



# THE CROQUET GAZETTE

ISSUE 284 - MARCH 2003



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*Garden croquet turns ugly*

**Image and elitism :**

*What price development?*

**A Guide to Hoop-setting**

**GK Chesterton's Perfect Game**





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**Specific Questions and Queries**

Specific questions or queries should be sent direct to the Editor. Email contributions, including tournament reports, should be sent direct to the Editor, or copied to the Editor if they are being posted to the Nottingham List.

Both black and white or colour prints of photographs can be used. Slides are no longer accepted. Photocopies of pictures or print-outs of digital images cannot be used. If using digital photography please send in jpeg or tif format files. Resolution of scanned images must be at least 300 dpi. 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 and Reports**

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**Delivery Queries**

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**Disclaimer**

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THE  
CROQUET GAZETTE

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**Cover photographs by Frank Rothe:**

This tournament at the Frisian Rough took place in Ellens, Germany, in late July 2002, to which players from five countries were invited. Surprisingly, much of the weather was sunny, until this spectacular downpour during the final between Mark Gooding and Stuart Romeril of Oxford University.

Visit the Croquet Association website at [www.croquet.org.uk](http://www.croquet.org.uk)



## Chairman's Column



Sponsorship in 2003

I am delighted to tell you that, thanks to David Openshaw's perseverance, we are on the point of concluding a major new sponsorship for 2003 from Lincoln Unit Trust Managers. Lincoln backed the World Association Croquet Championships held in London in 2001 and the response they got from our members then encouraged them to support croquet again this year.

Lincoln's presence will be seen at the Inter-County Championships, the Opens and in the Gazette; the CA is also mailing members with further information about our sponsors.

We look forward to renewing this partnership: the sponsorship sum that the CA receives will enable us to bring forward plans to develop our game.

### Looking after your new club members

A good croquet friend, Gladys Robertson, died recently. Gladys was someone who, quietly and without any fuss, helped new members at the Ealing club. She made them welcome, encouraged them to go on coaching courses and to enter club tournaments. Gladys will be greatly missed.

We should not forget the importance of encouraging *ab initios*. Recruiting them is one thing - retain-

ing them as enthusiastic club members is quite another. It really is vital to make newcomers feel part of the club at an early stage. They usually get a lot of attention when they go on initial coaching courses, but what happens after that at your club? It pays long-term dividends if, early on, new members get to know some of the more experienced players who can advise them. There are various ways of bringing this about. Social activities can be helpful; so can doubles play (alternate stroke in the Association game) which gives opportunities for informal help. If your club has succeeded in retaining a good proportion of its recent intake, do tell us how you have achieved this: write a letter to the Ed.

May your club have a good recruitment - and retention - year in 2003.

Quiller

## MacRobertson Test Team Announced

The CA has announced its team for the 2003 MacRobertson Shield Test Matches, as follows:

Mark Avery  
Matt Burrow  
Chris Clarke  
Robert Fulford (captain)  
David Maugham  
Stephen Mulliner



Three of the 2003 British team: (L to R) Chris Clarke, David Maugham and Robert Fulford

The event, between GB and teams from Australia, New Zealand and the USA, will be the first to take place at Florida's National Croquet Center, in November.

Five of the six members of the squad are veterans of the MacRobertson. Jersey's Matthew Burrow is the newcomer, and is both the youngest member of this year's team, and the first Channel Islander to represent Britain.

## Alan and Margaret's story

My daughter asked me the other day

*“Dad, what did you do when you wanted to put some money aside for the future?”*

to which I replied

*“When I was about your age, I put some money into an investment - a unit trust. I invested a little every month and I didn't even miss it.”*

Now that I'm coming up to retirement, I'm happy that I've got extra money set aside. After all, you never know when you might need it.

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## Letters

### Drug testing - a practical solution

The answer to drug testing in croquet already exists and has done so since 1865. This was the year the first croquet club in England was formed at Worthing, and it is possible that the use of laudanum was suspected, hence the need for regulations and random tests. The Victorians were of a practical bent, and, lacking the advanced equipment available to us today, came up with a cheap and accurate method.

For this we are indebted to the Rev. C. Lutwidge Dodgson, an early tournament reporter, whose colourful prose style set a standard that few have equalled and none surpassed. The one example that survives may be unrepresentative. It is certainly bizarre, and has one wondering whether the writer was himself under the influence at the time. Its damaging effect on the public's view of the game was immediate and lasting, and as a result the author was ostracised by players and administrators alike and his other writing on the game has been lost.

Nevertheless, it is within the surviving manuscript, tucked away towards the end, that we can find the

reference which describes the test then in use:

*p.152 Rule 42. All persons more than a mile high to leave the court.*

As if this were not enough, on the very next page the author quotes the Referee of the Tournament as stating that "It's the oldest rule in the book". Need we look further? While I agree that verification of this condition might require more than an unaided ocular test, it would only need a little elementary geometry and some simple instruments. No samples are necessary, and the result would be available in minutes.

It's been right under our noses all this time.

John Bevington  
Wrest Park

### Picture quality

Welcome the general appearance, readability and mix of articles you have introduced since becoming editor of the Gazette. But what has happened to the photographs? They are all of such low contrast! As a classically-trained spectroscopist, it pains me to see such lifeless reproductions. Surely not all originals are of such low

quality that a bit of black and white would destroy them! More contrast, please!

Lawrence Whittaker  
Leicester

*Point taken. There are at least four stages which could worsen the picture quality in the Gazette: sourcing, conversion, output (from me to the printers) and printing itself. Certainly I noticed some degradation in the image quality for the last issue, but getting it right is a matter for ongoing experimentation. In the meantime I'll be negotiating further with the printing house in order to improve future reproduction. - Ed*

### Handicaps

Many players seem to feel a conflict when they involve themselves in handicap play at the expense of the time they could be using to play the advanced game, and are frustrated by the loss of ten points to a high bisquer.

As this seems to be the main problem with the AHS, I should like to quote from Geoffrey Cuttle's article (*Gazette* 283, Jan 2003), but to rearrange the order of importance of the 'needs' which he summarised.

- 1 to combat the reluctance of low handicap players entering handicap events;
- 2 to counter the seepage of points from the AHS caused by joiners and leavers;
- 3 to reduce the excessive spread between scratch and the higher handicaps.

I agree that a solution is urgently required, if possible before the start of the season. I should be happy to see Geoffrey's proposals accepted immediately, and reviewed at the end of the season, but I ask myself this question: "Is the reason why a problem exists only because we record both level and handicap play on the same card?"

Could a simpler solution be to record level and handicap play results on separate cards, starting off this year with the same number of index points

on each card as are carried forward from last season. Thus we may have separate ratings depending on which game we are playing.

Let's face it; the handicap and advanced games are two different games with different tactics often having to be adopted, so why don't we recognise that fact with separate cards? I think we would find that the respective ratings would run sufficiently parallel, but even if not, I don't see discrepancies being a problem. What's wrong with a player having a handicap of, say, 2 for level and 1 for handicap, or vice versa?

Personally, I see the recording of handicap points on my card as quite irrelevant in helping me to measure my ability to play the advanced game. Handicap games can be fun, and with a different system I should make myself more available to play them, but when I may have worked hard to beat an opponent in level play there's a psychological deterrent against risking the 'hard-earned' against a high bisquer, notwithstanding the I may win. Whatever the result, handicap games never have the result of boosting my confidence, as they seem to reduce me to a bag of nerves.

I can see an advantage for rapid improvers to retain a single card, as they need the points from both games in order for their handicap to keep pace with their abilities. For those of us already on a plateau (handicap ratings above 1500, say), the keeping of two cards would be a boon, removing the fear of handicap play.

Two cards would allow the CA to disentangle the statistics to deal with the current problems. For instance, we could calculate seepage from each system by making year on year audits of index points.

In horseracing there are often different handicap ratings for flat racers on turf as against dirt even when they regularly interchange. If the Jockey Club can cope, let not Croquet be fazed. Let's just do it.

Edward Dymock  
Blackheath, London

### Missing you

The Croquet Players at Hurlingham Club send their best wishes to the CA staff in their new home. We hope they are enjoying the purpose built facilities, which they so deserve. It could be that they do not miss us - or that Portakabin - but we miss them! We miss their friendly and helpful presence at our Club.

Bronach Reid  
Chairman, Croquet Sub-Committee  
Hurlingham Club.

### Croquet Variants

I have been commissioned by the CA to produce a book on fun and alternative games of croquet.

This book will be in three parts. The first will give rules for some light-hearted games of croquet that can be played during an odd moment when there isn't the time or inclination to play a "proper" game. This will be followed by some non-standard variations to official versions of croquet. The final part will give some ideas for those who want to organize a croquet gymkana.

I am therefore asking for contributions to the book in any or all of the three categories. Essentially there are no boundaries to the contributions but please bear in mind the following points.

1. Do not send entries that need complicated diagrams to explain how they work. Simple diagrams are OK.
2. If I feel that an entry needs modifying or I have queries, I will contact you.
3. All accepted entries will have the donor acknowledged.
4. The games 4-ball, tag, three-person croquet, Time-share, snooker croquet, 4-hoop max, Getting in the washing, 10-minute croquet and robber are already in, so do not send these.
5. Any entry must have been tried out and found to work. Please include clear rules and scoring.
6. Do not send entries that are too com-

plicated.

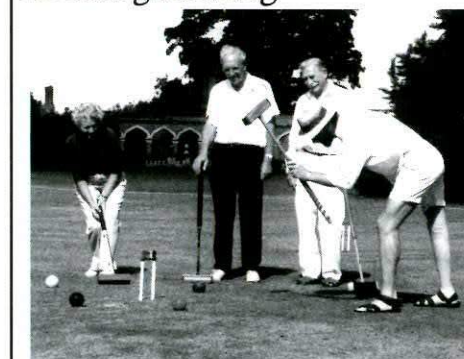
7. Word or plain text files are OK, also Publisher 2000.

8. I reserve the right to not include any entry. If I do so I will say why.

Please send contributions to me at  
5 Rosedale Ave.,  
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Glos GL10 2QH  
or email [dongaunt@compuserve.com](mailto:dongaunt@compuserve.com)

Don Gaunt  
Gloucestershire

### A clan gathering



Readers might find this photo (above) interesting. It has quite a story attached to it.

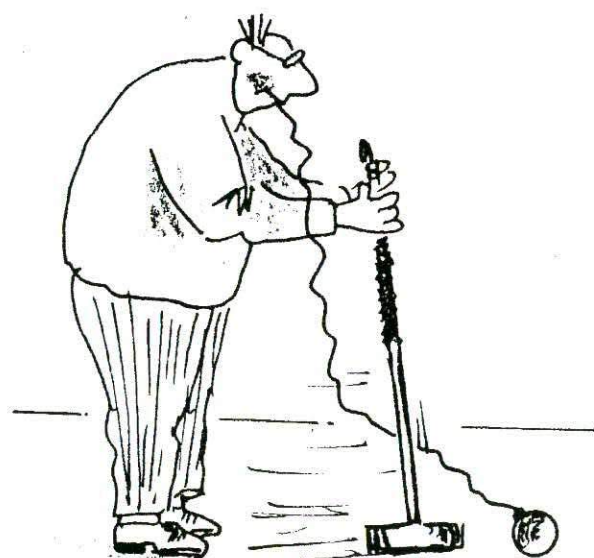
The players shown are (L to R) Barbara Toye, Les Toye, Les Toye, Jonathan Toye. Notice a certain pattern? Barbara and Les (from Devon) and I had all entered the August tournament at Hunstanton (in 2000 I think, though I'm not entirely sure). We hadn't met before. Les had a son called John, a teacher (as I was then). So we arranged a doubles match at my home club, Downham, where we play in the lovely grounds of Stow Hall, a mile from Downham Market.

The local paper was intrigued by Toye and Toye vs Toye and Toye so came and took a photo.

A sad footnote is that now both Les Toyes have died. Barbara's husband lasy year (as I understand), and my Dad (who is standing next to me) two days before his 85th birthday in April last year.

It was a lovely day.

Jonathan Toye  
Downham Market



Jack Shotton

**Brian had discovered an excellent means of extracting teeth, without the bother of a visit to the dentist.**



## 'The Perfect Game'

A vintage short story from GK Chesterton

We have all met the man who says that odd things have happened to him but who does not really believe that they were supernatural. My own position is the opposite of this. I believe in the supernatural as a matter of intellect and reason, not as a matter of personal experience, I do not see ghosts; I only see their inherent probability. But it is entirely a matter of the mere intelligence, not even of the emotions. My nerves and body are altogether of this earth, very earthy. But upon people of this temperament one weird incident will often leave a peculiar impression. And the weirdest circumstance that ever occurred to me happened a little while ago.

It consisted in nothing less than my playing a game, and playing it quite well for seventeen consecutive minutes. The ghost of my grandfather would have astonished me less. On one of these blue and burning afternoons I found myself, to my inexpressible astonishment, playing a game called croquet.

I had imagined that it belonged to the epoch of Leech and Anthony Trollope, and I had neglected to provide myself with those very long and luxuriant side-whiskers which are really essential for such a scene. I played it with a man whom we will call Parkinson, and with whom I had a semi-philosophical argument which lasted through the entire contest. It is deeply implanted in my mind that I had the best of the argument; but it is certain and beyond dispute that I had the worst of the game.

"Oh Parkinson, Parkinson!" I cried, patting him affectionately on the head with a mallet, "how far you really are from the pure love of the sport - you who can play. It is only we who play badly who love the Game itself. You love glory; you love applause; you love the earthquake voice of victory; you do not love Croquet. It is we the buglers who adore the occupation in the abstract. It is we whom it is art for art's sake. If we may see the face of Croquet herself (if I may so express myself) we are content to see her face

turned to us in anger. Our play is called amateurish; and we wear proudly the name of amateur, for amateur is but the French for Lovers".

"We accept all adventures from our Lady, the most disastrous or the most dreary. We wait outside her iron gates (I allude to the hoops), vainly essaying to enter. Our devoted balls, impetuous and full of chivalry, will not be confined within the pedantic boundaries of the mere croquet ground. Our balls seek honour in the ends of the earth; they turn up in the flower-beds and the conservatory; they are to be found in the front garden and the next street".

"No, Parkinson! The good painter loves his art. The good musician loves being a musician; the bad musician loves music. With such a pure and hopeless passion I do worship croquet. I love the game itself. I love the parallelogram of grass marked out with chalk or tape, as if its limits were the frontiers of my sacred fatherland, the four seas of Britain. I love the mere swing of the mallets, and the click of the balls is music. The four colours are to me sacramental and symbolic, like the red of martyrdom, or the white of Easter Day. You lose all this, my poor Parkinson. You have to solace yourself



H.F. Crowther-Smith

for the absence of this vision by the paltry consolation of being able to go through hoops and to hit the stick".

And I waved my mallet in the air with a graceful gaiety. "Don't be too sorry for me", said Parkinson, with his simple sarcasm. "I shall get over it in time. But it seems to me that the more a man likes a game the better he would want to play it. Suppose the pleasure in the thing itself does come first, doesn't the pleasure of success come naturally and inevitably afterwards?"

"Or, take your own simile of the Knight and his Lady-love. I admit the gentleman does first and foremost want to be in the lady's presence. But I never heard of a gentleman who wanted to look an utter ass when he was there". "Perhaps not; though he generally looks it", I replied.

"But the truth is that there is a fallacy in the simile, although it was my own. The happiness at which the lover is aiming is an infinite happiness, which can be extended without limit. The more he is loved, normally speaking, the jollier he will be. It is definitely true that the stronger the love of both lovers, the stronger will be the happiness. But it is not true that the stronger the play of both croquet players the stronger will be the game".

"It is logically possible - follow me closely here, Parkinson! - it is logically possible to play croquet too well to enjoy it at all. If you could put this blue ball through that hoop with any more difficulty than you pick it up with your hand, it would not be worth doing. If you could play unerringly, you would not play at all. The moment the game is perfect, the game disappears".

"I do not think, however", said Parkinson, "that you are in any immediate danger of effecting that sort of destruction. I do not think *your* croquet will vanish through its own faultless excellence. You are safe for the present". I again caressed him with the mallet. I knocked a ball about, wired myself, and resumed the thread of my discourse. The long warm evening had been gradually closing in, and by this

time it was almost twilight. By the time I had delivered four more fundamental principles, and my companion had gone through five more hoops, the dusk was verging upon dark.

"We shall have to give this up", said Parkinson, as he missed a ball almost for the first time. "I can't see a thing". "Nor can I", I answered, "and it is a comfort to reflect that I could not hit anything if I saw it". With that I struck a ball smartly, and sent it away into the darkness towards where the shadowy figure of Parkinson moved in the hot haze. Parkinson immediately uttered a loud and dramatic cry. The situation, indeed, called for it. I had hit the right ball.

Stunned with astonishment, I crossed the gloomy ground, and hit


my ball again. It went through the hoop. I could not see the hoop; but it was the right hoop. I shuddered from head to foot. Words were wholly inadequate, so I slouched heavily after that impossible ball. Again I hit away into the night, in what I supposed was the vague direction of the quite invisible peg.

And in the dead silence I heard the peg rattle as the ball struck it heavily. I threw down my mallet. "I can't stand this!" I said. "My ball has gone right three times. These things are not of this world". "Pick your mallet up", said Parkinson, "have another go". "I tell you I dare not. If I made another hoop like that I should see all the devils dancing there on the blessed grass". "Why devils?" asked Parkinson; "they

may be only fairies making fun of you. They are sending you the Perfect Game, which is no game".

I looked about me. The garden was full of a burning darkness, in which the faint glimmers had the look of fire. I stepped across the grass as if it burnt me, picked up my mallet, and hit the ball somewhere - somewhere where another ball might be. I heard the dull click of the balls touching, and ran into the house like the one pursued.

G.K. Chesterton,  
from *Tremendous Trifles* (1909)



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## 'The Others': image and elitism in croquet

Michael Wilson gives a personal view of snobbery within the game

If we haven't actually heard the conversations then we can imagine them:

'What's needed is new members.'

'Young people, that's what the game needs.'

'More youngsters playing our game.'

'Yes, of course,' says the longstanding club chairman, who's voted himself a parking space and a bench plaque. 'But then, we need the right sort of youngsters.'

'Oh, yes. We need the right sort of youngsters.'

'Youngsters who don't drink so much.'

'Who'll join us at teatime for a chat.'

'Who won't be too intense about the game.'

'The neat and tidy sort of youngster.'

'One who doesn't swear and who wears proper clothes.'

Before long, we wonder if new youngsters are wanted at all. Perhaps what is really wanted is old youngsters, a rejuvenation of the club's current membership. This is not a call for new blood, but rather a keening for some narrow criterion of membership which is no longer practicable. Change, oh my God - imagine it!

Committees are the same in all walks of life, from sewing circles to local government. A vigorously waved banner of progress can't hide a group of friends who want to preside over their own kingdom without the threat of change. But in croquet especially, we have a paradox which extends beyond the club committees. This paradox centres on The Others. Other people, new people, outsiders. We want them, because we see the many benefits which sports can gain from popularity. Yet we don't want them, because they will undoubtedly spoil what we already have.

Whatever we say about croquet's aura, there are clear reasons why people do and don't join croquet clubs and for most of them it has little to do with whether or not hitting balls with a mallet is enjoyable in itself. Croquet clubs have a powerful image in the

ignorant conscious, an image that would be difficult to shake off in any circumstances. And shaking that image off is impossible given the simple fact that no-one in the game really wants to lose it at all.

No, for all the moaning about development and the token marketing that goes on, we don't want anything to change at all.

Not really.



Let's face it, most of us are in croquet because we were drawn to its very image. Of course not the stale archetype of pensioners' pat-ball, which we'd love the media to dispel for us. Croquet, as we're tired of explaining to the uninitiated, is unfathomably skilful. But nevertheless, croquet as it is played today has an image which attracts the majority of its followers, and that image is one of exclusivity. It is an elitist's sport.

Croquet is not elitist because it is a snob's game, or a rich person's game, or a difficult game to learn. Indeed, at least one of these is untrue. In essence though it is elite, simply because it is unusual. People choose to play it because they would rather take a road less travelled.

We should recognise, for example, that those young people who choose to play the sport are making a daring statement. They don't want to join in the activities of the common herd. They want something more exclusive, more mysterious, an esoteric pursuit with something other-worldly about it. Something different. And we can guess why. An exclusive pursuit allows the individual to shine more

brightly. A sparsely populated pursuit allows an amount of crony-ism, the pleasures of recognition and a close-knit community that know who's in and who's outside: who 'we' are and who represent 'The Others'. Croquet's other-worldliness also fuels a certain escapism which is barely quashed by the practical rigours of hard, skilful competition.

Contrast snooker's aficionados, a set who have followed the crowds and hugged to the popularising output of the TV. Anyone who has been to a snooker club recently will find that the gentlemen after-dinner billiards players are conspicuously absent. Gone too are the seekers of an 'alternative' pastime. Times they have a-changed. I remember my *Tiger Book of Sport*, circa 1974, had snooker on a page with other 'seldom-seen sports' (there was no reference to croquet, weltering presumably with the 'never-seen sports'). Anybody surfing their TV channels during the 1980s, however, would've been lucky to catch a snooker-free hour. Snooker's dominating group is consequently the mass of urban youth, with its contemporary manner and occasionally astonishing talent.

No apologies for comparing the two games. They have become opposite extremes in some ways, yet they require similar skills and offer not dissimilar satisfactions: they were once played in the same atmosphere by the same people. What happened to snooker? Will the same happen to croquet? Is that what croquet wants?

Indoor courts, baying crowds, skin-head croquet geniuses playing truant in order to practice that octuple... it's a far cry from the current game, but isn't it equally valid? Isn't it even quite possible? We're just waiting for the Alex Higgins of croquet to spring up out of the Cheltenham ghettos, or a Ronnie O'Sullivan figure to drag his fans to Budleigh.

And of course such change - heaven forbid - would see the top levels of the game soar beyond recognition. We know how standards suffer in games which are dedicatedly middle-class.

Illustration by HF Crowther-Smith

Finding genuine high-flyers needs a large pool of participants. Look at the standard of football in countries with a large population of urban poor. Okay, you can't play croquet in a back-alley with a tin can, but the point is still there. We know that cricket, for one, has suffered irreparably from post-war decline in interest among the urban working population.

So, talented individuals from the broadest demographic possible. Is this a likely change in croquet? Interested groups from a similarly broad demographic - what about that? Fans bawling from the sidelines mid-break - 'Go on Reg, wellie it, mate!' - kids in jeans giving the old guard a pasting... visible antagonism, air-punching elation... 'Give 'im a kicking, Rob!' Do we want it, Yea or Nay?

I bet the Nays take it by a landslide. And most of the voters will be quite happy to denounce out loud any such heretical proposals. 'Let's keep our sport for the elite who appreciate it'

In which case, where do the new members come from?

Of course it is nice to support the preservationist slant. We all basically like croquet the way it is or we wouldn't be involved in it now. The atmosphere which surrounds it is, for one thing, unutterably beautiful. Even the 'radical' Palm Beach project has used

Hurlingham as a template for its design. Teas, parkland, blue-skies and whites - for anyone with a fondness for the picture created by English country house mythology, croquet has a charm rivalled only by village cricket. Indeed, this image is a priceless resource, one which naturally markets itself to elitists and escapists.

Part of croquet's whole attraction is that it is currently played in a world removed from mainstream twenty-first-century life. We shouldn't be surprised that The Others don't appreciate the intricacies of a pastime they see from over a barbed-wire fence nor that they will muddy the carpets when they're invited in. What we have in croquet is a little enclave where populist existence, with its watered-down street cultures, crowds and hubbub, is banished. And when we say yes to lovely new fee-paying members, we expect them to wipe their feet clean and kowtow to our neatly preserved Eden in its entirety. 'They can join, but only if they do things our way.'

With new members change is inevitable though, especially if they arrive en masse. New members, young members, however much they are drawn by croquet's current state and some of its surrounding myths, are bringing changes all the time, with new styles in everything from t-shirts

to roquets.

It is a sad yet classic problem - 'I know my kingdom is collapsing but the only way of preserving it is by changing it beyond recognition - by making it somehow no longer mine.' People who cry out for more members generally want subservients, an influx of numbers and money but with no force for change. Hence the little committee drama imagined above.

What, then, do we want? How do we encourage more people to join and at the same time preserve the game's pleasant exclusivities? What should change and by how much? What will the new generation bring? If crowds are undesirable, then can the game really rely on us one or two oddballs to keep it alive?

Compromise is of course possible, and we should hope nothing that is great about croquet will be lost, and this includes a large part of its current image: its 'other-worldliness' and, in a good sense, its 'elitism' - its location down the road less travelled by. We must also hope that any changes prove to be positive ones. But one thing is sure, where large groups of people are concerned we have very little control, and which of The Others do eventually come into croquet, and how they affect it, will be decided not by 'us' but by 'Them.'

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## Sonoma-Cutrer Gives World Singles the Boot

Garth Eliassen reports on the demise of California's premier event

The Sonoma-Cutrer World Singles Championship, which for the last seventeen years has been held at Sonoma-Cutrer Vineyards in Sonoma County, has just been sent packing by the winery's corporate owners, Brown-Forman of Louisville, Kentucky.

This year's World Singles Championship was scheduled for May 12-17, but tournament sponsors and managers are scrambling to find another site in the California wine country, north of San Francisco. There aren't many options. Meadowood Resort in the Napa Valley has two championship courts, and there are a few private courts in the area.

To further complicate the issue, Brown-Forman and Sonoma-Cutrer intend to hold a new tournament, possibly a one-day invitational, on May 17, the date originally set for the World Singles final.

Sonoma-Cutrer's new tournament, whatever the format, will apparently exclusively benefit the Make-A-Wish Foundation, which has been a primary beneficiary of previous World Championships, sharing the bounty with other Bay Area charities including the Polly Klaas Foundation.

The World Singles Championship, an extraordinarily successful fundraiser, last year drew 1,200 spectators and raised over \$1 million at its finals-day luncheon and wine auction, which has become a major event in the Bay Area's annual social calendar.

The split will open competition among sponsors, managers, and contributors, including the numerous

Sonoma and Napa wineries that have donated fine wines for the tournament's fundraising auctions.

Brown-Forman bought Sonoma-Cutrer in 1999 and merged the winery into Brown-Forman Wine Estates, which includes Fetzer Vineyards in Mendocino County as well as other wineries in California and Australia.

It has been one and a half years since Brown-Forman gave the pink slip to Sonoma-Cutrer founder Brice Jones but promised that the World Croquet Championship would continue to have a home at Sonoma-Cutrer.

"Brown-Forman is a great corporate citizen," the corporation's director of communications Phil Lynch then told the Santa Rosa Press Democrat, "and the people of Sonoma County can rest assured that Sonoma-Cutrer will continue to play a role in sponsoring these important events."

What about the courts? The tournament shuffle raises the question of Brown-Forman's commitment to croquet in general and whether other events will continue to be held there. The Sonoma-Cutrer Croquet Club is continuing to use the courts for the time being and currently has 25 members.

The Sonoma-Cutrer World Singles Championship debuted in August, 1986, four years after the winery was founded. Jones took the new tournament under his wings and invited top players from around the world to come and participate, and the championship rapidly gained a reputation as the world's premier croquet event.

Tom McDonnell of Santa Rosa, a

croquet vet from the classic Hollywood days who moved with his family to Santa Rosa, helped establish croquet in San Francisco and at Meadowood Resort, and introduced Jones to the potential of the game shortly after the winery's main building was completed in 1981.

Jones was sold. In January, 1984, he began construction on two oversized championship courts below the winery's wine-tasting terrace and surrounded them with magnificent stone embankments. The courts have been considered for many years to be the best in the world. One year, in fact, many of the championship's foreign players grumbled that the courts were too perfect, and therefore too easy for top-level championship play. Triple peels were common during each tournament and became the standard to strive for until the more intense quadruple, quintuple, and sextuple peels debuted in top-level play.

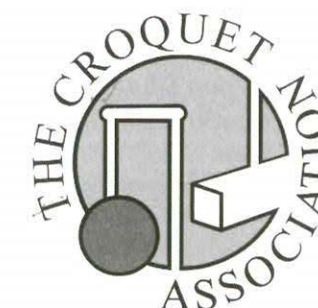
The first Sonoma-Cutrer championship in 1986 was won by Stephen Mulliner of England. For the most part the competition has been dominated by foreign players, despite occasional runs by American players. In 1991 Jim Bast made it to the final and was about to win, but overrolled the last hoop after peeling partner and had to shoot offcourt. David Maugham took advantage of the misstep and won the title. In 1999 Jacques Fournier, then seventeen, became the first American and the youngest ever to win a world championship.



Left: David Maugham in play at the Sonoma World Championship, Right: The wine auction gets underway

# THE CROQUET GAZETTE

## TOURNAMENT DIGEST 2002



Looking back through previous copies of the Gazette, there has long been a problem with the completeness of the CA's archive of results.

In the 1970s, the dearth of tournaments allowed editors to publish details of every club tournament taking place throughout the country. Now, with close to 200 tournaments a year, the Gazette cannot hope to act as a journal of record for all calendar events.

Even so, it does intend to continue reporting of major events and championships, and, for the sake of historical completeness, the Tournament Committee will be assisting in making sure that this is the case. In the short term, there have been some unsatisfactory gaps in reporting of tournaments run by the CA itself, and this supplement seeks to address that by providing a summary of all major competition results.

### Golf Croquet Championships

#### Inter Club

##### Final

Tyneside bt Hurlingham 4.5 - 2.5

#### All England Handicap

##### Final:

Abdul Ahmad bt David Mounfield 10-5

#### Inter Counties Championship

CA Select Team

#### Ascot Cup

##### Final

Nelson Morrow bt John Moore 2-1

#### Ranelagh Cup

Chris & Roddy Sheen

#### Open Championship

Final: Reg Bamford bt John Moore 2-0

#### WCF World Championship

Final: Khaled Younis bt Salah Hassan 4-7,7-4,5-7,7-5,7-5

#### Lancashire Open

Final: John Moore bt Alan Pidcock 2-0

#### Ramsgate Open

Final: Reg Bamford bt Robert Fulford 2-0

#### Yorkshire Open

Final: Salah Hassan bt Khalid Younis 2-0

### Handicap, team & other CA events

#### Peel Memorial Handicap

##### Men's Champion

David Mooney

##### Women's Champion

Sue Best

##### Mixed Doubles

Don Williamson and Janet Davies

#### All England Handicap

David Kitson

#### Students Championship

##### Singles Event

##### Final

Michael Blackwell bt James Mackay +4tpo -18tp +3

##### Team Event

Oxford University bt City University

#### Schools Championship

Eton College bt Spalding Grammar School 2-1

#### Veterans Championship

##### Winner: Ken Smith

##### Runner-up: Bill Arliss

### Club Events

#### Inter Club

##### Final

Colchester bt Bristol 5-2

#### Mary Rose

##### Final

Wrest Park bt Medway 4-3

#### Longman Cup

##### Final

Zenmet bt Bristol 4-3

#### Secretary's Shield

##### Final

Bowdon bt East Dorset (Parkstone) 4-3



# Association Croquet Championships - Level Play

## British Open Championships

Hurlingham 30 June to 7 July

### Semi-Finals

Reg Bamford bt Jonathan Kirby  
+17tp +10sxp +25sxp  
Chris Clarke bt David Goacher  
+5tp +26tp -26tp -16tp +26tp

### Final

Bamford bt Clarke  
+12 +26sxp +26sxp

### Open Doubles Winners

Chris Clarke & David Maugham bt  
Reg Bamford & Stephen Mulliner  
-17, +24tp(C), +24tp(M)

## Men's Championship 2002

Cheltenham 23 - 26 May

### Semi-Finals

Bamford bt Openshaw  
+26qp -26tp +13tpo  
Goacher bt Farthing  
+16tp +16tp

### Final

Bamford bt Goacher  
+17sxp +15sxp +17octp

## Women's Championship 2002

Jenny Williams bt Beatrice McGlen  
+4, +7

## Mixed Doubles Champions

David Openshaw & Kath Priestley

## European Championship

Jersey 19 - 22 September

Matt Burrow bt Stephen Mulliner  
-6, -17tp, +8otp, +26tp, +26tp

## WCF World Championship

Wellington 2 - 8 December

### Final

Robert Fulford bt Toby Garrison  
+26tp, +26tp, -17tp, +15tp

## Selection Events

### President's Cup - Parkstone

Robert Fulford

### Chairman's Salver - Budleigh

Mark Avery

### Spencer Ell Cup - Hunstanton

Keith Aiton

### Treasurer's Tankard - Surbiton

David Magee

### Selectors' Weekend - Wrest Park

Martin Granger Brown

### Barlow Bowl - Cheltenham

Sarah Burrow

### Longman Bowl - Cheltenham

Gene Mears

## Regional Championships

### South Of England Championship 2002

Compton 13 - 15 September

### Semi-Finals

David Maugham bt Ed Duckworth  
-2 -20 +17tp +25tp +26tp  
Tim Wilkins bt Dave Kibble  
-12tp +4 -23tp +5tp +23

### Final

Maugham bt Wilkins  
+3 +26

### Western Championship 2002

Parkstone 4 - 6 May

### Semi-Finals

Robert Fulford bt David Goacher  
-8, +26tp, +9tp  
Peter Trimmer bt David Openshaw  
-14, +17tp, +17

### Final

Fulford bt Trimmer  
+26tp, +24tp, +26tp

### Eastern Championship 2002

Hunstanton 26 - 28 July

### Semi-Finals

David Maugham bt Robin Brown  
+17 +26tp +17tp  
Jeremy Dyer bt Phil Cordingley  
+25tp +2 -18tp +12

### Final

Maugham bt Dyer  
-3 +17 +16tp -26tp +1

### Northern Championship 2002

Bowdon 23 - 26 August

### Semi-Finals

Chris Clarke bt Colin Irwin  
-26tp, +16tp, +4tpo, -16, +26tp  
David Maugham bt Mark Avery  
+26tp, -8, +26tp, -26tp, +26tp

### Final

Maugham bt Clarke  
+12tp, +21, -10, +26tp

### Coles Championship 2002

Cheltenham 4 - 6 May

### Semi-Finals

Reg Bamford bt Chris Farthing  
+26sxp, +26sxp  
Mark Avery bt Stephen Mulliner  
+24tp, +25tp

### Final

Bamford bt Avery  
+26sxp, -26tp, +26sxp, -5tp, +26qp

## Surrey Championship 2002

Surbiton 14 - 16 June

### Semi-Finals

Stephen Mulliner bt Jeremy Dyer  
+26tp, -13otp, +26tp  
Jeff Dawson bt Lionel Tibble  
-13tp, +10tp, +4tp

### Final

Dawson bt Mulliner  
+13otp, +26tp, +14

## Team Events

### Home Internationals 2002

Nottingham 15 - 16 June 2002

1 England 3 wins  
2 Ireland 2 wins  
3 Wales 1 win  
4 Scotland 0 wins

England bt Wales 4-0

Ireland bt Scotland 4-0

England bt Scotland 3-0

Ireland bt Wales 5-0

England bt Ireland 3-1

Wales bt Scotland 4-1

## 88th Inter Counties 2002

Southwick & Compton 1 - 4 June

### DIVISION 1

County	Pd	Won	Games
Essex	10	8	21
Northumberland	10	7	17
Surrey	10	6	19
Gloucester	10	6	18
Cheshire	10	6	15
Nottinghamshire	10	5	15
Middlesex	10	5	14
Avon	10	5	14
Dorset	10	4	14
Sussex	10	2	10
Lancashire	10	1	8

### DIVISION 2

Hertfordshire	10	9	24
Suffolk	10	8	24
Glamorgan	10	7	21
Yorkshire	10	7	17
Bedfordshire	10	7	16
Warwickshire	10	4	15
Northamptonshire	10	4	14
Devon	10	3	10
CA Select	10	3	7
Kent	10	2	10
Berkshire	10	1	7

Dorset, Sussex and Lancashire were relegated to Division 2.

Hertfordshire, Suffolk and Glamorgan were promoted to Division 1.

# World Association Croquet Rankings

	Grade	Games	Wins	Index	%age
1	R Bamford [SA]	2867	105	88	2776 83.8
2	R Fulford [E]	2774	95	74	2881 77.9
3	B Fleming [A]	2656	88	73	2621 83.0
4	D Maugham [E]	2639	149	107	2605 71.8
5	C Clarke [E]	2613	100	68	2670 68.0
6	T Garrison [NZ]	2607	65	46	2691 70.8
7	J Dyer [E]	2578	109	70	2642 64.2
8	J Fournier [USA]	2569	46	38	2647 82.6
9	M Burrow [Jer]	2562	82	58	2563 70.7
10	J Prince [NZ]	2560	28	22	2515 78.6
11	G Beale [NZ]	2555	13	10	2555 76.9
12	D Bulloch [NZ]	2554	55	41	2447 74.5
13	S Mulliner [E]	2551	82	50	2578 61.0
14	R Jackson [NZ]	2548	141	117	2507 83.0
15	M Avery [E]	2547	104	71	2559 68.3
16	R McInerney [I]	2547	47	38	2598 80.9
17	B Wislang [NZ]	2547	45	29	2573 64.4
18	S Comish [E]	2533	13	10	2535 76.9
19	G Bryant [NZ]	2521	102	75	2465 73.5
20	M Clarke [A]	2516	80	58	2524 72.5
21	M McInerney [I]	2516	53	31	2495 58.5
22	L Watson [A]	2494	99	72	2423 72.7
23	J Stark [USA]	2493	45	27	2380 60.0
24	I Dumergue [A]	2490	41	25	2461 61.0
25	C Irwin [E]	2489	60	41	2533 68.3
26	J Hogan [NZ]	2484	28	19	2477 67.9
27	P Parkinson [NZ]	2474	109	76	2382 69.7
28	M Suter [SA]	2474	32	19	2456 59.4
29	D Goacher [E]	2464	77	42	2346 54.5
30	D Openshaw [E]	2462	116	72	2512 62.1
31	J Dawson [E]	2459	76	49	2361 64.5
32	P Skinley [NZ]	2450	84	53	2412 63.1
33	S Williams [I]	2445	47	29	2484 61.7
34	J Kirby [S]	2442	118	75	2448 63.6
35	W Louw [USA]	2434	29	22	2437 75.9
36	L McBride [C]	2434	76	60	2468 78.9
37	E Duckworth [E]	2431	66	43	2502 65.2
38	P Trimmer [E]	2425	37	24	2429 64.9
39	J Sutton [A]	2421	117	82	2418 70.1
40	J Death [E]	2416	39	24	2417 61.5
41	D Anderson [A]	2416	40	31	2541 77.5
42	J Gibbons [E]	2416	118	77	2513 65.3
43	G Bury [A]	2407	128	97	2427 75.8
44	R Baker [NZ]	2407	29	17	2366 58.6
45	S Meatheringham [A]	2404	126	96	2423 76.2
46	D Harrison-Wood [E]	2402	122	87	2324 71.3
47	P Hort [E]	2382	61	36	2379 59.0
48	B Dawson [A]	2375	55	36	2445 65.5
49	L Harvey [A]	2363	100	70	2406 70.0
50	S Hockey [A]	2358	72	46	2424 63.9

# UK Golf Croquet Rankings

	Grade	Games	Wins	Index	%age
1	R Bamford	159.12	47	43	159.74 91.5
2	S Mulliner	148.27	23	14	137.42 60.9
3	J Moore	139.48	105	75	133.76 71.4
4	R Fulford	138.21	31	22	138.58 71.0
5	C Sheen	131.70	66	42	133.78 63.6
6	D Old	124.49	68	42	127.15 61.8
7	I Brand	124.30	55	32	128.02 58.2
8	S Curry	123.69	48	30	122.64 62.5
9	N Morrow	122.78	26	18	118.57 69.2
10	T Weston	121.29	40	23	120.93 57.5
11	E Dymock	120.39	22	14	119.53 63.6
12	D Hopkins	119.46	34	24	121.45 70.6
13	R Ware	118.44	81	48	119.17 59.3
14	A Pidcock	117.52	16	11	117.38 68.8
15	W Arliss	116.18	66	37	120.42 56.1
16	D Beck	113.66	48	26	106.08 54.2
17	P Strover	111.87	21	15	118.31 71.4
18	J Hawkins	107.08	18	9	112.51 50.0
19	R Knapp	106.30	46	22	102.12 47.8
20	T Mockett	106.12	16	9	110.85 56.3
21	C Jones	104.96	20	9	102.87 45.0
22	J Hackett	104.56	32	15	98.75 46.9
23	K Mason	103.52	30	14	104.15 46.7
24	R Brand	100.50	30	15	106.29 50.0
25	T Bower	100.42	17	8	102.26 47.1
26	J Jeffrey	100.37	26	11	103.41 42.3
27	M Gibson	100.26	11	7	104.70 63.6
28	S Jones	99.24	19	8	101.60 42.1
29	R Longbottom	98.54	13	6	93.33 46.2
30	P Quinn	98.48	11	4	95.88 36.4

# World's Best Triple Peelers

	Total tp's	Games played	Games with tp's	Total wins	Wins with tp's
1	Bamford [SA]	69	105	65.7%	88 78.4%
2	Jackson [NZ]	66	132	50.0%	108 61.1%
3	Maugham [E]	64	149	43.0%	107 59.8%
4	Fulford [E]	61	95	64.2%	74 82.4%
5	Clarke C [E]	58	100	58.0%	68 85.3%
6	Bassett T [A]	58	110	52.7%	77 75.3%
7	Fleming B [A]	46	88	52.3%	73 63.0%
8	Avery [E]	45	106	42.5%	71 63.4%
9	Openshaw [E]	43	118	36.4%	74 58.1%
10	Dyer [E]	42	109	38.5%	70 60.0%
11	Sutton [A]	40	117	34.2%	82 48.8%
12	Burrow [Jer]	39	84	46.4%	60 65.0%
13	Garrison [NZ]	34	65	52.3%	46 73.9%
14	Harrison-Wood [E]	34	122	27.9%	87 39.1%
15	Watson [A]	33	99	33.3%	72 45.8%
16	Mulliner [E]	32	82	39.0%	50 64.0%
17	Bury [A]	30	128	23.4%	97 30.9%
18	Kibble [E]	30	135	22.2%	72 41.7%
19	Kirby [S]	28	118	23.7%	75 37.3%
20	Dawson J [E]	27	78	34.6%	51 52.9%

Sextuples in 2002: Reg Bamford (42 + 1 octuple); Robert Fulford (16); David Maugham (13); Dave Kibble (3); Trevor Bassett (2); Daniel Anderson (1); Ed Cunningham (1); Jacques Fournier (1); Keith Aiton (1); Stephen Mulliner (1); Mark Avery (1); Greg Bury (1); Patrick Hort (1); Jeremy Dyer (1); Simon Hockey (1); Toby Garrison (1); Chris Patmore (1)



# UK Association Croquet Rankings

Top 120 players as at end of year 2002

	Grade	Games	Wins	Index	%age		Grade	Games	Wins	Index	%age		
1	R Bamford [SA]	2868	105	88	2776	83.8	61	J Toye [E]	2149	13	5	2070	38.5
2	R Fulford [E]	2775	95	74	2881	77.9	62	J Davis [Lux]	2148	25	12	2122	48.0
3	D Maugham [E]	2639	149	107	2604	71.8	63	R Rogerson [I]	2145	12	5	2201	41.7
4	C Clarke [E]	2613	100	68	2670	68.0	64	P Duckworth [Jer]	2145	20	9	2157	45.0
5	J Dyer [E]	2578	109	70	2642	64.2	65	P Castell [E]	2127	109	60	2151	55.0
6	M Burrow [Jer]	2564	84	60	2586	71.4	66	A Linton [E]	2126	33	18	2193	54.5
7	S Mulliner [E]	2552	82	50	2579	61.0	67	J Surgenor [S]	2116	40	31	2130	77.5
8	R McInerney [I]	2547	47	38	2598	80.9	68	P Nash [E]	2112	12	6	2137	50.0
9	M Avery [E]	2544	106	71	2496	67.0	69	J Davies [E]	2109	56	33	2071	58.9
10	S Comish [E]	2533	13	10	2535	76.9	70	H Bottomley [E]	2107	29	19	2091	65.5
11	M McInerney [I]	2516	53	31	2496	58.5	71	A Lines [E]	2103	43	23	2096	53.5
12	C Irwin [E]	2496	62	43	2565	69.4	72	M Blackwell [E]	2096	19	11	2096	57.9
13	M Suter [SA]	2474	32	19	2456	59.4	73	K Carter [E]	2086	68	41	2108	60.3
14	D Openshaw [E]	2466	118	74	2528	62.7	74	W Prichard [W]	2084	16	8	2042	50.0
15	D Goucher [E]	2465	77	42	2347	54.5	75	P Stephenson [E]	2081	12	8	2123	66.7
16	J Dawson [E]	2451	78	51	2391	65.4	76	J Williams [NZ]	2078	102	49	2035	48.0
17	S Williams [I]	2445	47	29	2484	61.7	77	R Jenkins [E]	2077	56	27	2023	48.2
18	J Kirby [S]	2442	118	75	2448	63.6	78	S Burrow [Jer]	2074	43	26	2082	60.5
19	E Duckworth [E]	2431	66	43	2502	65.2	79	L Bradforth [E]	2072	106	47	2077	44.3
20	P Trimmer [E]	2427	37	24	2432	64.9	80	J Mackay [W]	2069	42	24	2044	57.1
21	J Gibbons [E]	2421	118	77	2518	65.3	81	P Eardley [E]	2065	22	11	2010	50.0
22	J Death [E]	2416	39	24	2417	61.5	82	N Morrow [NZ]	2061	86	39	2047	45.3
23	D Harrison-Wood [E]	2402	122	87	2324	71.3	83	W Ormerod [E]	2051	16	7	1966	43.8
24	P Hort [E]	2382	61	36	2379	59.0	84	P Smith [E]	2050	63	30	2108	47.6
25	T Burge [E]	2356	12	5	2246	41.7	85	C Dent [E]	2038	61	36	2106	59.0
26	R Beijderwellen [NL]	2354	122	72	2318	59.0	86	R Smith [E]	2037	50	33	2031	66.0
27	I Bond [S]	2348	14	9	2319	64.3	87	I Plummer [E]	2037	23	9	1980	39.1
28	K Aiton [S]	2343	71	34	2414	47.9	88	P Harbord [E]	2036	13	8	2006	61.5
29	A Johnston [I]	2340	65	39	2496	60.0	89	L Whittaker [E]	2034	62	30	2028	48.4
30	P Cordingley [E]	2326	108	58	2378	53.7	90	T Browne [I]	2033	31	16	2016	51.6
31	R Brown [E]	2325	64	31	2297	48.4	91	C Jones [E]	2032	40	20	2032	50.0
32	J Guest [E]	2318	164	91	2341	55.5	92	P Swaffield [E]	2027	39	21	2091	53.8
33	D Gaunt [E]	2316	48	30	2289	62.5	93	N Harris [E]	2025	41	26	1974	63.4
34	D Mundy [E]	2301	156	88	2402	56.4	94	P Death [E]	2017	20	10	2008	50.0
35	R Tribe [E]	2296	21	14	2304	66.7	95	T Wood [E]	2017	12	3	1890	25.0
36	P Taylor [E]	2294	62	39	2304	62.9	96	B Neal [E]	2014	24	9	2037	37.5
37	D Kibble [E]	2287	136	72	2250	52.9	97	P Payne [CH]	2012	47	23	1998	48.9
38	C Farthing [E]	2287	67	35	2200	52.2	98	A Pidcock [E]	2011	40	20	2006	50.0
39	R White [E]	2284	30	20	2302	66.7	99	S Patel [E]	2001	58	24	1994	41.4
40	T Wilkins [E]	2281	113	58	2303	51.3	100	M Granger Brown [E]	1993	46	26	2088	56.5
41	L Tibble [E]	2279	107	63	2296	58.9	101	D Hector [E]	1991	14	9	2019	64.3
42	J Evans [W]	2272	32	19	2258	59.4	102	J Allen [E]	1984	55	29	1951	52.7
43	D Magee [S]	2256	78	51	2261	65.4	103	B Burnett [E]	1983	41	21	2000	51.2
44	I Burrige [W]	2252	23	11	2224	47.8	104	M Evans [E]	1979	31	21	1982	67.7
45	A McInerney [I]	2239	19	9	2230	47.4	105	G Bennett [E]	1978	60	25	1938	41.7
46	M Heap [E]	2227	42	18	2159	42.9	106	E Newell [I]	1972	19	7	1952	36.8
47	C Williams [W]	2226	77	43	2277	55.8	107	B Wainman [E]	1968	25	13	2005	52.0
48	J Watson [E]	2224	12	9	2279	75.0	108	B Smith [E]	1967	49	26	1991	53.1
49	T Mrozinski [W]	2221	38	26	2275	68.4	109	T Weston [E]	1966	61	29	1997	47.5
50	D J Nicholson [E]	2200	43	25	2179	58.1	110	B Rannie [S]	1956	72	38	1972	52.8
51	I Vincent [E]	2190	51	26	2213	51.0	111	T Dustan-Smith [E]	1953	22	15	1946	68.2
52	N Evans [E]	2188	38	25	2227	65.8	112	P Whittall [E]	1951	10	5	1997	50.0
53	G Noble [E]	2186	47	26	2170	55.3	113	R Ashwell [E]	1951	19	8	1925	42.1
54	B Elwell [E]	2181	11	7	2232	63.6	114	B McGlen [E]	1948	34	19	1992	55.9
55	C Patmore [E]	2176	68	31	2195	45.6	115	J Hawkins [E]	1944	23	11	1987	47.8
56	D Foulser [E]	2175	102	57	2195	55.9	116	C Edwards [E]	1938	56	29	1916	51.8
57	E Cunningham [I]	2174	47	19	2152	40.4	117	D Tutt [E]	1928	21	14	2039	66.7
58	S Tudor [W]	2157	34	17	2144	50.0	118	R Williams [S]	1927	34	17	1874	50.0
59	P Fitzgerald [I]	2156	16	9	2197	56.3	119	T Coles [E]	1919	10	3	1966	30.0
60	I Lines [E]	2154	61	35	2104	57.4	120	D Lilly [E]	1918	10	4	1862	40.0

# Code of Practice for Setting Hoops

This article reviews the recent arguments over hoop setting and suggests a code of practice that should be adopted for the setting of hoops for tournaments. Grateful thanks are offered to Roger Wood, Colin Irwin and Jeff Dawson for their comments and the additional material they have provided. Bill Arliss, Chairman, Golf Croquet Committee.

As most readers will be aware, there has been a vast amount of correspondence in recent years about the tolerances to which hoops should be set for competitive Croquet. Most has centred on the gaps between the largest ball diameters and the hoops and only passing reference has been made to the firmness of the hoop setting in the ground. I suppose this is to be expected as it is a very simple matter to measure sizes with feeler gauges but a totally different problem to measure firmness in the ground. What is firm to one person may be slack to another.

**"Runability":** I am also certain that most good players will agree that the hoop/ball size tolerance is only one factor in the determining the "runability" of a hoop. In fact if we are considering soft and wet lawns, the "runability" is only marginally affected by clearance, particularly at the larger clearances. In identical ground conditions a wide hoop will always be easier to run than a narrow hoop. However a hoop set in rock hard ground at 3/16" clearance is likely to be much harder to run than on set at 1/32" in very soft ground. It should be clearly understood that hoops are very seldom cleanly run and that some wire is almost always taken. Thus the response of a ball when it hits a wire is the most critical factor. In order to understand the process of running a hoop, let us look at the possible ways in which a ball will progress through a hoop.

(a) The ball passes through the hoop with no contact with the hoop itself. The hoop is scored.

(b) The ball contacts one hoop upright, makes a single change in direction and exits a hoop without contacting the other wire. The hoop is scored.

(c) The ball contacts one wire is bounced to the opposite wire, bounces backwards and forwards several times

before it exits the hoop. The hoop is scored. (Listening to the sounds made when a ball passes through a hoop would suggest that this is most common).

(d) The ball behaves as in (c) but loses all forward momentum before it has cleared the hoop. The hoop is not scored.

(e) The ball hits one upright and is effectively rejected on the playing side of the hoop. The hoop is not scored.

(f) In cases where the ball has been inaccurately aimed at the hoop, it bounces backwards off the hoop then rolls forward through the hoop due to its forward rotational energy. The hoop is scored.

I have tried to analyse mathematically what happens when a ball contacts a wire and found it technically very complex. It is not my intention to include vast reams of mathematics in this paper but just to say that I concluded that the change in direction when a ball hit the wire was mainly governed by the comparison between the elasticity of the ball and the elasticity of the hoop mounting, the latter being very low in soft ground. Thus with very hard ground, unless the angle of contact was very slight, case (e) was most likely to occur. With the softer ground and with greater angles of contact, cases (b) to (d) where far more likely to occur. It is also easy to see how the hoop tolerance is likely to have most effect in deciding between responses (c) or (d). Those who have played indoors will know how difficult it is to run angled hoops, and the indoor hoops are the full 1/8". It is simply because the uprights are welded to a steel plate and there is no give or absorption of impact at all. A hundred years ago they experimented with hoops set in oak blocks under the ground, and abandoned the idea because it made hoop running so difficult. Firmness is everything and at the marginal level it is much more important than clearance.

It is because of these variations that the Tournament Committee is unwilling or in fact unable to stipulate at the beginning of a season, what the tolerances should be for each competition if some measure of constant "runability" is to be maintained from tournament to tournament. This can only be main-

tained if the Manager/ROT is allowed to vary tolerances dependent on ground conditions at the time of play and the level of players in the tournament. I am fully aware that some Managers have in the past reduced clearances to 1/32" which was technically illegal at that time and this has produced howls of protest. However one simple question that should be asked in these cases was 'did it stop the triples being performed in most games'. I agree that we cannot have ROTs taking the law into their own hands but unless play becomes generally impossible, should we not question whether we have got our regulation right or wrong?

**Maintainability:** A further factor in hoop performance which has become more evident to me during the last two seasons has been the maintainability of hoop settings during a tournament. My involvement with Golf Croquet, where hoop settings are much more likely to be abused by hard hitting, has brought home to me that it is very little good having a setting which measures up fully before play starts but rapidly deteriorates after a few hard contacts. Again practical experience has shown that it is possible with the use of correct procedures for hoop settings to last for considerable time even with the hard abuse of Golf Croquet. A situation that is commonly encountered with bad hoop settings is the 'rattling' hoop. If the ground around the carrot becomes compressed, it may be found that the hoop top can be moved very easily over a short distance, but then rapidly becomes firm as the edge of the carrot hole is encountered. This type of situation is far more likely to produce a 'blobbed' hoop. As a result in top class Golf Croquet, the players are always feeling hoop tightness before trying to run the hoop and if necessary will ask for a hoop to be tightened before they attempt it.

I hope that in the preceding paragraphs, I have managed to convey some of the major factors that affect hoop "runability". It is not my intention to review the actual settings that should be used for a particular event under specific ground conditions, that is the prerogative of the Tournament and organising committees. What I would like to do is suggest how a particular setting can be



reached and more importantly what procedures should be used if the settings are to be maintained for as long as possible.

**Setability :** The Tournament Regulations quite clearly require hoops to be reset in new holes at the commencement of each tournament. It is recognised that this is a very labour intensive task and therefore is not requested lightly. The need to ensure that there are no "rabbit runs" is one reason but really only a minor reason. The major reason is that new hoop holes give by far the best chance of getting a very firm base for a hoop mounting. Under normal conditions of weather, effective compression by players, growth of grass etc, ground not being used for hoop mounting will gradually become well compacted and will develop a fibrous structure near to the surface due to the growth of the grass roots. To set a new hoop position, the first task must be to remove two cores in suitable positions for placing the carrots of the moved hoop. Unless the ground is rock hard it is suggested that the carrot size should not be more than 1/2 - 5/8" diameter. The depth will depend upon ground conditions and could be 4 to 6" deep in very hard ground but reducing to no core at all in very soft conditions. There are no hard and fast rules to these dimensions but they should be chosen from experience such that when the hoop is driven home to its normal working position, the force necessary is not so great as 'bow' the hoops in the process. Do not hammer the centre of the crown, hammer directly above the uprights, alternating from side to side. The reason for this smaller core is that it ensures the ground surrounding the top of the carrot is well compacted but without breaking up its fibrous structure. Particular emphasis is made to the upper surface as it is this area that has by far the most effect on holding a hoop steady during the impact of a ball on the hoop. This can be deduced from a simple law of moments. Having placed the hoop in the prepared core holes, it should then be driven partially down into the ground until say 1 to 1.5" of carrot remain protruding above ground. The setting should then be checked with a ball and feeler gauges at a height at

which it is estimated the ball will pass through the hoop eventually. Should this be found incorrect, the hoop should be removed and some earth carefully scrapped from the appropriate side of the top 2 to 3" of one core hole and deposited on the opposite side. I have found the best method of performing this operation is to use a wide bladed screw driver or alternatively a large knife or chisel. The hoop can then be hammered down until firm and the measurements rechecked. The process can then be repeated until the required setting is obtained. Ideally the correct sizing should be reached when the carrots remain about 1/2" above the surface. It is strongly recommended that the 1/2" protrusion is always the starting point at the beginning of a tournament as this provide the best way of maintaining hoop settings during subsequent days. One point that must not be forgotten is a simple gauging check on the balls. Although the modern croquet ball is much more likely to maintain very good dimensional tolerances, it should not be assumed and a quick check to determine the maximum diameter should be made. The ball with the maximum diameter should then be used for setting. Checks such as this also identifies balls that may have a 'blister' and thus show slight ovality which may not be visible to the naked eye.

Having now discussed the initial setting, we must move on to how we maintain our settings. As play continues, the ground will become gradually more compressed as balls strike the hoops. The quite obvious way to maintain the firm setting is to physically drive the hoop further home until it becomes firm again. Naturally this can only happen a limited number of times as the carrots will gradually disappear below the surface. The laws do allow the carrots to sink by up to 1/2" so this does provide a fairly wide range of adjustment but we must consider what happens when this limit is reached. I have seen many hoop setters reach for their bucket of earth at this point and simply pack the bottom of the hoop hole. Over the course of years adding soil like this has the highly undesirable effect of raising humps around the hoop positions. Whilst this may produce a hoop that seems firm at the outset, its

performance will rapidly deteriorate as all additional support has been added around the base of the carrot whereas it is only the top section that of the carrot that provide the major stability in the hoop. There are some setters who have manufactured small spigots that allow earth packing around the top of the carrot hole. This will achieve the desired result but is a rather tedious process to accomplish satisfactorily. Probably the best method of correction is to inwardly collapse both hoop holes along their full length using the setting screw driver before the carrots are below ground level, compact the earth around the hoop area using your feet and then reinsert the hoop without taking a core. This will produce a setting that will last for some time. Excellent results may also be achieved by lifting the hoop slightly, without removing it, then, in a circular pattern around each upright, moving out from 1 to 6 or 8 inches, plunging the screwdriver deep into the ground and forcing the earth towards the hole. Recheck that the hoop setting is correct and then vigorously tamp the ground all around the hoop, spiralling out to a foot or more, with a standard, flat bottomed punner (6 inches square, weight 10 lb) to firm the disturbed soil and level the surface. Should the ground start to break-up around the top of the carrot, I have one piece of advice; don't bother to try to rectify, make new hoop holes.

Naturally each morning during a tournament the actual settings must be checked by the ROT or his assistant and must be corrected if found in error. The same technique of removing earth from one side of a hole and replacing on the other side should be used to correct the problems but it must be realised that this will generally result in the hoop position being slightly lower than it was before the correction.

Many people have said to me that as they want to cut before start of play on the first morning of a tournament, there is no time to reposition hoops after the cutting. My own experience is that hoops can be fully set on a previous day and providing that they are very carefully lifted the previous evening and replaced after cutting in exactly the same holes, very little of the original setting will be lost. Preferably the initial

setting can leave the carrots in excess of 1/2" above the ground so that there is scope for adjustment on the following morning. It should be remembered that newly set hoops are likely to be very firm in the ground and if left to an impatient groundsman may easily be loosened by a sideways kick, the quickest way to destroy any setting. The only way to remove hoops properly is to first loosen them with a vertically upwards blow from a hammer or alternatively use a lever system to exert strictly vertical lift. The replacement in the same holes is often very critical as hoop wires are often not concentric with the carrots. After lifting hoops always tread the holes down with your feet. The above requirements suggest that all hoops should be marked by lawn, position and orientation and this can be quite easily accomplished by simple black paint marks on white hoops. It is most important with the older sets of hoops where casting tolerances may not be too good. The above principles also apply to clubs who have to take their hoops in each night after a days play.

The use of grass cuttings as a packing agent is still seen to be quite common but is certainly not used by most experienced hoop setters and should be strongly discouraged. In hot dry weather the grass dries quite quickly and produces a "rattling" hoop whereas in wetter weather the hoop holes rapidly turn into compost heaps.

The very minimum of tools I would

expect to see in any hoop setters kit would be:

- ♦ One hammer, preferably with plastic or rubber ends to protect the hoop surface.
- ♦ One large, flat bladed screw driver (usually with a blade length of about 12")
- ♦ At least two sizes of coring tools ranging from 1/2 to 1" cut. These may simply be pieces of metal tubing with a hole drilled through the top end to take a torsion bar that allows the tool to be rotated. I personally have used pieces of copper tubing which have lasted several seasons but stones in the ground can easily damage them. A simple plunger will be required to remove cores from the cutters or alternatively a cut-out in the side of the cutter will allow the core to fall free.
- ♦ One set of feeler gauges

A critical and often overlooked area is repairing the old holes. Never fill them with sand or earth, this just builds hills over time. There is a simple principle to remember, take nothing away (hollows) and add nothing (hills). It's not rocket science. Break down the compaction of the old holes with the screwdriver and use a new cores to fill the top 1". The core should be taken from off the playing surface and should contain good grass as this will allow the old hole to repair itself most quickly by natural growth. I have used a 1.5" cutter for this duty as I have found this is sometimes

necessary to cover badly damaged hoop holes. It is time consuming to do well, but if you want to maintain quality lawns there are no short cuts.

I hope the foregoing has cleared up some of the more detailed points about the process of hoop setting. It is not an easy task and needs some practice before if the operator is to get the right balance between core sizing and ground conditions and can shave just the right amount of earth of a hoop hole to get the required change in size. I would not say that you will always obtain a setting that will last for ages but that if you follow the above codes you are much more likely to get a setting that is likely to last for the longest time under the given ground conditions. On some grounds with a very sandy composition, it is physically impossible to get a good setting that will last for a long time. Alternatively with a clay-based subsoil, the hoop setter has a much easier task. One point that I hope has been clearly demonstrated is that hoop setting is not a 30 second task, it takes considerable time to carry out correctly. This and the costs of lawn maintenance were the reasons behind the increases agreed last season for lawn and ball hire by the Tournament Committee. Thus I am sure all clubs will agree that if they claim the full recognised rates for hosting CA events, correct preparation of both lawns and hoops will be expected in return.

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# 'Mallets plus morons equals mayhem'

James Hawkins reports on American attempts to spice up the game

I was sitting in a coffee shop in Salisbury last August when I found a rack of postcards. The usual stuff - semi-abstract watercolours and arty photographs which advertisers and struggling artists like to leave in free help-yourself stacks in bistros. Here, though, there was one showing a group of 30 smiley, sun-tanned Americans under the caption "Greetings from San Francisco". The funny thing was, they were all waving croquet mallets.

These are the folk of the San Francisco Extreme Croquet Club. Along with practitioners from Connecticut to Detroit to Seattle, they dwell in the nether reaches of the Kingdom of Croquet.

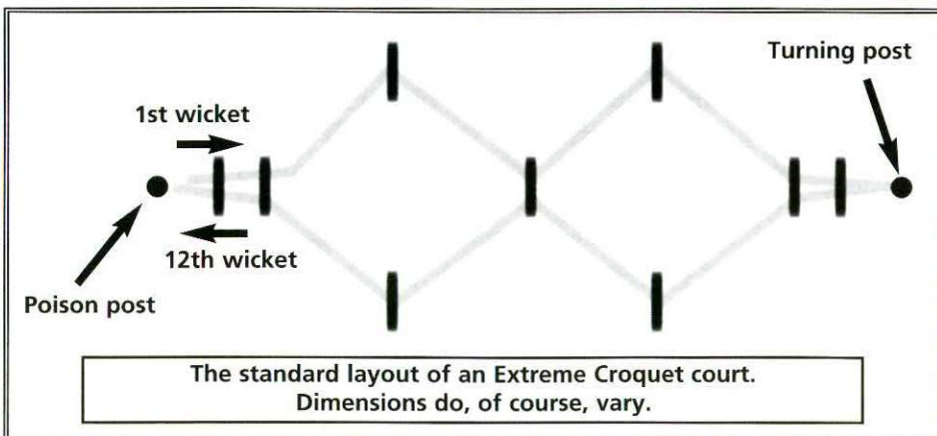
In a grand democratising gesture, the rules of the game are restructured to make them more - well - fluid. For a pursuit whose vicarage garden mythology decrees that house rules should be created to suit local geography or personal taste, Extreme, or XC, takes this to its logical conclusion. So much so that it exists not so much as a single game, but as a generic family, clearly recognisable as a group, but with few similarities in actual play from club to club, and often little scope for transference in skills.

Nine-wicket croquet, where the course is laid out in a double-diamond (below) faded from English croquet by the 1870s. Somehow, this configuration resurfaced in post-war America with the efforts of mass merchandisers aiming for the backyard (i.e. garden) croquet-playing family market. This became the standard layout for what would become XC.

The game of children's pat-ball was clearly something in which no adult with any level of self respect would engage. The change in thinking came when a generation of university students uncovered their old childhood sets. In most cases, this reintroduction to the game was largely beer-fuelled. With no facilities to play on a perfect surface, the 'creative juices' allowed them to accept what-



"I'll take a bisque" - students in Texas puzzle over their next hoop



ever conditions were available. Boundaries disappeared, distances between hoops got larger, and the inferiority of the playing conditions was embraced and celebrated. The extremeness of the game depends on the individuals involved, time allocated, and quantity of alcohol available. Up in Seattle, for example, it's a relatively staid affair. The New Englanders of Connecticut and Maryland have all but dispensed with the garden itself, and have a leaning towards playing in dense woodland. Texas A&M University has possibly the most masochistic outlook of the lot, with wickets in drainage culverts, atop waterfalls or in tree stumps.

So much for the layout of the course. Fixing a hoop into a flower bed, or a broken up area of patio, or a garden shed is the same whether it's done in Michigan or California. Where the games differ are on a more fundamental level.

Specifically, some clubs have the recognisable foot-on-the-ball method of croquetting, two bonuses for a roquet, limits on roquets per turn, and the rest of the features many of us imagine as key to the game of garden croquet. Some allow multiple successive roquets of the same ball. Some disallow the croquet stroke altogether. The radical departure in some forms is the concept of "poison".

Unlike our game, with a peg in the middle to be struck at the end of the game, XC has a peg at each end. One

peg is struck half way through the game (the turning post). Here, the finishing post serves a very different purpose from the centre peg in croquet. After completing the final wicket, a ball becomes "poisonous". Any other ball with which it comes into contact is immediately eliminated from the game.

The strangeness of the poison concept is not fully realised until one understands that very little credit is given to the running of hoops. The elimination of opponents is what counts, and the Byzantine scoring system dictates that pegging out in this game is almost certainly a losing tactic.

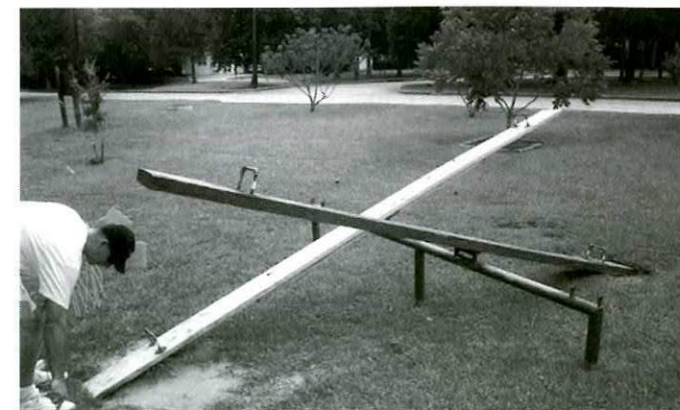
Tactics altogether are a curiosity. The rules seem to expect a one-sided battle, and games stop, not when there's a winner, but when individuals have had enough. Connecticut rules define the allotted time period as dictated by "1) Specific number of games; 2) Time limit; 3) Darkness; 4) High tide; 5) Etc." It's not uncommon for a game to drag on for eight hours. One group in central Ontario, Canada have an annual event that takes place over three days. For this event, a different course designer sets the wickets and course each day, with only the "Tee Off" point remaining constant.

Don Oakley, a Canadian mallet maker, has had dealings with the Extremists for some time. "About five years ago I was contacted by an Extreme Croquet player. His reason

for calling was the lack of a decent mallet with which to play. After some discussion, it turned out that they regularly purchased a few croquet sets each year JUST to replace the mallets that keep breaking." Wear and tear isn't limited to the mallet head. Delicate shots call for the tip of the shaft, or the underside of the head to be used. And, of course, the more vigorous strokes threaten to shear the entire mallet into pieces.

Despite its evidently high-profile presence on the campuses of the United States, the game is not, in fact, an American invention. The oldest surviving club is thought to be Krocketklubben R.Å.S.O.P. (the meaning of the initials is a closely guarded secret known only to members), founded in 1975 by ten students at Linköping University in Sweden. This was a firmly forest-bound affair. "One year we put a hoop one metre up a tree trunk, thinking it would be a difficult shot. It was actually quite easy because there was a stone at the bottom of the tree and we found we could ricochet the ball off it up through the hoop," claims Anders Wilen, the last of the club's founders still in the game.

Contemporary photographs show participants dressed at all times in tweed suits. The subtext isn't hard to spot. If croquet is seen as the quintessential English activity, adherents must adopt the dress code to match.



(Left) The handle of a seesaw doubles as a hoop; (Right) The referee checks the correct setting of the peg



The Swedes go the whole hog, and play to a CD of 1930s palm-court music. Lakewood Croquet Club, in the top left hand corner of the US, takes the idea a step further, with the stipulation in its rules that players must talk with exaggerated British accents.

This is perhaps the crux of the game, and the element which is the most uncomfortable for us fans of the 'serious' game. Underpinning the XC philosophy there seems to be a layer of contempt for 'old' croquet. Bob Alman, of Florida's National Croquet Center, is an émigré of San Francisco, and has had dealings with the SFXCC. "All they're interested in is drinking and partying and getting attention from the press. Part of their shtick is ridiculing 'serious' croquet players, whom they accurately describe as 'boring old dorks in white.'"

Indeed, publicity is something which has come easily to the Extremists. Even now, journalists have the same preconceptions as ever about croquet. And XC provides the antithesis of what people imagine our game to be - stagnant, upper-class and geriatric - rather than what it is. Local press and television in the States have lapped it up. Coverage has reached as far as a recent article in the Danish press, and a (for us) less than flattering interview on BBC Radio Five Live. Oh, and since finding that postcard of mine last year, I now see that my local shoe shop in Liverpool sports a life size poster of SFXCC members play-



ing croquet in a car park.

So, does all this really damage us? A few years back, some members of Southport Croquet Club posed at the top of Snowdon with a couple of balls and a hoop. Coverage in the local paper brought a few extra people along to that year's coaching course. Over in Florida, the NCC has created its own semi-Extreme Croquet course. "The course has obstacles, palm trees, and challenging changes in elevation," says Bob Alman. "We can play the course exactly like golf if we're trying to seduce golfers - and when played that way it is at least as entertaining as golf. Or we can play it exactly like Golf Croquet - which is even more entertaining." It's too early to say whether this will provide the stepping stone for golfers to make the transition to Golf Croquet or whether it will remain a sideline for the Center.

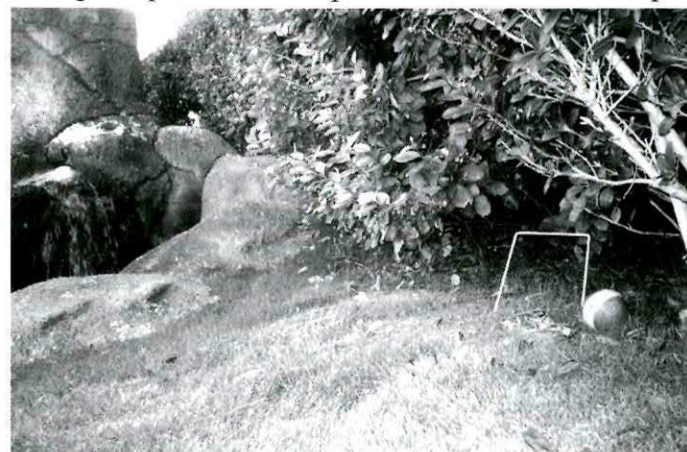
What is clear is that the two games have very little in common. At its most basic level, Extreme Croquet seems to be more like a portable do-it-yourself version of Golf. Design your own course in the morning, and don't forget the crate of beer to keep you going throughout the day.

It's fair to claim that most participants appear to be more interested in hardened party-going than the actual mallet-wielding, though it's probably also a fair claim that most (proper) croquet players, either in clubs or in the garden, are more interested in the social network croquet provides than the abstract appeal of the game.

And as for the question of bad publicity, Don Oakley for one is unperturbed: "Any time a sport is taken to the extreme, it is likely to gather attention. As they gain notoriety, the sport which they are compared to also falls into the spotlight. It is there that eloquent spokespeople can bring more attention to the original game."

**Weblinks:**

- [www.extremecroquet.net](http://www.extremecroquet.net)  
Connecticut Extreme Croquet Society™
- [www.extremecroquet.com](http://www.extremecroquet.com)  
San Francisco Extreme Croquet Club



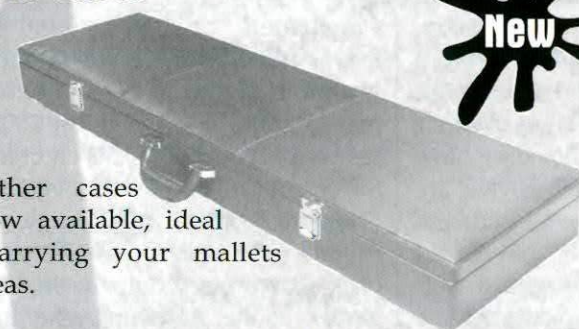
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  - The Laws of Golf Croquet £2.00
  - A Guide to Golf Croquet £5.00
  - Know the game £5.00
  - Croquet - The Skills of the Game by Bill Lamb £10.00
  - Croquet by John Solomon £9.00
  - Plus One on Time by Don Gaunt £10.00
  - Expert Croquet Tactics by Keith Wylie £14.00
  - 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 £3.00
  - Lawn Management by John Beech £2.00
  - Croquet: Technique by John Riches £7.00
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## Tournament Business

As a result of some communications received from several of the top lady players, the tournament committee agreed to review how the ladies selection events (i.e. the Barlow Bowl and Longman Bowl) were organised. Jeff Dawson took up the task of responding to the communications we have had, and assessing whether there was sufficient support for any change. The suggestions made had been for a change to the format of the events to shorten them (so that less time was needed to be taken as holiday), to change the venue to Bowdon (if they were willing to host) on the basis that several of the top ladies based in that area may be more likely to participate, and to move the event to avoid clashing with Northern week (on a similar basis).

The tournament committee felt that changing the format to a knock-out competition would not be appropriate, in view of the fact that there was already a ladies event organised this way (the Men's and Women's event). However, the committee was keen to ensure that as many of the top women as possible be encouraged to participate, so that the event is seen as having the prestige we consider it deserves. We were therefore willing to take a flexible approach to achieve this end, provided that any change was supported by the majority of the likely participants. After an initial exchange of emails with some of the potential players, it was decided that a viable way of shortening the event would be to play as a single round-robin rather than as a double round-robin, thus providing 7 games for an eight, which could be played over 3 days and still allow time for any play-offs.

Decisions for any change had to be made quickly, as the tournament committee meeting was held only some 3 weeks before the fixtures book needed to be finalised. In view of this fact, and the fact that Cheltenham had already been promised the events for 2003, it was quickly decided that for 2003 it would be impractical to change the venue and hence also the dates (which need to fit into Cheltenham's busy

schedule). In order to get as wide a view as possible in the short time available, Jeff undertook to contact as many of the top ladies as possible, by phone and email. Because of the need to get views on this quite quickly, there was not time to send out a more formal questionnaire, and it was felt that this method also elicited a wider response than might otherwise have been achieved. Nonetheless, we are aware that this was not necessarily the most scientific approach that could have been taken, and we would welcome further views from any of the ladies who might participate in the future, especially those whose views were not obtained in the survey.

Jeff obtained responses from 25 players, including all but 2 of the players in the top 240 on the current ranking list. The results regarding change to a shortened format were:

9 definitely in favour

11 quite happy to go along with the change

3 who would prefer no change

2 who were definite in their views that there should be no change.

It should be said that of the 9 definitely in favour of the change, 5 of these are unlikely to play in 2003 anyway, because of the clash with the beginning of the Northern week.

The other strong view which emerged was that most ladies would prefer the two events (Barlow and Longman Bowls) to be held at the same time and place, as the social interaction was felt by many to be important. Most had no strong views about when the event should be held, except that it should not clash with any of the other major events, or other events specific to their local clubs!

Jeff also asked about double banking, time limits and venue. As to be expected, these questions gave rise to a much more varied response. Broadly, the majority were prepared to double bank if it meant the events could be kept together (with a significant number of dissenters), and the majority were also against imposing time limits except where strictly necessary to complete the event. Most were rea-

sonably happy with Cheltenham as the venue, although there was a view from several that the event should be moved around.

### Conclusion

It was felt that there was a sufficient weight in favour of the shortened format to make the change for 2003, and hence we have made this change, with the events to be played over 3 days, Friday to Sunday, with a single round-robin. However, this has the drawback that there would be insufficient games if the numbers who applied were insufficient to form two eights, and sixes were played instead. Therefore, the proviso was made that if there are insufficient entries to make up 2 eights, then any six which is played should revert to the double round-robin format over 4 days.

In view of the clash with Northern week, it was also felt that we need to find an alternative date for the event in future years. This will be reviewed over the forthcoming season.

In the meantime, we would like to hear from as many of those players as possible who may be affected by any of these changes. Please send any comments to Jeff Dawson, 112 Potters Lane, Send, Surrey GU23 7AL, or email him at [sales@croquet.co.uk](mailto:sales@croquet.co.uk).

### Tournament Regulation Changes

The Tournament Regulations have had a few adjustments for the 2003 season. Probably the most significant change to affect most players, concerns practice. The regulations now stipulate that players may practice for the five minutes before play commences each day, on the lawn allocated for their first game, provided that there is no instruction to the contrary from the Manager, and that they take care not to loosen hoops.

Perhaps the other most controversial change is in Appendix 1, on hoop setting - always a hot topic! The appendix has been modified to remove reference to 'Exceptional Conditions', which it was felt was very subjective. This now leaves clubs free

to vary the standard settings by +/- 50% provided that they advertise any planned modifications in the fixtures book, or publicise before play commences on the day why a change was considered necessary.

Other changes are relatively minor, and include:

(a) Appendix 4: Definition of A Class Championships amended to allow for qualifying blocks.

(b) H1(a): Clarified when changes of handicap should take effect (i.e. normally at the end of the tournament in which the trigger point is reached, not just an event within the tournament)

(c) H1(e): No-one with a handicap greater than 20 may enter an event organised by the CA (note that this restriction does not apply to club events advertised in the fixtures book).

(d) H1(f): New section to clarify eligibility for handicap restricted events (players may still play if their handicap was within the restriction limits at

the closing date, or if no closing date applies, one week before the tournament is played).

(e) H2 Amended to clarify who may act as tournament handicapper, and to introduce a section on appeals

(f) Various changes to clarify where the regulations apply to Golf croquet, including a new section T4 on timed games in Golf Croquet.

The full regulations are available in booklet form, and every member club will be sent a copy. They can also be seen on the CA website [www.croquet.org.uk](http://www.croquet.org.uk), or the booklet may be purchased from the CA on-line shop, cost £3. Principal regulations affecting players are also summarised in the fixtures book.

### Fixtures Calendar Corrections

• pp 4 & 6 : The Open Championships at Cheltenham will commence on 6 July, not 7 July, as

shown in the summary calendar. The main entry on page 23 is the definitive version.

• p 32 : The dates of the Seniors' Championship are 15-20 July, not 26 July.

• p 90 : Both the Improver Course and the Bronze Course at Southwick will be held on 26-27 April

• The South West Federation Bronze Course will be held at Nailsea on 17-18 April, managed by Peter Dyke, 23 Broom Farm Close, Nailsea, Bristol BS48 4YJ, tel 01275 545178.

• The Silver Course at Dulwich will be on 3-4 May, and at Bath on 26-27 April.

There are some minor errors in the summary details of tournaments on pp 2-9, but except as detailed above the dates are correct, as are the entries in the main body of the book.

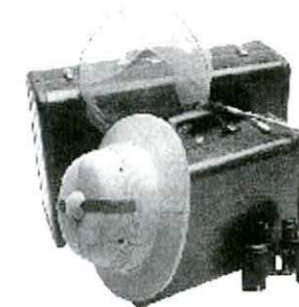


## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

At the next AGM, which will be held on Saturday 11 October, three members of Council will have completed their terms of office, two of whom have indicated their wish to stand for re-election.

The names of any Associates who wish to stand for election to Council should be notified to the Secretary of the CA by 1 June. In addition it would be helpful if notice of any motions to be put to the AGM could be given to the Secretary by that date.

Nigel Graves  
Secretary, The Croquet Association  
c/o Cheltenham Croquet Club, Old Bath Road,  
Cheltenham GL53 7DF.  
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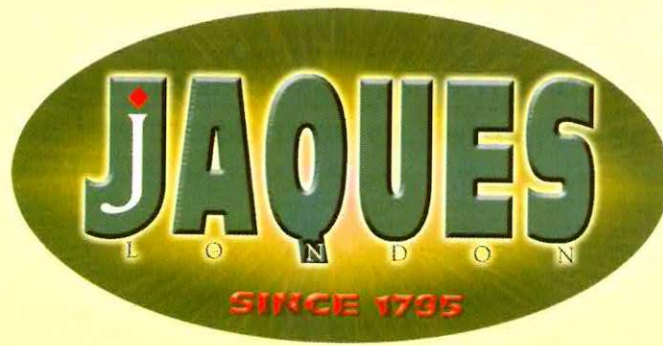


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