



QUOQUET GAZETTE

296 - APRIL 2005



5: The Rebirth of Pendle Croquet Club



Conditions: To qualify for this exclusive offer you must take a copy of this advert and your Croquet Association membership number to your local Mitsubishi dealer. This offer is open to current membership from an official UK Mitsubishi Dealer. The OTR price includes the cost of delivery to the dealer's premises, number plates and VAT @ 17.5%, along with Government road fund licence for 12 months, and DVLA 1st registration fee of £38. Offers are correct at time of going to press and may be withdrawn at any time.

PROUD TO SUPPORT CROQUET CHAMPIONSHIP

MITSUBISHI ARE THE 2005 WORLD CR



The Mitsubishi Colt range from £7,999 OTR

A chic super-mini with a sleek design and modern attitude. Underneath the clean-cut, contemporary exterior the style continues, creating a relaxing environment in which to enjoy the most spacious cabin in its class.



The Mitsubishi Grandis range from £18,499 OTR

The new Mitsubishi Grandis is as stunning to look at as it is to drive. Concealed beneath its sporty curves is a super spacious interior incorporating our unique Hide and Seat system™ that allows you to transform from a 7 seater into a cargo hauler effortlessly in seconds.



The Mitsubishi Outlander range from £16,999 OTR

The new Mitsubishi Outlander combines safety, visibility and 4-wheel drive power, with the practicality of an estate and the drive of a saloon. You can now also experience the Outlander Dualfuel.



The Mitsubishi Shogun range from £22,999 OTR

The Mitsubishi Shogun gives you the confidence to cope with anything. With a pedigree spanning across 20 years of off roading and reliability that doesn't compromise on power, performance or style. The Mitsubishi Shogun, the full on 4X4 experience.

£500 OFF ANY
NEW MITSUBISHI

An exclusive offer open to all Croquet Association Members.

Visit us at www.mitsubishi-cars.co.uk or call 0845 330 2002

DRIVE ALIVE



MITSUBISHI
MOTORS

CA contacts

Secretary
Klim Seabright
The Croquet Association, c/o Cheltenham Croquet Club, Old Bath Road, Cheltenham, GL53 7DF.
01242 - 242318
caoffice@croquet.org.uk

President
Bernard Neal, 41 Asquith Road, Cheltenham, GL53 7EJ
01242 - 510624

Chairman of Council
Ian Vincent
29 Thoresby Road, Bramcote Hills, Beeston, Nottingham, NG9 3EN.
0115 - 9253664
ian.vincent@nottingham.ac.uk

Treasurer
Dr Roger Bray
Street Cottage, Polstead Hill, Polstead, Colchester, Essex, CO6 5AH.
01206 - 263405 (H)
rwbay@tiscali.co.uk

Gazette Editor
James Hawkins
38 Ballantrae Road, Allerton, Liverpool, L18 6JQ.
0151 - 7242140
gazette@croquet.org.uk

Press Officer
Rebecca Hopkins
ENS Limited, 42 Fullerton Road, London, SW18 1BX
020 8871 3865
rebecca@ensltd.com

Tournament Committee
Richard Hoskyns
25 Burlington Road, London, W4 4BQ
020 8994 3244 (H & F)
richard_hoskyns@compuserve.com

Marketing Committee
Jeff Dawson, Wildcroft, 112 Potters Lane, Send, Woking
GU23 7AL
01483 776971
jeff@wildcroft.fsworld.co.uk

International Committee
Phil Cordingley, 1 Milbro Court, 35 Anson Road
London N7 0RB.
020 7609 3040
phil_cordingley@tiscali.co.uk

Laws Committee
Barry Keen, 20 Grove Park, Knutsford, Cheshire, WA16 8QA
01565 632420
barry.keen1@ntlworld.com

Equipment Committee
Alan Pidcock
The Manor House, 1 Barn Croft, Penwortham, Preston PR1 0SX
01772 743859
pidcock@manorh.u-net.com

Coaching Committee
Brian Fisk, 7 Woodfield Drive, Winchester SO22 5PY.
01962 865458
brian@fiskfamily.org.uk

Golf Croquet Committee
Bill Arliss, 30 Hove Park Villas, Hove BN3 6HG,
01273 - 728204
arliss@mistral.co.uk

Selection Committees
Assoc: Phil Cordingley
(details above)

Golf: Bill Arliss
(details above)

Handicap Committee
Cliff Jones, 3 Queen Street, Budleigh Salterton, EX9 6LB
01395 446700

Development Committee
Patricia Duke-Cox
171 Witham Road, Woodhall Spa, Lincoln, LN10 6RB.
01526 354878 (H) 0794 4487880 (M)
dukecox@aol.com

Management Committee
Jonathan Isaacs, Meers Farm, The Hollow, West Chiltington. RH20 2QA.
01798 - 817326 (H) 01798 - 817393 (F)
isaacs.wapping@virgin.net

Publishing Committee
Charles Waterfield
The Lodge, Great Broughton, Middlesbrough, N.Yorks, TS9 7HA
01642 - 712551
waterfield@beeb.net

Regional Reps on Council

East Midlands
Patricia Duke-Cox (details above)

East Anglia
Robert Bateson, 3 Applecroft, Northchurch, Berkhamsted, Hertfordshire, HP4 3RX
01442 866004 (H) 01494 535011 (O) 01494 452487 (F)

London & South East
David Mooney
121 Highlands Heath, London SW15 3TZ
020 8789 7707
d.mooney@rmjm.com

North West
Barry Keen (details above)

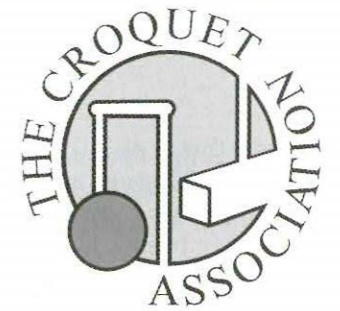
Croquet North
Charles Waterfield (details above)

South West
Cliff Jones (details above)

Southern
Pat Kennett, 7 Woodfield Drive, Winchester SO22 5PY.
01962 865458
pat@fiskfamily.org.uk

West Midlands
No representative

Yorkshire
Julian Tonks, 13 Hobgate, Acomb Road, York, YO24 4HE.
01904 - 791254



THE CROQUET GAZETTE

ISSUE 296 - APRIL 2005 Price £3.00

Next Issue Published 21st June 2005

Copy Deadline 15th May 2005

Contents

Editorial	6
Chairman's Column	7
Introducing the not so new Editor	7
Letters	8 - 9
The Lost Game of Roque	10 - 11
Brass-Faced Mallets	12
<i>What's the damage to balls?</i>	
A Gift You Won't Miss	13
<i>The CA's Legacy Strategy</i>	
Killing Two Birds with one Stone	13
<i>Getting paid to recruit members</i>	
Obituaries	14
<i>Betty Weitz and Christine Bagnall</i>	
Croquet the American Way	15 - 16
The Renaissance of Pendle Croquet Club	17 - 19
CA Diplomas	20 - 21
Club Development Awards	21
News & Information	22

Front cover photographs by James Hawkins:

Top: The last ever Pendle Easter Tournament to be held on the lawns at Nelson and Colne College

Bottom: The brand new clubhouse and five lawns at Earby

Visit the Croquet Association website at www.croquet.org.uk

Publication Details

The Croquet Gazette is published six times per year, in February, April, June, August, October and December.

Publication Schedule

Copy should reach the Editor BEFORE the 15th of the month before publication is due, unless otherwise informed.

Advertising

Full details of all advertising rates and data are available at all clubs as well as via the CA Shop and the Secretary of the CA.

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

Emailed reports are welcomed. Attachments may be sent in Microsoft Word format, or any other PC-based word processor. Hand written reports are no longer accepted.

Delivery Queries

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

Disclaimer

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

Editorial

Well, this is it. Three and a half years, 27 issues, and now my last few paragraphs as editor of the *Gazette*. My printer is the major casualty of this edition. Drained of its ink supply, it's finally given up the ghost, and, after chugging through 668 pages of proofs, it's spewing out its final copy in a curious shade of pale pink.

The learning curve for editing a magazine such as this is a steep one, as it is for learning our game. Thanks to everyone for bearing with me, as I squandered my fence of editorial bisques, getting to grips with providing something which I hope most Associates have valued.

I hand over - or rather back - to Gail Curry, who assumes the role starting with the next edition. Those of you who were around in the good old days will remember Gail's previous stint, in which she edited the *Gazette* for seven years. I wish her all the best, and look forward to my role as avid spectator rather than active participant.

The Hawkins Years, as I doubt anyone else will call them, have been a momentous period in the life of the game. September 2001 (my first issue of the *Gazette*) saw the Rise of the Supershot, with Reg Bamford's mechanically straightened swing taking him to victory in that summer's World Championship. Croquet at the

top level continues to thrive, with a new band of up-and-coming stars chasing on the heels of the top players. Britain continue to dominate the game, but other nations improve constantly.

The United States has become a force to be reckoned with, running the GB team close in each of their last encounters. The US has a great new resource in Florida's National Croquet Center, which opened in 2002, teetered on the brink of collapse, and only now seems to be assured of its future survival. Not so lucky was California's World Championship venue at Sonoma Cutrer, which ceased to host its annual event.

Domestically, the CA has successfully moved from its spiritual home at Hurlingham, and left London for Cheltenham. Up here in the bottom left hand corner of Lancashire, times are exciting. Twenty years ago, this was largely a croquet wasteland. Then there were seven clubs in the North of England. Now there are 25. Chester opened their four-lawn club last year. Pendle, whose demise was announced (prematurely, by me) at the start of my tenure, finish it with a reborn club, in what I consider the game's most exciting development story in many years.

While I was on the train to London last month, I saw the new Wembley Stadium taking shape. The team of inspectors for the Olympic

Games had just paid their visit to the capital, all of which set me thinking.

Normally, I'd be ambivalent to the decisions of the IOC. I have little interest in sporting prowess beyond my narrow croquet confines. But experience of the last couple of years teaches me that such things do have a bearing on even our minority sport.

Manchester's 2002 Commonwealth Games left behind what I hope will remain a premier croquet venue. Heaton Park hosted its first croquet Test Match last year (the Solomon Trophy), and brings the President's Cup to the immaculate lawns of North Manchester this autumn.

The bookies confidently predict a French win for the 2012 Olympics. We'll know for sure within the next month or so. In the event of a successful London bid, let us hope that Croquet can jostle its way into the queue for using some of the regenerated land after the athletes have left.

I'm signing off now. Well-wishers continue to ask me how my house move went. The answer is - predictably - that I'm still waiting. By the time you read this, and a whole year behind schedule, everything should have completed. If so, I'll be keeping a low profile for the season. I'll be back on the lawns as soon as possible. In the meantime, thanks and goodbye.

James

Chairman's Column

By the time you read this, Nigel Graves will have been succeeded as the CA Secretary by Klim Seabright, whom I introduced in my last column.

Nigel will be a hard act to follow, having taken the office into this millennium (do you remember all those scares of computer meltdown five years ago?!) and, more significantly, from Hurlingham to Cheltenham. He has not only been a very efficient administrator, both of the office and in supporting Council and its committees, but has invariably been both helpful and sympathetic when dealing with established players and casual enquirers alike. Going far beyond his contractual duties, he has played an active part in many of the committees, bringing invaluable coordination as well as many good ideas, with commendable tact, patience and loyalty even when he was exasperated by their decisions, or lack of them. It was typical of him that he offered to take on the job of editing the fixtures book when his predecessor found that he did not have time to do it.

Many of you will have had dealings with Nigel over the past five or so years, either as individual associates or as club or tournament secretaries. If clubs or individuals would like to contribute to a retirement gift to him,

please do so by sending a cheque payable to the Croquet Association to the CA Office.

The good news is that he is not going to disappear from the scene entirely, but has been appointed to fill the vacancy on Council until the AGM, when he will be required to retire but able to stand for election. If you, or anyone you know, also wishes to stand for election to Council, nominations, proposed and seconded by two Associates and with the consent of the person nominated, must be received by the CA Office by 1st June. If there are more candidates than vacancies, an election will be held under Rule 18.

I am pleased to say that it looks as though we also have a successor lined up for James Hawkins, and hence this should be his last edition as Editor. We are very grateful that he has produced the *Gazette* so regularly to a high standard, despite the domestic trials and tribulations which he has described in his lively editorials (I now see why my doubles partner reputedly sleeps with his mallet under his pillow) and his many other commitments. We hope to see more of both James and Nigel at tournaments this year.

Council met on Saturday, 19th March at Hurlingham in glorious sunshine and in full view of the lawns. Despite the distractions, we welcomed Klim, thanked Nigel, got through the routine business, thanking the Treasurer, Roger Bray, who I'm pleased to say later survived a VAT inspection, the Auditor, Marian Hempstead and the retiring members of Council: Bill Arliss, Dave Kibble, Phil Cordingly, Chris Sheen and the retiring regional representatives: Robert Bateson, Barry Keen and Charles Waterfield for their service during the last three years. We then approved a new set of Golf Croquet Laws, modelled closely on the new WCF Rules, and updated our standing orders and practice book to reflect changes of practice over the years, in particular the widespread use of e-mail. We ended with a report from the Chairman of the Development Committee, Patricia Duke-Cox, who got us thinking about arrangements for the Club Conferences we are planning to hold next winter. Please let her or myself know of anything you would like discussed in these.

I hope you have a very enjoyable season.

Ian Vincent

(Re) Introducing the not so new editor

Well, James has come to the end of his stint in charge, and - like the glutton that I am - I decided to come back for more (you see, it simply isn't true that I hold a grudge of any sort regarding platinum badges not being awarded in retrospect). I am hoping that some things have changed and that others haven't, but only time will tell.

In the meantime, I would like to wish James well with his new found freedom. I'm sure he will spend more time playing now, although he could be spending a considerable amount of his time nursing the Lancashire team back to full health, if the rumours are true about their decrepit state [*this saga*


is worthy of a future article in itself - Ed].

So what do I have in store for the readers? Well some of that rather depends on you the readers, as your contributions are the mainstay of the *Gazette*. I fully intend to reinstate the *Talking Croquet* interviews, which were so popular and so well carried out by the late Neil Williams. If you have an idea of who should be interviewed, or perhaps would like to do the interviewing, I would love to hear from you. I would also like to see the return of *Club Focus*, as some of the lesser know, or attended, clubs can have an opportunity to acquaint the readers with their history, location and other good points.

I am also eager to have some lively debate in the letters pages, let's not let the 'Nottingham List' have all of the fun. If you have any other burning issues or ideas please feel free to contact me either by email, gailecurry@hotmail.com, or by telephone on 01642 640880. For those who still insist on putting pen to paper, my address is 135 Acklam Road, Thornaby, Stockton on Tees TS17 7JT. So now you have no excuse not to get in touch. I look forward to hearing from all of you and in the near future.

Gail Curry
Editor Designate

M C Percival Mallets



The new TM range of mallets are available with proven Carbon fibre or Ash handles, mallet weights are adjustable by +/- fl to 3 ozs from any base weight. Handles are adjustable for angle, removable and interchangeable. All mallets are made to your specification.

A new range of hard wearing synthetic grips available in various colours, lengths from 2 to 18 metres. Alterations and repairs are undertaken to any mallet (over 350 completed so far).

Contact Michael Percival, The Laurels, Heath Rd., Hessest, Suffolk. IP30 9BJ

Telephone 01359 270 200 Mobile 07780 677943

Email: michael@croquetmallets.co.uk

Web: www.croquetmallets.co.uk

The John Hobbs Mallet

The mallet that adjusts to your grip.

You set the handle to whatever angle best suits your style of grip and swing.

Optional curved bottom to 12" heads
Easily dismantled for airline travel

Light aluminium shaft, nylon shock absorber,
variable weight heads - see web site:
<http://members.aol.com/Hobbsmall>

John Hobbs, The Lewins, Mayfield Road,
Rotherfield, E. Sussex, TN6 3LS
Tel: 01892 852072 Email: Hobbsmall@aol.com

Letters

Tournament disillusionment

I was interested to read John Solomon's letter (*Gazette* 294, December 2004), comparing our wonderful game and our fifth win of the MacRobertson Trophy, with the Rugby Union World Tournament in Australia, and bemoaning the fact that Croquet does not get the recognition that it justly deserves.

I am late in my comment on his letter because I have had an extended trip to Africa which culminated in a so-called International tournament in Cape Town "The Western Province Championships". Any game, John, that produces a set of results after a week's play, that across the world will throw up one winner, but in South Africa with exactly the same results produce a different winner, does not really deserve the recognition that we crave. It is no surprise that we struggle to obtain Olympic and Commonwealth Games recognition.

During the Open Doubles tournament my partner and I played Bamford and Stephens and achieved a surprise but deeply satisfying win. At the end of the tournament both pairs had won 5 games and lost one. My partner and I were congratulated by at least four other players, one of them Bamford's partner, on winning the championship.

However, much to the astonishment of certainly all the overseas players, on prize giving day the doubles trophy was presented to Bamford and Stephens on a count back of hoops. What about Who Beat Who then?

If we can't get our association rules standardized across the relatively small Croquet World, as have The Rugby Union, Cricketers, Bowlers, soccer players and even darts players, I can quite understand why the Queen, Prime Minister and Sports Minister do not descend on us with an M.B.Es O.B.Es. or anything else. With results and inconsistencies like this Croquet will continue to be the laughing stock of world sport.

Come on John, get the powers that be to standardize the Rules across the

World's Croquet playing Nations. They all display our Rules but change them if they feel so inclined. Moral of the story, I suppose, avoid entering overseas Tournaments, even if they are described as 'International'.

I don't intend to copy this to the Cabinet Office, I suspect they know already.

David Tester
Rochester

The Toss of the Coin

The study of statistics is usually cold and boring, and the warmth of their response makes me feel that John Spiers and Jolyon Kay (*Gazette* 295, February 2005, "The Toss of a Coin") protest too much. They seem to think that the aim of my note in the preceding *Gazette* was to denigrate Blewbury's success in the Longman Cup: it was not. I did not, and do not, complain about Blewbury's 7-0 win over Bristol, but it did start me thinking about probability and statistics in croquet.

The gist of my note was to summarise an article on the Oxford croquet web site (www.oxfordcroquet.com) concerned the match advantage of playing at home, and some puzzling results for Longman matches prior to 2000, possibly due to their high doubles content, and my passing comment about Blewbury that "they must have played amazingly well", remains true and, I would have thought, complimentary.

I am fully aware of and happy to agree with many of the points they make, though Jolyon's correction of my figures needs reversal - losing 0-7 is not the same as winning 7-0, but it is naughty of them to rubbish calculations that they have imagined me to make, and to muddle prior probabilities with actual outcomes; the rubbish is their own invention.

Statistics and probability are about drawing the best conclusions from limited information; they have well known limitations, but also serious

value. The assumption behind my analysis was that in handicap games each player should have a 50% chance of winning, but John and Jolyon convey the impression that the idea is wrong and/or irrelevant: I await with interest their better calculations.

Don Gugan
Bristol

An Expensive Defeat

I picked up the following account from the obituary of Major-General Sir James Eyre, as published in the *Daily Telegraph* in January. I'm sure it's worth bringing to the attention of other readers.

"...James Eyre enjoyed a game of croquet, and was not the sort of man to refuse a sporting wager. On one occasion [in 1966], playing a game in Singapore in which the stakes started at half a crown (12fip) a hoop and doubled with every successive hoop, Eyre lost £64 on the final hoop to his opponent.

"This opponent, dismayed at taking such a large sum off a friend, but confident that there was not a restaurant on the island whose prices would make a big dent in his winnings, said to Eyre, "Dinner is on me, Jim. You order the best one that money can buy." Eyre planned the dinner like a military exercise. Caviar was flown in from one country; the best claret from another; and, when the reckoning was made, Eyre's friend discovered to his chagrin that he was out of pocket."

Roger Croston
Chester

Those Were the Days

Whilst browsing through some old *Gazettes* I have come across this fascinating itinerary of the 1927-1928 English Mac team's tour of Australia and New Zealand.

October 15th - Leave Tilbury in ss

Oronsay.

November 15th - Arrive Fremantle. Matches at Fremantle and Perth if time permits.

November 19th - Arrive Adelaide.

November 23rd - Match at Adelaide.

November 24th - Arrive Melbourne by train. Special Tournament arranged by the Victoria CA.

December 9th (approx) - FIRST TEST MATCH at Melbourne.

December 16th (approx) - Team crosses to Tasmania. Matches at Launceston and Hobart.

January 1st (approx) - Return to Melbourne for SECOND TEST MATCH, followed by Matches v Geelong and Ballarat.

January 18th (approx) - Team leaves by P & O for Sydney. THIRD TEST MATCH either here or before leaving Melbourne.

January 20th - Sail from Sydney in ss

Ulimaria

January 24th - Arrive Auckland (Hotel Cargan)

January 26th or 27th - Leave for Wanganui (N. Island) Championship Tournament.

February 2nd (approx) - Match v N. Island

February 10th (approx) - Dominion Championship Tournament and DOMINION TEST MATCH at Palmerston North

February 28th (approx) - Sail from Wellington to Christchurch (ss Maori) for Match v S. Island returning to Wellington

March 14th - Leave in ss Tamaroa for Southampton via Panama and Curacao.

Chris Williams
Llanvaches

Presumably, the journey back to Southampton would have added at least another month on to the already relaxed schedule. Incidentally, the entire series took up just eight days of the six month tour. England and Australia tied on nine matches each., with Australia declared the winners, after taking 20 games to 19.

WB Du Pre, playing for England, had the least successful tour, failing to win any games at all in singles play. His doubles partner, the legendary Miss DD Steel, did at least manage to steer him to wins in four games (out of seven). One wonders if the lack of urgency in the timetable was responsible in part for the absence of form among the English team, but it's difficult to imagine modern players having either the patience or the financial resources for such an extended visit. - Ed

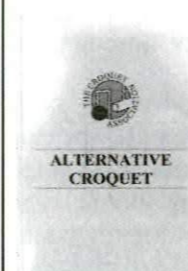
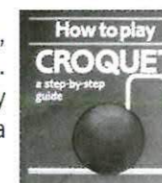
New Publications available from the Croquet Association

Two new books are now available from the Croquet Association on-line shop.

How to Play Croquet

A beginners guide to Association Croquet, with lots of diagrams to aid understanding. Originally published in 1989, edited by Mike Shaw and Nigel Aspinall, this is a reprint.

Cost £4.50 or £40 for 10 copies.



Alternative Croquet

A compilation of alternative versions of croquet, compiled by Don Gaunt. It covers 'fun' games such as Pirates, and more serious games such as speed croquet and USCA rules. Over 30 games are included. Cost £7.00

Order from Jeff Dawson at the Croquet Association Shop, email sales@croquet.org.uk or call 01483 776971

INTER-COUNTIES TEAM SHIRTS

This year we are again making Inter-counties shirts available, with the name of your county/team. The shirts are white, 100% cotton 'Fruit of the loom' short-sleeved polo shirts, and they will bear an Inter-counties logo and county name on the breast (as below) embroidered in green.



Logo example



Only £16 each!

Available in sizes S to XXL

As the shirts will be made to order, orders must reach the CA shop by **May 5th** at the latest. Shirts will be available for collection at the event (Southwick), or they can be posted in advance for a charge of £1.50 per shirt.

Order from Jeff Dawson at the Croquet Association Shop,

email sales@croquet.org.uk or call 01483 776971

The Lost Game of Roque

James Hawkins tries to trace America's extinct national game

Stop and think - why are we here? A century and a half ago, would Walter Whitmore, the originator of Croquet, have imagined his game would still be played now? It's remarkable that this mid-19th century craze should have survived and developed, come through two World Wars, and emerged intact. The story's not quite so cheery for the game's American counterpart, Roque.

Roque grew directly out of the newly imported game of Croquet. The (American) National Croquet Association was founded in 1882, and in 1899, Mr Samuel Crosby, of New York City, suggested dropping the first and last letters to form a new name, and a new game.

There was largely an element of thumbing the nose at the British, and a perception that Croquet was "insufficiently scientific". By 1904, when the Olympics came to St Louis, Roque was an official sport. No surprises, then, that all three medals went to members of the host nation. [The precedent to include Croquet in the Olympics, and to weight the chances towards the home team, had been set four years earlier. In Paris in 1900, all medals went to Parisians, an outcome explained by the organisers' insistence on holding matches on weekends throughout the playing season. Neither game has appeared at the Olympics since.]

Roque and Croquet bear many common features. In terms of rules, the American game is similar in most respects to British Croquet pre-1900. The notable differences are:

1. The four balls are coloured Blue, White, Red and Black, and made of hard rubber. Play is in strict sequence, as it would have been in England, but with blue and red opposing black and white.
2. There are ten hoops, and two pegs arranged in the "double diamond" formation of many backyard (US) croquet variants, but with the direction of play changed, to force players to run several of the hoops from the far side.
3. Play takes place, not on grass, but



on a hard surface (typically compacted sand/clay mix). The playing surface is small, being 20 yards by 10, and with a two yard triangle lopped off each corner, to form a long, thin octagon.

4. To allow for a surface which is much faster than grass, mallets are typically much smaller and lighter, held in one hand, and often swung golf-style. One face is metal (or ivory), the other may be rubber.

5. Here's the critical point: there's no boundary line. Instead, there's a five-inch high concrete wall around the court, allowing balls to bounce back into play, as in billiards.

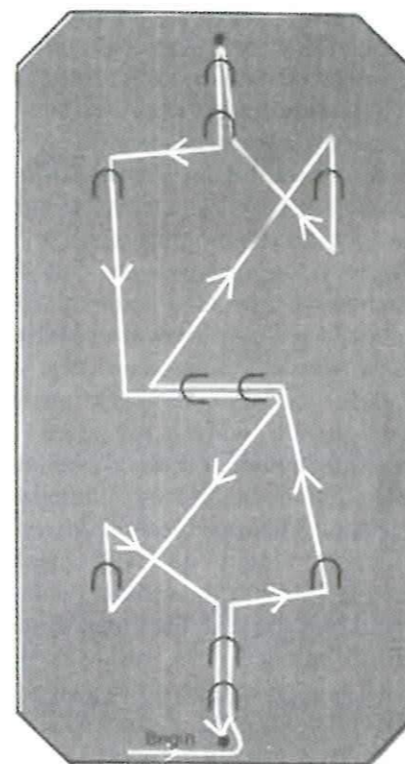
Strangely, even though the split from Britain occurred before the standardisation of equipment here, both Croquet and Roque decided on the same relative dimensions for hoops. The balls may be smaller in the American game, but the clearance is identical, at 1/8". And, on a lightning fast surface and unyielding hoops, that must have presented a great challenge for players.

Jack Roegner, who took over as Secretary of the American Roque League in 1984, hints that higher standards in the States may have accelerated the split from the UK. "They dropped the C and the T to differentiate from the lawn game which was not as 'scientific' or precise... you have to remember that traditional croquet didn't adopt any new technology or

enhancements, much to the aggravation of those innovative Americans. I am told that there used to be some sort of competition similar to the Davis Cup, and the Americans arrived with short handled mallets and hard rubber balls. The Brits were laughing about it until the Americans armed with superior equipment proceeded to win match after match. Short handled mallets and hard rubber balls were promptly banned, and the Americans were rather insulted and never returned." The detail may be open to debate here, but the move to turn their backs on Croquet's colonial roots was a conscious one.

During the period between the Wars, Roque could definitely lay claim to being the Official American Rules game of Croquet. Municipal clubs existed all over the country, from California to Florida, and tournaments enjoyed great popularity, among players and spectators.

In St Petersburg, Florida, the game became so popular that the private club all but overran the local park. This displeased the city elders, who demanded the game find its own site. By 1926, the newly re-christened Sunshine Roque Club was rehoused with its own clubhouse, four floodlit outdoor courts, and four indoor surfaces. Membership reached 200 within a couple of years. By 1957, the club

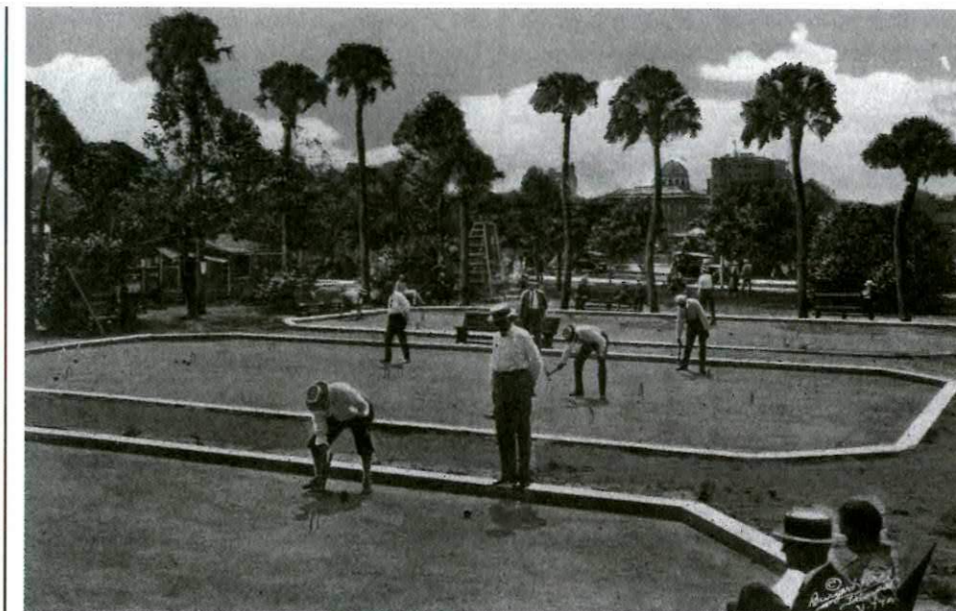


had 500 members, and was one of 50 clubs in the States. But within three years, the whole site had been flattened to make way for a car park.

While the next twenty years saw British Croquet recover from the post-war doldrums, the situation worsened for Roque. Now, another generation on, Roque is all but dead. A few diehards soldier on. St Petersburg has one remaining court at the local yacht club. A few courts remain in the Midwest. All the large, urban, municipal sites have been dismantled to leave few traces. It's some time since the National Championships have been contested. They were abandoned when the entry fell to single figures.

So, what went wrong? From our remote vantage point it's difficult to tell. Few survivors from the game's heyday remain, and clues are scarce.

What we do know is that it was the policy of the US Government during the Depression of the 1930s to put money into public parks, and roque was a major beneficiary. Player totals peaked, as did the number of courts. With hindsight, there seems to have



been an element of social control in the policy of the time ("No job? No money? Come and have a game of roque!"). which must have aligned the game with the stigma of unemployment. Improving economics cannot have helped with the sport's image. And, when that happened, supply of courts must have far outstripped the demand for their use. It's easy to see why the Government would subsequently embark on a widescale process of dismantlement.

The onset of wartime must have forced many out of the game. By the end of hostilities, one would expect Roque's core support to have shrunk back, largely to an ageing retired set. It's unlikely that the game's powers-that-be were well equipped to cope with a changing society.



These were times of increased consumer spending among the young.

Returning soldiers were keen to settle down with families, and there was an upsurge in the popularity of backyard croquet sets. People had cars, and croquet picnics with the kids were easier to organise than games of the decidedly un-portable roque. Roque, now seen as a pursuit for the old and the poor, stood for everything the new generation aspired against, and the sport's governing body were certainly left struggling to cope.

The game's ethos from the start had been to oppose the status quo of croquet. Maybe that could be seen as pig-headedness against what the public wanted. It was certainly the case that no one at the top wanted to adapt. Charges of cliquiness and sectarianism appear convincing, in an American Roque League whose management remained unchanged for over 40 years until the 1980s.

Now, it seems, hope of a recovery is too little too late. Jack Roegner has occupied the driving seat for 20 years now, but a widespread revival in America's cities looks impossible, for an administration with no resources, a game which no one remembers, and which has lost out to the various games on grass. For Roque, it seems, the battle is lost.

Brass Faced Mallets

A report on alleged damage to balls by Barry Keen and Bernard Neal

1. INTRODUCTION

This report has been prepared because of anxieties expressed by the Southwick Croquet Club. The club feels that balls have been damaged by the use of brass-faced mallets. The investigation was focussed on a 'Pidcock' brass end, its edges rounded to a radius of 1.5mm.

2. GENERAL

Damage to balls can be caused by

2.1 Manufacturing defects, which are likely to promote irregular damage, such as chipping or cracking, during normal play.

2.2 Bad shots, such as wild miscues resulting in edge impact, which might also cause chipping in a defective area, but which are more likely to cause elongated dents.

2.3 Impact on extraneous objects with hard, sharp edges, or, even worse, sharp points.

3. HARDNESS OF MATERIALS

The hardness of mallet end faces, in comparison with the hardness of the ball, clearly has a bearing on the possibility of damage. Hardness tests were therefore carried out in a Rockwell test machine, in which the diameter of the indentation made by a 1/8 inch diameter hardened steel ball on flat test pieces under a 60 kg f (130 lb) load is measured.

The results showed that glass reinforced epoxy resin, which is commonly used in end faces, is nearly as hard as brass; textile reinforced epoxy resin, also used, is not quite as hard; but the ball material is an order of magnitude softer than these three materials.

Interestingly, the (approx.) 2.5mm diameter indentation made on the ball specimen virtually disappeared after a day or so - the plastic has a 'memory' and tends to return to its original shape after indentation.

Since both plastic and brass end faces are much harder than the ball material, it would seem that ball damage, whether associated with manufacturing errors or caused by a miscue, is no more likely to occur because of the use of brass end faces than the widely

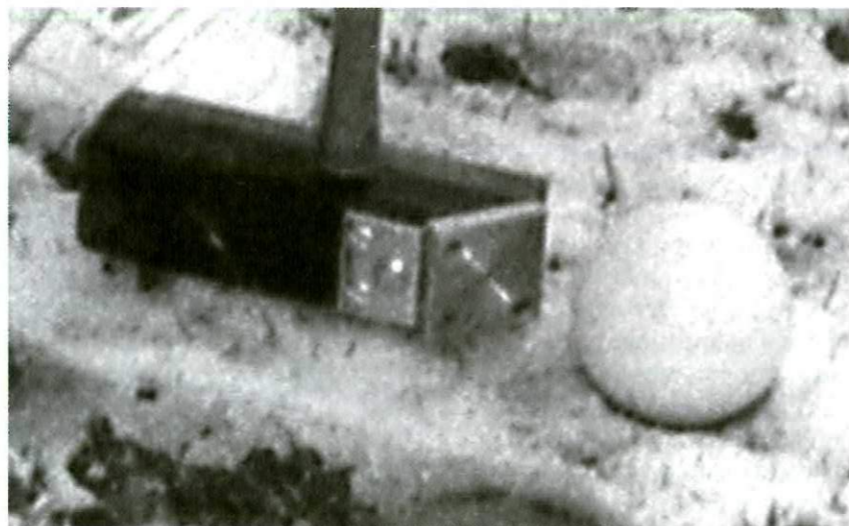


Bernard Neal testing the brass mallet in the weather of Cheltenham in February

used plastic ends. However, it was felt that a positive test was desirable, and this is described in Section 4.

4. EDGE IMPACT WITH BRASS END FACE

It was decided to subject a Barlow ball to an edge impact more severe than is possible in normal play. A mallet head



The ball is struck very hard with the edge of a brass end-face. Even at full strength, a ball placed hard against a hoop upright sustains no detectable damage.

was therefore cut to an angle of 45 degrees. A square 'Pidcock' end was then screwed firmly to the head, so that a rounded edge was vertical and in line with its centre line.

The modified mallet was then swung so as to simulate a long shot struck at full strength, so that the rounded edge hit the ball 'full on'. There was no detectable indentation or damage to the ball, even after ten successive 'shots' in the same area. In addition, several 'golf' style strokes were played which provided an impact force far greater than that achieved by even the biggest hitters in the game. This produced no damage to the ball. Finally 'golf' style strokes were played with the striker's ball on the end of a straight line 4 ball cannon with no damage. The ball was then placed in contact with a hoop upright and struck 'full on'. Again, this produced no detectable damage.

These impacts are much more severe than a likely impact in a miscue. It follows that the use of brass end faces, provided that the edges are rounded to a radius of at least 1.5mm, will not damage a ball unless it has a manufacturing defect, which is equally prone to damage if struck by a mallet with plastic end faces.

Needless to say, sharp edges to a face, whether plastic or brass, should not be permitted.

A gift you won't miss!

Jonathan Isaacs gives details of the CA's new Legacy Strategy

One of the remits of the CA Marketing Committee is to look at new ways of raising funds for the Croquet Association and its members. A very effective method of funding for similar organisations has been the implementation of a Legacy Strategy - i.e. to encourage members to remember the CA in their will. We would very much like to implement such a strategy, and as an initial step I thought it might be useful to recount my own experiences.

Croquet and those within our community have given me considerable enjoyment over the years. As such I decided that a bequest in favour of

Croquet was a fitting thank you for those many pleasurable years.

The more difficult decision was whether to leave a gift to my own club or to leave a bequest to the Croquet Association for investment in projects needing the money at the time required.

From my point of view both options had their merits. I thought it might be better to leave a sum to The Croquet Association, who could then allocate the money to projects regarded as needy at the time. However most of my croquet has been played at my own club and I really felt that they should have the benefit of a bequest.

In the end I decided to leave a sum to both organisations on the grounds that whilst my own club had provided many years of enjoyment and companionship, playing in CA organised tournaments and visiting many very hospitable clubs had also given me considerable pleasure.

I do hope others of you will also consider leaving a bequest in favour of our game. To help with this process, the Marketing Committee will be providing some further information in the next edition of the *Gazette*.

Killing Two Birds with One Stone

Michael Hague gives tips on recruitment and fundraising

Two of the biggest challenges facing most clubs are recruiting and fund-raising. At Woking, we addressed both in one experiment. The results are worth passing on to other clubs as although our idea was not an original one, many may not be aware of the opportunities available.

All County Councils participate in the adult and community learning scheme. At the Woking Adult Learning Centre, contact was made with the Lifelong Learning Development Co-ordinator for Woking who welcomed the offer of a Croquet Course for Beginners to add to her extensive portfolio of adult learning courses published each term. It was agreed to run one course during the day for those not working and another in the evening for those who were. Each course consisted of four two hour sessions over May/early June. The club would receive £3 per head for the hire of equipment and facilities and £25 per session for the instruction. Later we learnt that the students each paid £46.50 discounted to £39.60 for the over 60's for the four sessions.

All this was arranged in the

autumn for the following season. Nothing was heard in the intervening months. In fact the course programme for the summer months was not available until the end of March but anyway, it was a bit of a long shot and one did not really expect sufficient response to make the course financially viable for the County. Thus it was that the club coach faced with having to change the dates of his sailing holiday to the end of May, did so with no fear of causing undue complications. He was a little nonplussed to receive the day prior to the published date of the first session the otherwise welcome news that two couples had signed up for each of the daytime and evening courses, making four students per course - the ideal size of class for one coach.

The courses went well with students keen to attend all sessions having paid up front for them. The club was able to offer them time to practise between sessions for the standard club visitor's fee of £3 per session. Most importantly they were invited after the first coaching session to join in the club Golf Croquet mornings to meet members and appreciate the social aspects

and the friendly playing environment. Further free coaching was offered for those who wished to continue with the sport when the Adult and Community Learning courses were completed by joining the club. The net result was £298 in the club account and five new members plus two more possibly starting next season.

It was interesting that when asked why they had paid Surrey County Council for a course which they could have had for the minimal visitors' fee of £3 per session, three couples replied that although they lived in Woking, they did not know the club existed and the fourth pair said that they did not think that they were good enough players to apply to join! I would imagine that any club in an urban environment could reach out to a wide potential membership through the local community services. It is certainly worth giving it a go and Woking LTCC will be working in partnership with Surrey County Council to offer this learning opportunity for next season.

Obituaries

Betty Weitz

Betty Weitz, who died in August 2004, had been a member of the Cheltenham Croquet Club since 1974.

Betty and her husband Bernard began to play croquet when they lived in London in the 1960s, first as enthusiastic "garden croquet" players and then more seriously as country members at Southwick.

A move to Reading in 1967 led to them joining the Caversham Club run by Dr. Boucher in his grounds. The high standard of play - the club numbered amongst its members Richard Rothwell and Nigel Aspinall - led to a huge improvement in Betty's standard of play. It also kindled her enthusiasm for the game, which was to last for the next thirty years.

A thread running through her life has been to help others to share her interests. She soon began coaching, and this activity was to continue throughout her playing career. Betty was the inspiration behind the development of croquet at Phyllis Court; as a direct result of her coaching an active croquet section developed and is now firmly established. She also sought out the owners of many private courts in the area, and organised weekend tournaments between them, with the finals at Phyllis Court.

Betty and Bernard moved to Cheltenham when Bernard retired, and both quickly became involved in the Club's activities. Betty was a member of the Club Committee for many years, and for a while was Vice-Chairman. She also became an enthusiastic member of the Club's coaching team. Betty made a major contribution to the Club by running the all-important House Committee for many years, and was also a club handicapper. Her services to the Club were recognised by the award of a Croquet Association Diploma in 2002, jointly with Bernard.

As a player, Betty's principal achievements were three appearances in the Ladies' Field Cup and winning the Peel Memorial Singles in 1981 off a handicap of 2 1/2. She was also a member of the Caversham team when

it won the Inter-Club Championship in 1973.

Sadly, ill-health caused Betty to withdraw gradually from playing the game she loved, and eventually to withdraw from other club activities too.

Betty was an accomplished musician and maker of musical instruments, and she passed on her love of music to many members of her family. It was therefore fitting that Bernard and the family chose to celebrate her life with a concert at which all the family performed. A highlight was Elgar's "Salut d'amour" played by her daughter Sue on a violin which Betty had made herself.

It was a most moving occasion, attended by many friends and a tribute to one who had shared her interests and enthusiasms with such generosity throughout her life.

Bernard Neal

Christine Bagnall

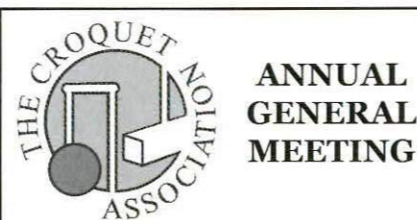
Budleigh Salterton recently lost one of its longest-serving and most generous members when Christine Bagnall died on 10 February. She had been active at the Club after Christmas and the New Year and her sudden decline and death was a great shock to all her many friends.

Christine joined Budleigh Salterton Croquet Club in 1976, but was already an accomplished croquet player and records show that she won a club trophy in 1979 with a handicap of 5. She had previously played croquet in England before going to South Africa and had taken mallet and balls with her to ensure she could continue a sport, which gave her such pleasure for the rest of her life. Her elegant style was a familiar sight on the lawns at Budleigh, and she was a great stickler for etiquette. She had also been a keen golfer.

No club could have had a more loyal supporter than Christine who was not only a very great benefactor but had also taken an active role in many of the Club's activities. She had

on various occasions served on the Croquet Committee of which she had also been Chairman and was a coach and an Association handicapper and had served on the CA Council. For several years she ran the club's bars and when she could no longer play in tournaments she was to be seen with her camera taking photographs of the players which she despatched round the country afterwards. In more recent years she joined the bridge section of the Club and gave that her strong support as well. Budleigh Salterton Croquet Club owes her a deep debt of gratitude. She will be sadly missed.

J. and M. Goodhart



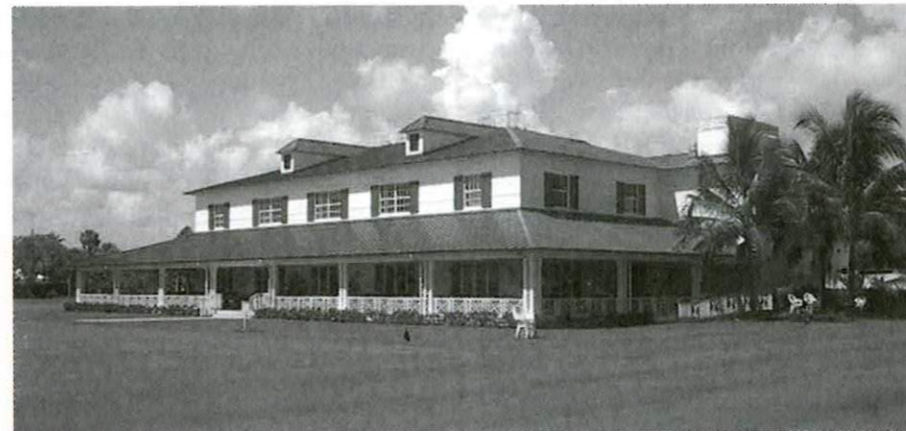
At the next AGM, which will be held on Saturday 15 October, five members of Council will have completed their terms of office, all of whom have indicated their wish to stand for re-election.

The names of any other 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.

Klim Seabright
Secretary, The Croquet Association
c/o Cheltenham Croquet Club, Old Bath Road, Cheltenham GL53 7DF.
Email caoffice@croquet.org.uk

Croquet the American Way

Jon Diamond reports from Florida



February always seems such a cold and dreary month, so Florida just seemed too good an idea, especially as a Cruise brochure featuring the Caribbean and starting in Fort Lauderdale dropped through the door in November.

Anyway the logistics all worked out, so after delivering my mallet to John Hobbs to be part of the glorified mallet "coffin" that went with the main party, Barbara and I flew off for our mid-winter sun at the end of January. (Even with the mallet head being detached we didn't have any luggage large enough to take the mallet handle and the airlines don't allow them to be taken as hand-luggage any longer!)

The cruise complete, we drove gently up Interstate 95 to West Palm Beach, stopping at an obligatory Quilting Shop (a self-organised element of the 'spouse programme') and 'people watching' the 'parade' up and down the Palm Beach equivalent of Bond Street. We were expecting to meet the rest of the 24-strong party in the bar at the Hilton, which was to be our base for the Croquet week, at about 6:30pm. Unfortunately they had been caught up with USA Immigration queues and delayed for a mere two hours, so were rather more tired than expected when they eventually rolled up. Happily, the hotel had laid on a Wine and Cheese reception, so there was at least some welcome from the USA on the starting Saturday!

The Hilton was ideally located and, according to veterans of these trips, much better than the hotels in the pre-

vious two years. It provided free shuttles to both the National Croquet Centre (about 3 blocks away) and to the Shopping/Dining location of City Plaza on request, in addition to several 'special requests' from those on the spouse programme.

The weather dawned the next day mainly sunny, but warm, and after a briefing from the Hotel Manager, a local Tourism Officer, our very own Nicky Evans (Tour Manager) and Richard Hoskyns (Tournament Manager) we were off to the NCC for an intro and practice to be greeted by Mike Jenner (CEO of the NCC). His accent definitely showed his English origin, but he seems to be gradually slipping into American by the minute.

Off we go to the lawns for a bit of practice and to meet up with a number of the Americans. They've got a couple of classes in progress with about 30 people learning the game, so we're confined (!) to only 5 lawns. Most of us manage to meet up with some Americans also practising, and use the time to do a bit of education in the Association game.

I ran into Dick Knapp, who I played last year at a Surbiton tournament - he still remembers pegging one of my balls out, but my struggling around with a three-ball break and winning. Unfortunately, he'd fallen over in the car park, so we couldn't complete a full game and he eventually had to retire home with a blood injury.

The lawns seemed in excellent condition, a bit fast but holding well and very flat almost everywhere. Also, the grounds seem to have recovered well

from the hurricane last year, with only a couple of defunct gazebos being the obvious damage.

Sunday was Super Bowl day and the majority of US citizens take the opportunity to party. Not wishing to be left out, the NCC had organised an Open Buffet that evening. The food was excellent, the alcohol flowed and, despite the jet-lag, a number of us decided to participate. An excellent time was had by all, even those not watching the game on the three big screens.

Having rested and relaxed, the next day was something really different - croquet, but in real American style. We were all bussed the 15 miles to the PGA (Professional Golfers Association) National Resort and Spa for an introduction at their club to the American Rules game. Although the main focus of the resort is obviously golf, they have a mere 5 croquet lawns, so providing another really good environment for the game.

After an introduction to American Rules we were paired up with the Americans to play three fun doubles games. It's certainly a different sort of game and also, perhaps surprisingly, uses a different range of shots. For example, thin take-offs are much more frequent and rolls appear to be almost non-existent.

We certainly needed our partners to tell us what strategy we should be using, but after the three games I feel that most of us had at least a grasp of some of what we should be doing. I'm not sure that I'd like to be out on my own for a real game though...

There are clearly some advantages to the American game - games typically last no more than 90 minutes and, given the automatic rotation of the balls and usually shorter breaks, almost no time for sitting out. However, the deadness of balls after a roquet takes a lot of getting used to, even when the display boards on each lawn show the current status. (Three balls deadness is a disastrous situation.)

The differences in the rules appeared to me to make the game too

complicated for beginners to keep track of the state of the game, and therefore work out what the strategy should be, and probably too defensive for the better players. However, it's still a fun game and I shouldn't really make definitive pronouncements after only one day's exposure. It is interesting to note that during the rest of the week we had quite a few Americans say, unprompted, that they preferred the Association game.

The accompanying golfers in the group decided that the rates at the PGA were rather extortionate (I heard a figure something like \$350 being bandied around), but did manage to find another of the almost 200 courses in Palm Beach County to play on. I believe they also found several others during the week whilst we had our heads down at the croquet.

Tuesday dawned brightish again, but this day was 'at leisure'. Retail or any other kind of therapy was permissible, even relaxing by the outdoor swimming pool! In the evening we were entertained by one of the locals and a number of the other players for a drinks party at her flat overlooking the Intercoastal Waterway, separating the island of Palm Beach from West Palm Beach where most of our activities took place.

Richard had been beaver away in the background organising at the NCC, so promptly at 9am on Wednesday we started play in the Handicap Event, with six 2fi hour games over the two days. A little help had to be given to some of the Americans who, although familiar with the rules of Association, were not quite as familiar with the tactics. Nevertheless, there didn't have to be too many calls on the Referees to sort things out.

Although the timing should have allowed play to cease at sunset (just after 6pm), at least one game went on well after dark, at almost 6:45pm with the extra last-turn. I don't know about the players, but I couldn't see which colour ball was which from the side of the lawn. But since they were playing the secondary balls we could just about see where they were because of the white stripes!

The Thursday dawned, dare I say it, a bit cold. Not only that, there was a chilly wind and even 10 minutes of rain, especially nasty since I'd left my rain gear at the hotel! However, we all played through it in true Brit style and completed the games on time. Dick Knapp won this event with John Kennedy as runner up.

The Class Events were played on

Friday and Saturday in the expected warm and sunny weather, although one Brit had to retire due to over-exposure to the sun. The A-class event was won by Keith Jones (USA), the B class by Jim Taylor (USA) and Deirdre Duggan in the C class (Handicap).

The Fun 14pt Doubles on Sunday allowed for mostly Brit/American pairings. Unfortunately, we had to leave early to catch our plane back from Miami so didn't participate in the last round, but Les Kershaw and Tony Whateley proved the ultimate winners (two Brits paired together - shame). Finally, the main tour ended with a day and a half at leisure with many people visiting the Space Center at Cape Canaveral and others visiting the Everglades, and even some just relaxing!

Thanks to everyone for making this another successful foray by the Brits to America. Perhaps we'll do better with the results next time?

Ah, I almost forgot, you were wondering why the é in the title? Well, the Americans stress the second syllable of the word in a rising tone. So to make us understood when we were asked in elevators, shops, hotels etc. what we were doing in Florida we had to learn to speak American...

Have a nice day!

The Renaissance of Pendle

James Hawkins recounts the rescue of one of the North's premier clubs

Three years ago, the *Gazette* reported on the imminent eviction of Pendle Croquet Club. The prognosis wasn't good. The Club's landlords had served a year's notice on the lawns. Diggers were about to move in, and, with no alternative home, this five-lawn tournament venue on the edge of the Yorkshire Dales looked to be in danger of fading away.

The Club was formed in 1985, when John Beech and a group of friends pinpointed an area of land at Nelson and Colne College. They've been there ever since; initially using the "front garden" of the college for two lawns by the main road, later moving to the side of the College, before taking five lawns at the furthest tip of the site, beyond the College's playing fields.

Then, in November 2001, the College finalised expansion plans. Building work was to take place on the playing fields. This would push the hockey pitch southwards, leaving no room for croquet. Pendle Croquet Club was given one year's notice to vacate the site.

The story of the Club's impending eviction reached the local paper, and from there the news came to the attention of Pendle's White Knight, local factory owner Ted Fort.

Ted Fort had been an occasional member of Pendle. Running a successful engineering firm with four factories around the country, he had never found much time to play while at home in Nelson, so, as one of those couple-of-afternoons-a-season players, it was perhaps surprising to see the strength of his conviction. He summoned John Beech and fellow member Robin Delves, and issued an ultimatum. The Club cannot be allowed to fold - you must visit the Council's Chief Executive tomorrow, and report that I will act as financial backer to any new venture.

At 9 o'clock the next day, John was in the office of Stephen Barnes, the head of Pendle Borough Council. With a backer with some local clout, the wheels were now in motion. And,



The old club, "Croquet in Pendle", situated in the grounds of Nelson and Colne College.

by March 2002, a new site had been earmarked in nearby Marsden Park.

These Capability Brown-designed gardens incorporated an impressive lido, now defunct, and it was here that the Council, and Ted Fort, had opted to redevelop on the Club's behalf. Architects were consulted, plans were drawn up, meetings were held to seek National Lottery funding. In a council-sponsored redevelopment, this would provide a brand new club for Pendle, with what amounted to a blank cheque from Fort.

Ted was well accustomed to financing such projects. It was his efforts which led to the construction of a millennium lighthouse by the Solent in Southampton. He didn't, of course, stump up the cash for the whole deal. But he did have access to the Great and the Good throughout the area, and was possessed of the skills to twist arms and keep the money flowing in. Persuading the business community of North East Lancashire to dig quite so deep, and for a croquet club, would be a tougher call.

Six months slipped by. Building work at the College fell behind schedule, and croquet continued to be played on its lawns. Even so, John Beech and his committee had heard

nothing from the Council. Letters went unanswered and phone messages met with no response. It was October 2002, and John set off to the Town Hall to knock on some doors. What he found was exasperating. Had planning permission been sought? No. Was Council funding in place? No. Building regulations? No. Or the promised lottery grant application? No.

Time was critical for the Croquet Club. The Council, in the driving seat, seemed to have little concern about the deadlines which the eviction presented. So John and the Pendle committee took the bravest decision - to turn their backs on Marsden Lido, walk away from the Council-sponsored project and forego the guaranteed funding. They set about finding their own site, raising funds alone and developing a new five-lawn club from scratch.

It took until July 2003 to find a new location. Earby is a 15-minute drive up the road towards Skipton. It's in hiking distance of the Yorkshire Dales National Park (it's the stop-off point for Youth Hostellers travelling the Pennine Way); it's about the most easterly point in Lancashire and has a catchment area which, notionally, includes the West Yorkshire conurba-

Manor House Mallets

The originators of carbon fibre shafted mallets offer a comprehensive range: from the 'Basic' (£87.50), the well established T-series (£137.50), and the 2000 mallet at £160 (inc. head wrap). All have heads of fine hardwood with screwed and glued double faces, inlaid sight lines and a high quality finish. Sustainably managed timbers.

Hollow head with brass plate extreme end-weighting (£20 extra)

Revolutionary 2001 model £220

Mallet bags (£27) Head wraps (£7.50)

For details or discussion, contact Alan Pidcock,

Tel & Fax 01772 743859

e-mail pidcock@manorh.u-net.com

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

WOODLANDS CROQUET

CROQUET BALLS FOR ALL OCCASIONS

CA CHAMPIONSHIP APPROVED

SUNSHINY £117 per set

BARLOW GT £139 per set

DAWSON 2000 £159 per set

GARDEN CROQUET BALLS

16oz £46; 12oz £41; 7oz £36

Postage packing and insurance adds £5 per set.

PPI on multiple orders at special rates.

MALLETS, HOOPS, WINNING PEGS, FLAGS AND CLIPS AVAILABLE AT KEEN PRICES. CROQUET SETS FOR GARDENS AND HOTELS.

Advice available from John Beech by phone.

Send for a full list of Top Quality Croquet

Equipment & Sets.

Woodlands Croquet, Woodlands, Skipton Road,

Barnoldswick, BB18 6HH

Phone/fax 01282 813070



The new club, "Pendle and Craven Croquet Club". The new site in Earby provides five courts, car parking and a brand new purpose-built clubhouse, with much more space than the club has previously enjoyed.

tion of Leeds, Bradford and Huddersfield, as well as Pendle's previous recruiting ground around Burnley and Blackburn.

Tucked away behind Earby village library was a patch of land big enough for Pendle CC's purposes. There's room for a clubhouse, five lawns and a car park. That aside, it would need considerable imagination to see this as a flagship croquet club of the future.

Fifty years ago, this had been farmland. Since then, it had fallen into extreme neglect. The area was covered in rubble. There were burnt-out cars, and it had become an unofficial dumping ground for residents' household rubbish. What's more, it wasn't flat and there was no sign of any grass. Within three months, Pendle had signed the lease to take it over, and make a brand new croquet facility.

Among the most daunting obstacles to such a hair-raising prospect is the lack of finance. Pendle Borough Council's support was no longer available, though Ted Fort continued to express his support as the Club's backer. This was all well and good, but no formal discussion had taken place to clarify what Ted's role involved. Would he finance the project from start to finish? (Unlikely) Would he provide a loan, to be repaid by the Club? (Undesirable) Or would he provide some of the funding, and rely on colleagues and associates to

meet the rest of the cost? (An unpredictable reliance) Either way, it was likely that money would have to come from elsewhere.

Pendle Croquet Club is registered as a Community Amateur Sports Club (see Gazette 285, May 2003). For tax purposes, this classifies an organisation as a "pseudo-charity", and allows any donations to be treated as for charitable Gift Aid. Inland Revenue rules stipulate that regular subscriptions are not eligible for tax refunds, but fundraising donations of this type are. Against an expected income from members of about £5,000, the actual total stands at close to £19,000. Of course, this has soaked up all of the Club's limited reserves, and has committed individual members to undertaking much of the work on the new club as volunteers.

At an early stage, John Beech asked Ted for a commitment of £5,000. Having a lump of cash up front persuades many funding bodies that intentions are serious, and often provides access to more help. The next port of call was the Lancashire Playing Fields Association.

Cash, it transpires, is short for the LPFA, who could only afford to award a nominal grant of £200, but their advice was vital, in recommending an approach to the Lancashire Small Sites Reclamation Programme. The LSSRP is a regeneration programme financed

with money devolved from the Northwest Regional Development Agency. Their objective is to bring derelict areas back to use, in order to improve the environment of local neighbourhoods, and to involve local community organisations (e.g. croquet clubs) in putting the project together. So far so good. But is an empty field in a village of 6,000 people the sort of project they're interested in? One look at the Earby site, and the inspector gave approval on the nod - one third of the total estimate for the project, and the maximum grant available from the Programme.

Biffa Waste Services is the UK's largest landfill sites operator. For the last eight years, they've been funding wildlife and environmental projects (to the tune of £70m) under the fund name Biffaward (www.biffaward.org). Funding is directed to projects which provide and improve public amenities for communities within 10 miles of a Biffa operation. High on their list is "Access to sport, culture or recreation (e.g. purchase of play equipment or sport equipment, village green improvements)." John's application for tree and hedge planting, and provision of a sewer connection fitted their criteria, and netted the Club an extra £5,000.

It was Ted Fort's plan for widespread commercial sponsorship which met with disappointment. Among all his local contacts, just two returned with positive responses. Rolls Royce (their factory is nearby) gave a small grant, and a local electrical firm agreed to carry out work for nothing. Even so, with much of the funding in place, and with contractors on site, it looked like the finishing post would be just £5,000 off.

John went back to Ted, and explained the situation. Ted nodded. The cheque for the outstanding amount arrived the next morning. So, barring a couple of thousand pounds for sundry expenditure, all the cash was in place. Now, with the project almost ready, there are still funding avenues available. Even without, a modest increase in membership

COSTS

Levelling, landscape, drains, lawn sowing and tree/hedge planting	38,626
Pavilion, services and DIY work	32,822
Equipment	2,987
Other costs	2,698
Remedial drainage works	5,156

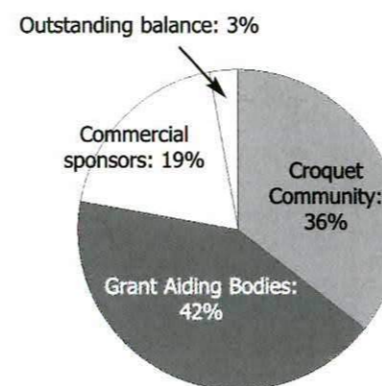
TOTAL COST 82,289

FUNDING OF SCHEME

<i>The Croquet Community</i>	
Club funds, members and friends gifts, tax back and interest	18,972
Croquet Association grants	10,000
North West Federation	250
Bury Croquet Club	50
	29,272
<i>Grant Aiding Bodies</i>	
Lancashire Small Sites Reclamation Programme	19,646
National Lottery Funding	5,000
Biffaward	5,000
Pendle Community Chest	4,988
Lancashire Playing Fields Association	200
	34,834
<i>Commercial Sponsors</i>	
Fort Vale Engineering Limited	10,000
Robinson and Lawlor Ltd	2,000
Bellingham Wines (via CA)	2,000
Cooperative Society Community Dividend	500
RD Geotech	500
Woodlands Croquet	500
Rolls Royce plc	250
Heap and Preece	100
	15,850

TOTAL RESOURCES TO DATE 79,956

BALANCE TO BE FOUND 2,333



Sources of funding: Pendle have so far raised £79,956 of the £82,289 required.

Applications for further grants have been made to The Craven Trust and Pendle Community Chest.

should see the small deficit wiped out quickly.

It was an emotional visit for me when I visited Pendle on Easter Saturday. I remember my first visit 20 years ago, and the Club's makeshift clubhouse - a ramshackle old caravan parked by the gate, sadly destroyed in a fire many years ago. The newer, more permanent clubhouse has gone, as have the new lawns. Play is back on the forecourt in front of the College. And, three and a half years after the Club's proposed eviction, there's still no sign of much building work.

The laxness of the construction schedule at Nelson and Colne College has allowed croquet to continue on site throughout the redevelopment. Uncertainty has taken its toll on membership. From a high of nearly 60, the lowest point saw a third of the members drop out. With the promise of better times ahead, the list is back up to 53, and confidence is buoyant.

Up the road in Earby, all is excite-

ment. The lawns look promising. They've been laser-levelled and re-seeded. The compaction of bulldozers has left a drainage problem, which will be sorted once the weather dries out, and the ground can be treated. The target date for readiness is the middle of this season.

There's plenty of hard work still to do on the interior of the clubhouse. Members have undertaken much of the work themselves. While I was there, the kitchen was just going in, the electrics weren't ready and the curtains were being made that afternoon.

This new clubhouse has a licensed bar, separate changing rooms, and, for those who remember the bad old days of the lawnmower shed in Nelson, flushing loos. I'm intrigued by the basin in the Gents: apparently - and this is typical of him - John Beech spotted his neighbour's discarded bathroom suite in a skip, and asked if he could salvage it (total cost = £0).

It's clear that this is John's project, and everyone I speak to is in awe of his

vision. Even at the meeting to approve planning permission, the local residents were gushing in their enthusiasm for their new neighbours, and how many clubs receive that sort of red carpet reception, even before they've arrived?

These are exciting times for the newly renamed Pendle and Craven Croquet Club. Perhaps eviction will be the best thing which ever happened to them.

Henley 2004

*And now the hedges green again
And marriage-white bedecks the pear,
For spring is here : oh yes it's spring
The matchless moment of the year.*

*So come and take your mallet down
Refresh your whites and croquet things,
Spring's glory lasts so short a time
And summer waits within the wings.*

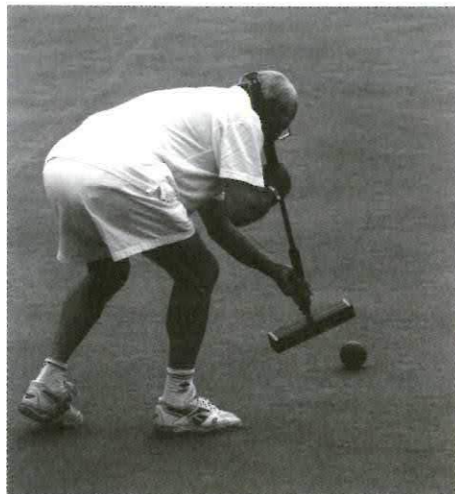
Smokey Eades

CA Diplomas

Croquet Association Diplomas were awarded to twelve deserving club members at the 2004 AGM, the citations for which are as follows:

Alan Linton - Bowdon

Member of Bowdon Croquet Club since 1986, Hon. Sec. 1992-4, Chairman 1996-8, editor of the club newsletter for four years, and Tournament Secretary for many years.



He has provided regular hospitality for many visiting tournament players. His regular weekly coaching sessions have helped ensure that new recruits to the game have gained the confidence to become tournament members of the CA, and been secured as long-term club members. With Daphne he has contributed a great deal to the social activities of the club, which contribute so much to its atmosphere and success.

Christine Bagnall - Budleigh Salterton

Member of the club for 28 years. During that time she at various times served on the Croquet Committee both as a member and as Chairman, acted as Coach and Handicapper, and off the lawns as Bar Officer, member of the General Committee of the Club, and for six years Trustee of the Club. Unable any longer to play croquet, she remained a loyal supporter of all the Club's activities, tournaments and competitions, and has been a most generous benefactor.

After being awarded the CA Diploma, Christine sadly died in February this year. Her obituary appears elsewhere in this edition of the Gazette.

David Purdon - Budleigh Salterton

David arrived at the club in 1987 as an accomplished player, and immediately involved himself in all aspects of running the club. He has acted as a CA Handicapper, has been Senior Coach in the Club, running Bronze and Silver courses, and as an Examining Referee has organised Laws Course and trained referees. Administratively he has been Secretary of the Croquet Section, Club Secretary and Chairman, and now serves on the General Committee of the Club as a Trustee.

Derek Trotman - Croquet North

Derek was Chairman of Croquet North for over ten years until 2002. During this time he was responsible for producing a four year plan for croquet in the region. He has served on the Council of the CA for over twelve years, and has been Chairman of the Development and Tournament Committees. He is a member of Belsay Hall Croquet Club, and a founder member of Tyneside Croquet Club, now in its twenty-first year. The Federation nominates him for the Diploma in recognition of the hugely valued contribution he has made at club, regional and national levels.

Canon Peter Cole - Rother Valley

Peter founded the club in 1994, has overseen two changes of location. He has served on the committee of the club for its whole life, and devotes large swathes of time to ensuring that the lawns are properly fed and watered, and to coaching beginners in the skills of both association and golf croquet. Without his inspired leadership and dedication the club would not be where it is today.

Peter Dyke - Nailsea

Peter is a founder member of the club, and was Chairman for the first ten years. He has continued to serve the club in many capacities, and he acts as Tournament Secretary. Perhaps he is best known for his work with junior members in local schools, which has produced a number of junior champions. He is Schools Officer for the South West Federation, and also gives a lot of time to coaching adult beginners and improvers.

Geoff Hughes - Nailsea

Geoff's main contribution to the club has been as handyman par excellence. He spends hours both on site and in his workshop at home repairing, inventing and/or making equipment for use on the lawns and in the club house. His involvement with the maintenance team includes researching and negotiating best value on all machinery and materials used, ensuring best use of club funds.

Hazel Kittermaster - Surbiton

Hazel's main contribution to croquet has been the setting of a new standard of catering, which is now widely applied but was extraordinary at the time. Through her own work and the leadership of others she has contributed catering profits which have been crucial in financing the development of the club for the benefit of both members and visitors.

Diana Brothers - Sussex County

Quite apart from Diana's generous backing when the club was in dire financial straits, there seems to be no aspect of the Southwick club that she has not been heavily involved with at one time or another. Recruitment, coaching, lawn maintenance, building maintenance, catering, accounting, club secretary - you name it, Diana has done it, and earned the award of the CA Diploma many times over.

Hyacinth Coombs - Sussex County

Member for some 22 years, Hyacinth has not only been one of the club's better players and a generous benefactor, but has also turned her hand to a wide range of ancillary duties. She has made valuable contributions both as a coach and tournament manager, and has served on the Club Management Committee. In recent years the role in which she has been most prominent has been the management of the club bar. In 2001 she was made an honorary member of the club, and she is equally deserving of the award of a CA Diploma.

Bryan Teague - Sussex County

Bryan joined the club in 1990, was elected to the committee in 1995 and became Chairman two years later. Under his leadership membership has increased, as have the number of tournaments and the Club's participation in national, Federation and social events. He has been extremely active as a coach and as a Tournament Manager, and since 1996 has supervised the maintenance of the lawns and grounds. His enormous contribution has helped make Sussex County the thriving club that it is today.

Les Butler - East Dorset

Les Butler is a name known to anyone who has visited East Dorset Lawn Tennis and Croquet Club in the last 40 years. Throughout the late '70s and '80s he was chairman of Parkstone Croquet Club, kept the club going with dwindling numbers of members and was responsible for moving the old lawn 5 to the new lawn 1. The work he did for the club cannot all be recounted but his legacy is there to be seen. He was a very competent player, and was selected for the Spencer Ell on 2 occasions. He sat on Council and contributed to the national management of the game. But above all he will be remembered for captaining Devon and Dorset county side. Winning in 1996 was perhaps his proudest moment.

Development Committee Awards

Every two years, the CA Development Committee chooses three clubs to receive awards for their efforts in promoting the game. Nominations are made by development officers from the regional federations, and winners receive a trophy, to be held for two years, a plaque, to be kept by the club, and a prize of £100.

The Townsend Award is presented to the small club (with no more than two courts) which has made the greatest contribution to development. Ashby in the East Midlands Federation is the latest recipient.

Founded in 1985, and being a CA registered club since 1992, Ashby CC has two lawns. The courts were laid in 2001/2002, and much work has been done to improve the playing surface. Much of this has been the result of the voluntary effort of the Club's members. In 2004, a weather shelter was designed, constructed and erected by members. The structure is large enough to enable meals to be consumed under cover, as well as providing the normal storage of competitors' clothing and bags.

The move to the current site has seen the Club become better established and has allowed focus to fall on recruitment. Beginners' courses and taster sessions have attracted over 180 people over the last two seasons, and membership has increased from 27 to a healthy 48.

Bowdon Croquet Club is the flagship club in North West Federation, and receives the Apps Heley award for the most improved club of no more than four lawns.

Bowdon CC has had the same four-lawn site in Altrincham since 1911, and serves a catchment including much of Cheshire and Manchester. Membership now stands at 100 full playing members, with a further 18 in other membership categories, and with several prospective members on a waiting list to join. Of these, an impressive 58 are full Associate Members of the CA.

The last two years have seen major

re-landscaping of the club, with the removal of 250 tonnes of spoil from the high bank behind lawns 3 and 4, and its placement in the hollow alongside lawns 1 and 2. This has extended the playing area of lawns 1, 2 and 3 by a further 60 sq. yards each, and improved the facilities for spectators. All the work was undertaken by volunteers, and by hand, and some 40% of the membership of the Club assisted in the process.

2004 was the wettest season on record for the Club, and the Ground Manager, Peter Taylor, took radical steps to restore drainage, again supported by voluntary effort. Some 180 six-inch deep boreholes were dug through to the underlying sand beds, and the holes filled with gravel. The results are promising, and the high standard of the playing surface is evidence of the constant care and hard work undertaken by members.

Among the players, the club boasts many CA coaches, and as many as ten minus-players. In 2004, Ian Lines achieved the handicap of -2, winning the Chairman's Salver at his first appearance. David Maugham won the President's Cup by a distinguished margin, and Cheshire won the Inter-Counties Championship, with all but one of its team drawn from Bowdon.

Clubs with five or more lawns are eligible for the Millennium Award, and this has gone to Cheltenham.

The relocation of the Croquet Association office to Cheltenham has involved extensive rebuilding of the Club's off-court facilities. The club secretary's office, the groundsman's hut and the irrigation control unit have each been re-sited. The kitchen has been fully redesigned and refitted.

The 11 courts host many major fixtures throughout each season and much work has been done in laying new drainage pipes to maintain the standards of the playing surface.

Cheltenham has around 215 playing members, with 127 CA members. The next WCF World Championship will be held at the Club in August.

News & Information

CA Secretary



Klim Seabright (above), the new Administrative Secretary of the CA, should now be settled in to the office in Cheltenham. On behalf of the readers, we wish him a long and happy tenure in the post.

Croquet on TV

Viewers of ITV's Midsomer Murders will have seen an intriguing choice of murder weapon in an episode screened in March. The victim was staked out with a set of hoops. Vicious indeed.

Coach of the Year

Congratulations to the Editor, James Hawkins, who has been awarded the title of Coach of the Year 2004.

James is Regional Coaching Officer for the North West Federation, and has been involved in three Coaches' Qualification Courses, at Southport,

Edgbaston and Middlesbrough. At the last of these, he was overall course director, and recruited a further 12 members to the CA Club Coaches programme.

Inventor of the "Hawkins Tube" - a rolled up sheet of paper for practising the grip and straightening the swing - he is, to date, the only holder of all five CA coaching badges, having qualified as a Club Coach, a Golf Croquet Coach, and an Association Coach at each of Grades I, II and III.

The award recognises his contribution to coaching of each of the formats of the game, throughout the north of England and North Wales.

Approved Equipment

The CA Equipment Committee has just granted approval for tournament use to the new cast iron hoop being produced by Jaques.

The previous hoop from Jaques used a hollow carrot, giving it a lighter weight than standard hoops. Many players found this unsatisfactory, giving the hoop an insufficiently firm anchor in the ground. The solid carrots of the new hoop rectify this issue.

Furthermore, tests have indicated that the steel hoops used in many tournaments may be easier to run than cast iron ones. Iron has a more granular structure, which may punish careless shots more severely than the smooth surface of a steel hoop. For this reason, it is hoped that the new hoop finds favour with top players relishing a more difficult challenge.

Jaques have also been engaged in

development of a new championship ball. Testing by the CA is at an advanced stage, and it is hoped that approval for use will be forthcoming soon.

Apology

Some results for the Veterans' Championships in the 2004 *Tournament Digest* (Gazette Issue 295) were incorrectly labelled. The correct titles and winners of the events should have read as follows:

1a The Veterans' Championship

Don Gaunt bt Tony Hall

1b The Felixstowe Cup (advanced play)

Derek Watts bt Don Waterhouse

1c The Strickland Cup (handicap play)

Don Laney bt Quiller Barrett

1d The Over 70s Championship

Bo Harris bt Dennis Moorcraft

1e Over 70s Singles (advanced play)

Derek Trotman bt Doug Taylor

1f Over 70s Singles (handicap play)

Peter Miller bt Ivor Meredith

2 Meredith Cup (handicap play)

Dennis Moorcraft bt Toby Jessel

3 The Sussex Trugs (handicap doubles)

Tony Hall & Nigel Graves bt Dennis Moorcraft & Bo Harris

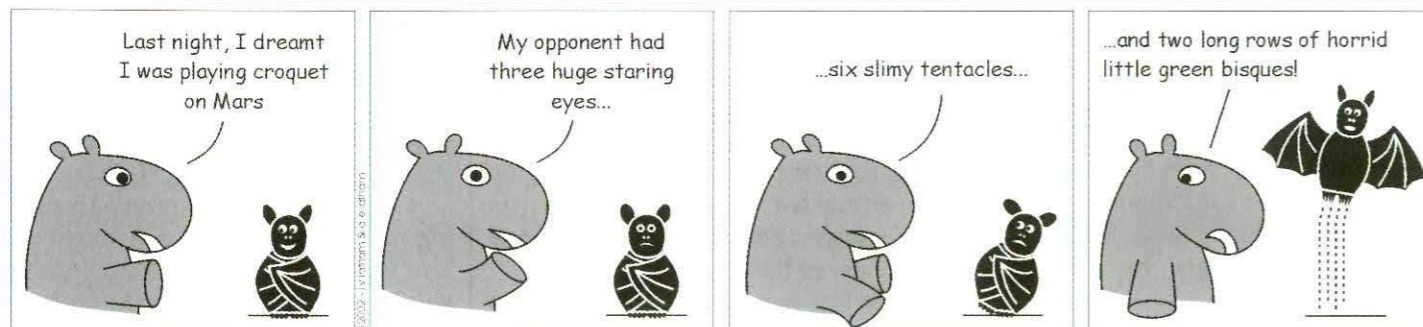
3X The Gilbert Spoons

Don Laney & Jack Thompson bt Derek Trotman & David Ruscombe-King

The editor apologises for any confusion and embarrassment which this may have caused.

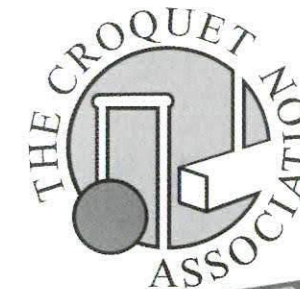
HOPOPOTAMUS

by Victor



The Croquet Association

CROQUET SHOP



Expert advice, discounted prices, rapid delivery on most items

Croquet Mallets

A comprehensive selection of mallets, including Pidcock, Percival, Hobbs, George Wood and Jaques. The popular George Wood Original mallet at £71 + delivery is still our best-seller.


Come to us for the widest variety and impartial expert advice.

Also a range of hard and soft mallet covers to suit most mallets, including both padded and unpadded.

Hard leather case, 9.25 x 38 x 2.5"	£69.00
Blue cover with Croquet logo	£20.00
Padded blue cover with croquet logo	£24.00
Blue canvas cover for up to 40" shaft and 12" head lengths	£29.00

Clothing

A wide range of white clothing and wet weather gear is available, including:

	Breathable wet weather jacket	£35.00
	Breathable jacket and trousers	£49.00
	Fleece reversible windcheater jacket	£35.00
	Fleece reversible gilet	£23.50
	Roll-up sports windcheater	£29.00
	White trousers	£27.00
	Pullover	£26.50
	Ladies cardigan	£29.00

Odds and Ends

Timer	£8.00
Silver earrings, hoop and ball or mallets	£12.00
Hoop setting feeler gauge	£2.50
Canvas ball carrier bags.	£10.50
Croquet Girl cards - pack of 8, blank inside	£4.50
Croquet posters - b&w prints, 4 designs available	£6.00ea
Ball markers, pack of 10 assorted plastic markers	£1.00

For more information

Call Jeff Dawson on 01483 776971

Email sales@croquet.org.uk

Or visit our website www.croquet.org.uk/shop

We are based at:

112 Potters Lane, Send, Surrey GU23 7AL

Callers welcome by appointment only, please

Books

A wide variety of croquet publications are available, including:

Basic Laws of Association and Golf Croquet.....	£2.00
The Laws of Association Croquet.....	£4.00
Official rulings and commentary.....	£3.00
The Laws of Golf Croquet.....	£2.50
A Guide to Golf Croquet.....	£5.00
How to play Croquet.....	£4.50
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
Challenge & Gilbey book by Alan Oldham.....	£3.00
Lawn Management by John Beech.....	£5.00
Croquet: Technique by John Riches.....	£7.00
Croquet: Error Correction by John Riches.....	£7.00
Croquet: Next Break Strategy by John Riches...	£9.00
Croquet: The Mental Approach by John Riches.....	£9.00
Croquet: Lessons in Tactics by John Riches.....	£9.00
Croquet: Finer Points by John Riches.....	£10.50

Videos

Imported from Australia, these videos were made by Kevin Brereton in the 1990s

Single ball strokes 30min	£12.00
Croquet strokes 30min	£12.00
Tactics parts 1 & 2 60min	£14.00
Tactics part 3 - Peeling 90min	£16.00
Using Bisques 30min	£12.00
Sports Sciences & Croquet 30min	£12.00

All book and video prices include P&P to UK addresses

Complete croquet sets

How about getting a set for the back garden? We sell a wide range of sets at low prices, and our voucher scheme entitles members to a **£20 discount** on their first set!

Club Equipment

This is an ideal time to check over your club equipment, and replace anything necessary. As always, we sell all the equipment your club is likely to need, including:

Balls - Barlow GT, Dawson and Sunshiny
Hoops - Omega, Aldridge, Townsend and Jaques
 Corner flags, yardline markers, pegs, clips, gauges.

JACQUES CROQUET LONDON

The Finest Quality Croquet for 150 years.
'We taught the world to play.'

05



John Jaques II won a place in sporting history and a Gold Medal for introducing Croquet into England at the Great Exhibition in 1851. His display there attracted such wide attention that the game speedily became the vogue and over the years has developed into the absorbing sport enjoyed by so many world-wide.

www.jaques.co.uk gameon@jaques.co.uk

ESTD
LONDON 1795

JACQUES
LONDON

Jaques New Championship Hoops.
Officially approved by the
Croquet Association for tournament play.

