottingham bt Wrest Park 5 - 2.

Final: Nottingham bt Pendle 5 - 2.



Nottingham's winning Mary Rose team. L to R Jed Allen, Nick Hyne, Rick Davis and Beatrice McGlen. (Photo by David Magee)

INTER-CLUB

Advanced play with no handicap restrictions.

Round 1: Harrow Oak bt Sussex County 5 - 2, Cheltenham bt Bristol 6 - 1, Guildford bt Woking 4 - 3, Bowdon bt Surbiton 4 - 3.

Quarter finals: Harrow Oak bt Wrest Park 6 - 1, Cheltenham bt Northampton 5 - 2, Hurlingham bt Guildford 4 - 3, Bowdon bt Nottingham 4 - 3.

Semi finals: Harrow Oak bt Cheltenham 5 - 2, Bowdon bt Hurlingham 7 - 0.

Final: Harrow Oak bt Bowdon 5 - 2.



The winning Inter-Club Harrow Oak team. L to R Michael Heap, Gary Bennett, Phil Cordingley and David Openshaw. (Photo by David Magee)

SECRETARY'S SHIELD

Handicap play. The shield is competed for by the winners (provided they are member clubs of the CA) of regional leagues plus last year's winners.

Preliminary round: Sidmouth bt Edgbaston 4 - 3, Winchester bt Ripon Spa 6 - 1.

Quarter finals: Beverley bt Caterham 5 - 2, Sidmouth bt Tyneside 4 - 3, St Albans bt Chester 5 - 2, Leicester by Winchester 6 - 1.
Semi finals: Sidmouth bt Beverley 4 - 3, St Albans bt Leicester 6 - 1.



St Albans winning Secretary's Shield Team. L to R Richard Smith, Terry Mahoney, Mike Gardener, Chris Frost. (Photo by David Magee)

Final: St Albans bt Sidmouth 7 - 0.

THE MILLENNIUM TOURNAMENT

Cheltenham 2 - 3 September 2000

Report by Ian Burridge

Capitalising on the success of the Centenary tournament two years previously the CA utilised the format of 14 point handicap doubles for teams of 4 for their Millennium tournament at the Cheltenham Croquet Club. With twenty teams entering the format achieved one of its main aims of appealing to a large number of players and 88 players took part in the event over the two days.

Played as an eight round swiss the crucial match took place in round 5 when the Angels of the North (Tyneside) captained by Gail Curry met Peter Dyke's Nailsea team. The Angels won the first game when the experienced pair of Bryan Kennedy and Derek Watts beat two very promising juniors, Marcus Evans and Andrew Lowdon. The second game was a thriller, it was all square when time was called with both the senior partners (Gail and Peter) on the peg with their partners (David Turner and Mary Barnes respectively) both for hoop 2. After 25 minutes of cat and mouse play the match was resolved when David ran the deciding hoop. This put the two teams level in the lead on 8/10 and



Ian Burridge, manager of the Millenium event surveys the scene at Cheltenham.



Tyneside's winning Angels. L to R Gail Curry, David Turner, Brian Kennedy and Derek Watts.

when the Angels won 2-0 in round 7, with Nailsea only managing a draw, a lead was established which proved decisive when the Angels won their final match.

The winning team were awarded medals as a memento of their achievement at the prize giving, an event which was almost overshadowed by Derek Bradley cutting the first sod of Cheltenham's ambitious £55,000 redevelopment of lawns 9, 10 and 11.

Results:

- 13pts Angels of the North (Tyneside)
- 12 Nailsea
- 10 Dave's Diehards (Cheltenham)
- 9 Medway, Northern Lights (Tyneside), Cornwall, Los Bandito's (Cheltenham), Sussex Eagles, Dyffryn Dragons
- 8 High Wycombe, Bristol Blue, Bristol Cream
- 7 Racketeers (Cheltenham), Harwell
- 6 Blewbury, Ipswich, Three Counties (Cheltenham), Sussex Condors
- 5 Bits and Pieces (Cheltenham)
- 4 Dab's Demons (Cheltenham)



Competitors at the National final, with Peter Dyke holding the trophy for Nailsea.

NATIONAL SHORT CROQUET

TEAM FINAL

Nailsea 9th September 2000

Report by Tim King

The funeral of Short Croquet?

For a wake, the atmosphere was anything but sad. However, the decision by the CA to cancel the national Short Croquet competitions (team and individual) in 2001 appears to have left the future of the game in the balance.

On Saturday 9 September, Bury and Ashby arrived at Nailsea and District Croquet Club to join the hosts in competition for the trophy (the Short Croquet National Team Final). Unfortunately, other clubs had withdrawn from participating.

The first shots of the day were marked by trails of spray but soon the early rustiness began to recede and the battle hotted up.

By the end of the second round, Nailsea had built up a lead with six wins. Bury stood on four and Ashby on two. The sleepy heads from Leicestershire looked in bad shape and everyone retired to lunch and catch a breath.

The Tournament Manager laid the challenge to Bury at the beginning of Round Four: win all your last four games and the cup can still be yours! However, in the end, Ashby managed the clean sweep in the Round and the scores ended at: Nailsea 10, Bury 7, Ashby 7. All had shown great spirit and enjoyed the experience.

Thus, congratulations to Nailsea as both excellent hosts and worthy winners. Their name goes on the trophy for yet another year but if theirs is the last then perhaps it was fitting that previous winners Ashby and defending champions Bury were able to contest.

It was great to see two younger players in the Nailsea team, both of whom performed with great composure and enthusiasm. However, the death knell appears to have tolled on Short Croquet. The question is whether the nation's clubs really have the time and lawns to ignore all but Association Croquet as the only competitive proving ground for newcomers?

NATIONAL SHORT CROQUET

INDIVIDUAL FINAL

Rochampton 16th September 2000

Report by Tim King

What's short and green in London?

For the second successive Saturday, Short Croquet saw the competition for a national title by representatives of only three clubs. The fuel crisis had scuppered the plans of two members of

Cheltenham at the last moment. However, the lack of entrants had been a problem long before the petrol restrictions.

Saturday 16 September was the day for the National Short Croquet Singles tournament. In many respects, the team and singles events were similar. The weather was again overcast but mild, the hosts were welcoming and supportive and, most of all, the competition was good spirited and enthralling.

The Roehampton Club was a splendid setting and for the newcomers, the quality of the turf was a revelation. A large proportion of the country's population must have domestic carpets that fail to meet the quality of the Club's lawns. Furthermore, the groundstaff had dealt with the unusual hazard of the grass being underwater at 9:00 the evening before!

Everyone arrived in time to start promptly at 10:00; the eventual entry of six players led to a five-round, all-play-all format, which threatened a full day. However, the quality of play was exceptional a relatively small number of games went to time.

The relaid Lawn 2 (full-size) has pride of place and players on the two half lawns there were able to enjoy roll of the utmost consistency. A large number of long peels and peg outs were accomplished. The Buttery and Bar offered a brief diversion at lunchtime but everyone returned with vigour and without delay to recommence.

The finale for the day was perfect, although one player was too well

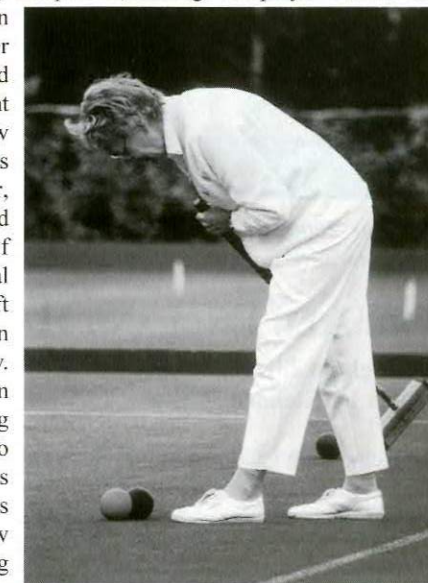
aware and his opponent in ignorance. As the other games finished, King and Sanville were left in a tight battle, relatively new Ashby member versus his club handicapper, respectively. King had observed the victory of Barbara Young in her final game and knew this left him needing to win in order to claim the trophy.

The chips were down as Sanville reached peg with both balls but had to lay up. King did make his shortfall of four points and a rover peel to draw level with all balls on peg but he then fractionally missed the vital chance to roquet and peg out one opponent ball. In reply, Sanville failed to deliver the killer blow by only pegging out a single ball. However, as Barbara Young averted her eyes, King was unable to make a long knock in and the day had gone to the wire as Sanville's resultant victory (14-12) gave the trophy to Barbara. Her husband Geoff was runner up by dint of victory over King in their earlier game.

The bystanders at this stage, Dyffryn contributed with great skill to the tournament. Mackay and Trickey were the two class players on display. Twice Mackay showed supreme creativity and confidence to set up chances to peg out opponent balls; the final execution slipped past both times but the young have the time to dwell on and improve plans that go awry. His next opponents have been warned!

Without wishing to be pedantic, the only minor issue in an otherwise excellent day was that members of a single club had to oppose each other in a critical game. Managers may care to note that these same club games should not occur in the final round of a tournament in order to avoid any claims of impropriety.

The whole event was undoubtedly and wonderfully enhanced by the presence of Douglas Gurney as an unflappable Tournament Manager and Paul MacDonald as the Referee. These two gentlemen embody the history of Croquet and tales of the 14-lawn heyday of Roehampton



Barbara Young of Bury, on her way to winning the National Short croquet title at Roehampton.

evoked an inspiring memory for the younger participants in the tournament.

Surely, the clubs can find the energy to participate in future years rather than leave national Short Croquet competitions as the subject for those who live long with long memories?

The results:

1. Barbara Young (Bury) 4 wins
2. Geoff Young (Bury) 3 wins
3. Tim King (Ashby) 3 wins
4. Richard Sanville (Ashby) 2 wins
5. James Mackay (Dyffryn) 2 wins
6. Adrian Trickey (Dyffryn) 1 win



The year 2000 All England finalists pose for a photo with their commemorative trophies at Nottingham.

THE ALL ENGLAND HANDICAP

Nottingham 23rd - 24th September.

Report by Richard White

The Nottingham Club played host this year to the All England Handicap Final. 16 players were split into 4 American blocks on Saturday. Respective block positions playing each other on Sunday.

Block winners were Roger Tedstone (Reigate) John Hansen (Nottingham) Peter Spiller (Hurlingham) and Marcus Evans (Nailsea).

STOP PRESS.....STOP PRESS.....

To the Friends of Hunstanton,

Sarah and the members of the Hunstanton Croquet Club wish to thank you all most sincerely for the generous donations we have received for our Phoenix Fund. Contributions to date amount to nearly £10,000, which means we can with confidence rebuild. Our architects plan has gone in for local authority planning permission, for consideration at the January meeting. We are assured there should be no problem as it fits the existing footprint, has wheelchair access, and a handicap loo. The brick building includes every vandal proof device built in - metal doors, metal shutters over every window, and security lighting. We hope to be able to replace the lawn equipment for 5 lawns, and put up security fencing around the site but the furnishing of the clubhouse may have to wait.

We have planned the Grand Opening for 5pm on Friday 24th August. It may be sit on a cushion on a concrete floor and bring your own tankard, but we will be a complete club again. We still need money - all planned tournaments will take place as the Cricket Pavilion will be available, but the sooner we can furnish our own building the more comfortable we will all be.

With many thanks to you all,
Sarah Hampson

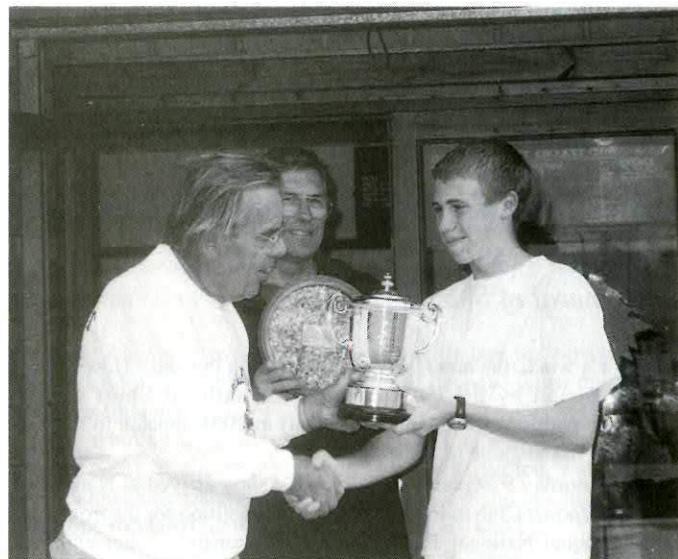
Marcus came back strongly to beat John +12, while Peter and Roger had the closest of games which Peter won with a golden hoop +1at.

The final was a one way affair with Marcus winning +25.

Despite his tender age (I didn't ask but assume below 16) Marcus showed tremendous ability. His only loss of the weekend being just over a quarter of his 10 handicap.

Other notable performances were from Francis Ransom (Bristol) Gary Duke (Parsons Green) and Andrews Elliott, Keeble and Winn all from Bowdon.

The weekend was, however, marred by the previous winner's apparent inability to ensure the trophies were available for presentation. This year's winner (and possibly the youngest) of, what is surely, the C.A's premier handicap event, consequently left empty handed.



Marcus Evans of Nailsea being presented with his trophy by Hamish Hall, with Peter Dyke of the Nailsea Club looking on.

New Editor of "The Croquet Gazette"

The Croquet Association seeks a new Editor to take over from Gail Curry from the January 2002 edition, after a planned overlap covering the September and November issues in 2001. The job description and benefits, which include provision on loan of a suitable PC and software, are available from Bruce Rannie, Chairman of the Magazine Committee, to whom initial enquiries in confidence should be made, to bruce.rannie@tinyworld.co.uk or by telephoning on 0191 2529739

With the setting up of the CA News pages on the CA Website, the new Editor may have the opportunity of developing the CA's flagship Magazine, by building on the features introduced by Gail, like the profile interviews, and other ideas, using the pages that previously have been taken up with news copy.

So, if you have the writing and publishing flair, not necessarily with experience so far, and want to take the Gazette onwards and upwards, please put your name, and ideas, forward before Easter. Detailed discussions will take place during the early summer, so that the CA Executive Committee can confirm the agreement with the new Editor before the end of July 2001.