

THE CROQUET GAZETTE

ISSUE 300

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MERRY CHRISTMAS

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
rwbay@niscali.co.uk

Gazette Editor
Gail Curry
135 Acklam Road, Thornaby, Stockton on Tees TS17 7JT
01642 - 640880
gazette@croquet.org.uk

Press Officer
Rebecca Hopkins
ENS Limited, 42 Fullerton Road, London SW18 1BX
020 - 88713865
rebecca@ensltd.com

Tournament Committee
Richard Hoskyns
25 Burlington Road, London W4 4BQ
020 - 89943244
richard_hoskyns@compuserve.com

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

International Committee
Phil Cordingley
1 Milbro Court, 35 Anson Road, London N7 0RB
020 - 76093040
phil_cordingley@niscali.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 Barncroft, 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
bill.arliss@ntlworld.com

Selection Committee
Assoc: Dave Kibble, 21, Grove Avenue, Coombe Dingle, Bristol BS9 2RP Tel: 0117 - 9079377
DaveKibble@iee.org

Golf: Bill Arliss
(details above)

Development Committee
Patricia Duke-Cox
171 Witham Road, Woodhall Spa, Lincoln LN10 6RB
01526 - 354878 (H) 07944487880 (M)
duke-cox@hotmail.co.uk

Management Committee
Jonathan Isaacs
Meers Farm, The Hollow, West Chiltington RH20 2QA
01798 817326 (H)
jonathanisaacs@btinternet.com

Handicap Committee
Cliff Jones
2 Gronau Close, Honiton, Devon EX14 2YT
Tel 01404 41261
cliffjones@fraggles.wanadoo.co.uk

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

East Anglia
Vacant

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

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

North West
Barry Keen

Croquet North
Charles Waterfield

South West
Cliff Jones

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

West Midlands
Esther Jones, 285 Harborne Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham B15 3JB Tel 0121 455 6426
cbej@btinternet.com

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CONTENTS

CA Contacts	2
Chairman's Column	3
Editorial	3
The Selection Events	
President's Cup	4
Chairman's Salver	5
Spencer Ell Cup	6
Treasurer's Tankard	8
Selector's Weekend	9
Club Focus:	10
Taunton Deane C.C.	
News & Information	12
Talking Croquet:	14
Bob Alman Interviews Brian Storey,	15
Secretary General of the World Croquet	16
Federation	16
Obituary:	
Leslie Yoxall of Cheltenham C.C.	17
Advice & Information on Choosing a Mallet	17
Secretary's Colours	19

Chairman's Column

As I don't play croquet in the winter (unlike some clubs, Nottingham closes down completely), I have a bit more time for my other leisure pursuit: bell-ringing. At first sight, they are unrelated: one is a sport, with the unjustified reputation for being viciously competitive; the other a very public performance, where teamwork is the order of the day. However, they have far more in common than you might think.

For a start, both require a combination of physical skill, mental understanding and concentration. Contrary to popular belief (public misconception is also a common factor), ringing, like croquet, requires timing rather than brute strength, and both sexes participate on equal terms. Both have their own vocabulary and concepts that must be learnt, initially by rote but later with more understanding, with scope for theoretical advances by those at the top. Lapses of concentration can easily be fatal (figuratively, not literally, as in both cases accidents are very rare), though at least when ringing your fellow participants will try and put you right.

Both are voluntary, relying on the enthusiasm of individuals to keep them going. They are also time-consuming, in an age when time pressures seem to have

increased rather than lessened. Recruitment is difficult and learning is slow, but both are very rewarding, if not addictive, once you get into them. Consequently, teaching beginners to ring or play is speculative: many of them will give up quickly, but a few will more than repay the effort invested for many years. Both can be started when a teenager and continued well into retirement, providing a rich source of friendship and stimulation. Ringing is even cheaper than croquet (though that is a topic for another day) and practitioners of both have been seen in pubs.

Finally, there is a whimsical coincidence of vocabulary, though only phonetically: I've performed an occasional peal of triples (all the 5040 permutations of seven bells, swapping three pairs each time, taking about three hours) as well as a few triple peels (scoring the last three hoops and peg for another ball), but higher numbers seem equally challenging!

Have a good Christmas and best wishes for the New Year.

Ian Vincent



Editorial

Welcome to the 300th issue of the Croquet Gazette. It feels sometimes like I have produced every one, but no doubt some of my predecessors would disagree with me on that one. Maybe it is just the time of year and the long cold days and evenings that give us the feeling of the winter blues. However not everyone suffers from this, some of you are lucky enough to go to warmer climates and play croquet in other countries. I hope the recent articles on South Africa and the USA, have encouraged more to travel further afield and experience croquet in different countries. The next article is written from New Zealand, so I feel that you are gaining a good grounding of the experiences of other players and would be happy to receive accounts of any other countries not yet covered.

Closer to home I have been looking at the many web sites that both clubs and federations have. It was refreshing to see that there are so many of these and that there

is obviously a good deal of time spent updating them. I would like to ask all of the webmasters out there to think of me when they are updating their sites, as there is a wealth of news as well as photographs that would have made good contributions to the Gazette or CA Website and that are worthy of a wider audience. I know that some clubs and federations also publish their own magazines, so perhaps there is another source of material which is unshared. Unfortunately neither myself or Dave Kibble have the time to surf or read through every issue or site, but if we were sent the links or maybe emailed the information for sharing I am sure we would use it to publicise or inform the wider audience.

Merry Christmas and a happy New Year to one and all.

Ed.



The Selection Events

The President's Cup

Heaton Park, 8-11th September

Report compiled by Dave Kibble

The President's Cup was won by Keith Aiton, who celebrated with a 5th-turn sextuple in the 14th round. Round 14 was completed with 20 turns, including Chris Clarke having a 4th turn +25TP over Dave Kibble.

Keith became the first player to have won the President's Cup (2005), the Chairman's Salver (1983) and the Spencer Ell Cup (2002), and at 46 he is the oldest winner of the President's Cup since 1961, when Humphrey Hicks won aged 57. Keith is only the second winner over 40 since that time - Eric Solomon won aged 44 in 1979.

On Day 1 Maugham had a perfect day. Clarke had his first 9 shots hit against him, but also had 6 errors made against him. Chris started to record the total length of shots hit against him, soon got to 200 yards, which includes 19, 25 and 33-yards in one game (against Keith). He was heard to groan "not again" as Keith turned down a 19-yard shot at partner to hit the 33-yard (easier to get going from) shot.

In general, the conditions were easy and shooting was the name of the game - something at which Keith, Jonathan and James excelled. Turn of the tournament? - probably from Keith, who having been TPOed with two balls off (Fulford), ended the succeeding turn by failing Rover (from about 1.5 yards)! Rob missed and Keith finished.

This year there were 48 peeling turns (including 6sxp, 1tpo, 3otp), which is a record for an 8-man President's Cup!



Final Standing		
Pos.	Player	Won
1	Keith Aiton	12
2	Dave Maugham	9
3	James Death	8
4	Jonathan Kirby	7
5=	Chris Clarke	6
5=	Robert Fulford	6
7	Mark Avery	5
8	Dave Kibble	3

Full Results

Round 1

Keith Aiton beat Dave Kibble +13tp, Chris Clarke beat James Death +18, David Maugham beat Robert Fulford +26tp, Mark Avery beat Jonathan Kirby +17tp.

Round 2

David Maugham beat Mark Avery +26tp, Robert Fulford beat Jonathan Kirby +26sxp, Keith Aiton beat Chris Clarke +12tpo,



In the picture (L to R): Dave Maugham, James Death, Jonathan Kirby, Dave Kibble, Mark Avery, Chris Clarke, Keith Aiton, and Robert Fulford.

James Death beat Dave Kibble +18.

Round 3

James Death beat Robert Fulford +12tp, Keith Aiton beat Mark Avery +13otp, Jonathan Kirby beat Dave Kibble +26, David Maugham beat Chris Clarke +15tp.

Round 4

Keith Aiton beat Jonathan Kirby +26tp, David Maugham beat James Death +15tp, Chris Clarke beat Robert Fulford +26tp, Mark Avery beat Dave Kibble +18tp.

Round 5

Mark Avery beat Chris Clarke +26tp, Robert Fulford beat Dave Kibble +26tp, Keith Aiton beat David Maugham +26tp, James Death beat Jonathan Kirby +5.

Round 6

David Maugham beat Dave Kibble +26tp, Jonathan Kirby beat Chris Clarke +14, James Death beat Mark Avery +14otp, Robert Fulford beat Keith Aiton +26tp.

Round 7

Mark Avery beat Robert Fulford +26tp, James Death beat Keith Aiton +26tp, Dave Kibble beat Chris Clarke +26tp, David Maugham beat Jonathan Kirby +17.

Round 8

James Death beat Chris Clarke +10tp, David Maugham beat Robert Fulford +20tp, Jonathan Kirby beat Mark Avery +18tp, Keith Aiton beat Dave Kibble +24tp.

Round 9

Keith Aiton beat David Maugham +23tp, Jonathan Kirby beat Dave Kibble +26tp, Robert Fulford beat James Death +26sxp, Chris Clarke beat Mark Avery +26tp.

Round 10

Jonathan Kirby beat James Death +26tp, David Maugham beat Chris Clarke +16tp, Keith Aiton beat Mark Avery +26tp, Robert Fulford beat Dave Kibble +16sxp.

Round 11

Chris Clarke beat Robert Fulford +22sxp, Mark Avery beat James Death +26tp, Dave Kibble beat David Maugham +26tp, Keith Aiton beat Jonathan Kirby +26tp.

Round 12

Dave Kibble beat Mark Avery +26tp, Keith Aiton beat Robert Fulford +13otp, Chris Clarke beat Jonathan Kirby +26tp, James Death beat David Maugham +13tp.

Round 13

Kirby beat Fulford +18, Maugham beat Avery +26tp, Death beat Kibble +6, Aiton beat Clarke +26tp.

Round 14

Aiton beat Death +26sxp, Clarke beat Kibble +25tp, Kirby beat Maugham +26tp, Fulford beat Avery +26sxp.

The Chairman's Salver

Parkstone 8th-11th September

Report by Marcus Evans

Five of the eight players who assembled at Parkstone had won the salver before, with the remaining three having only two previous appearances between them. The weather was very good throughout apart from a couple of hours heavy rain on the Saturday. The lawns were a very easy pace and so hoops were well set to 1/32" (apart from one which was found to be closer to 1/100", to the chagrin of Patmore who had just stuck in it), but soft ground ensured they were quite easy to run.

Despite this there were several close games, including Patmore starting the event with +4, -4, -4, his win coming after Evans, slightly hang-over, managed to hit both balls with his mallet on a take-off. Evans managed to pull himself together in the next round, finishing off the contact (from 4) versus Brown, who played pretty well throughout but was unlucky enough to inspire his opponents into doing the same. However, clearly Evans overstretched himself in this game as he then proceeded to miss a 1" roquet in the next round. Burrow suffered a combination of his opponents' shots hilling on and his own hilling off, including one in near darkness against Lines at the end of day one after he had already expressed the wish to peg the game down. This miss did not improve Burrow's mood, but the manager ignored his alternative suggestion as to what he could do with the game and instead finished with a triple - or so he claims, the crowd couldn't see what happened after penult! In all three games were pegged down (one twice), only two of which involved Goacher.

Game of the tournament must surely go to Patmore-Beijderwellen on day two. Rutger shot hard at Chris' duffer, missing. Chris was just beginning to celebrate an easy start when the ball hit the peg full-on and stayed there. Patmore also missed the duffer, bouncing off 6 to near 1 wired from partner, but the ball on the peg was also wired from everything, so Rutger could only join up. Chris then hit the join with his duffer ball. Later, Rutger made a sextuple leave. After the miss, Rutger accidentally put oppo into the jaws of 3. He then played a good rush to 1-back and a perfect pass-roll peel, but unfortunately the striker's ball hilled by a yard into the jaws of 2-back, unable to hit the ball at 1 and conceding a wiring lift! He was forced to retire to the North boundary, and Chris hit and later finished without Rutger taking croquet again.

A possible runner-up occurred in the next round, and again Beijderwellen was involved, having been TPOed by Evans. Being

4 vs. 1, Evans pegged two out, and played well (with the help of some poor shots by oppo) to reach penult v 5. At this point he played to a couple of yards off middle of East boundary, as Rutger had angled position and no lift. Rutger declined the hoop, hit oppo, played a split to a longer but straighter position, ran it well, hit a ten-yarder, approached 6 from the North boundary, and finished on a 2-ball break.

In the same round, Burrow hit partner third turn and played a croquet stroke, at which point Patmore claimed a wrong ball. Burrow was equally adamant that he had not switched the balls. Since the only spectator wasn't sure, the RoT had no option but to rule in favour of the striker. Later in the tournament Burrow played the wrong ball on the first turn (despite U & K going first in every game), followed by Dawson playing a wrong ball on the second turn. This time the ruling was against Matt, since Jeff's stroke, being with a wrong ball, had not condoned Matt's error, so he was forced to leave a ball in corner III for Jeff to play again.

Some of the players enjoyed a board game on the Friday evening, in which Goacher accused Evans of slow play and Brown scored his second win of the event!

Saturday morning was one of the few rounds in which Goacher did not delay proceedings, as Evans had another double peg out TPO, this time 1 vs. 1 against Burrow. Having lost by three to Rutger when starting three ahead, the reasoning was clear if somewhat illogical. However, this time Evans played rather poorly, and could only reach 1-back v 4-back after several failed attempts to get a break. Three times Evans in front of 1-back hit Burrow in front of 4-back, three times Evans played a shocking croquet stroke, the first two of which sent Burrow off in corner I! Eventually he did manage to run 1-back before Matt ran 4-back, but then immediately failed 2-back, finishing SSW of the hoop. Since Matt had 1-foot position at 4-back he declined his lift, but



In the picture (L to R): Chris Patmore, Marcus Evans, Rutger Beijderwellen, David Goacher, Jeff Dawson, Matt Burrow, Ian Lines, and Robin Brown.

after making the hoop he retired to the middle of the East boundary in the mistaken belief he was conceding a lift himself (he had a large wired area in which to take position at penult!). This mistake very nearly cost him the game, but Evans missed the peg after rover leaving Matt a five yard peg out, which he just made despite scuffing the ground! Meanwhile, did I mention Rutger was completing his first tournament sextuple on the next lawn? The

straight triple finish was made easier by an excellent cannon after 4-back, but the rush to rover has poor and though the peel went through by a foot, the hoop was long and angled. Rutger took slightly too much wire in making it (he wanted a bit to avoid partner) and was hampered from his only escape ball, so he had to hit the peelee. The peg out from behind and to the side of rover just hit before going off the North boundary!

Other highlights of Saturday included Evans failing a fourth turn delayed octuple and Brown finishing on the turn after the contact following a Beijderwellen TPO. Earlier in the game Rutger had made a sextuple leave with the rush the wrong way round, which Brown shot at after failing to notice. Rutger still didn't realise until in front of 1-back, but had another leave rather than making it before doing the TPO. At the end of the day Goacher was one win ahead of the pack with one pegged down game to finish (vs. Brown), and then failed to take croquet in the rest of the event! Better still, all the players left for a Chinese as soon as the pegged down game ended (with Burrow unbeaten at table tennis), and due to some staggered arrivals it was about half-an-hour later before an empty seat was noticed. "Did anyone tell Goacher where we were going?" was greeted with stunned silence. With the empty chair it looked rather like a group of friends dining with one of their number recently departed - there are plans to make "The Goacher Memorial Dinner" an annual event. It turned out he was still in the shower at the club when everyone had left (and locked up!).

On Sunday Rutger and Matt (on six wins) were both playing Dawson and Goacher (on eight wins). They both duly won twice, and Lines (on seven) had a chance to create the five-way tie but was denied by Patmore hitting the last shot via the peg (who also had a combination peg out in round 14 to claim =5th) and Evans finally winning a two-ball ending. So a disappointment on the playing side was a bonus on the managerial front, as was Goacher losing his "semi" -26tp. After a cagey start, the final was standard.

Congratulations to Jeff Dawson on his second Chairman's (first in 1999, and the second year running it has been won by a player not originally selected), and thanks to Ian Lines and the East Dorset Club for excellent management and hospitality respectively.

Final Standing

Pos.	Player	Won
1=	Rutger Beijderwellen	8
1=	Matthew Burrow	8
1=	Jeff Dawson	8
1=	David Goacher	8
5=	Ian Lines	7
5=	Chris Patmore	7
7=	Robin Brown	5
7=	Marcus Evans	5

4 way play-off.

Results

Round 1

Beijderwellen beat Burrow +26tp, Goacher beat Dawson +9, Patmore beat Evans +4, Lines beat Brown +25.

Round 2

Evans beat Brown +14otp, Lines beat Patmore +4tp, Dawson beat Burrow +26, Goacher beat Beijderwellen +14.

Round 3

Goacher beat Patmore +4, Burrow beat Brown +17tp, Lines beat Beijderwellen +26tp, Dawson beat Evans +20.

Round 4

Lines beat Burrow +17tp, Evans beat Goacher +26tp, Dawson beat Patmore +7, Beijderwellen beat Brown +16tp.

Round 5

Dawson beat Brown +25tp, Patmore beat Beijderwellen +19tp, Evans beat Burrow +17tp, Goacher beat Lines +12.

Round 6

Beijderwellen beat Evans +3otp, Dawson beat Lines +26, Brown beat Goacher +8, Burrow beat Patmore +14tp.

Round 7

Patmore beat Brown +13, Goacher beat Burrow +17tp, Dawson beat Beijderwellen +26, Lines beat Evans +16.

Round 8

Goacher beat Dawson +25tp, Evans beat Patmore +11tp, Lines beat Brown +16, Burrow beat Beijderwellen +22tp.

Round 9

Burrow beat Evans +1otp, Beijderwellen beat Lines +25sxp, Goacher beat Patmore +26, Brown beat Dawson +3.

Round 10

Lines beat Goacher +26, Dawson beat Evans +19tp, Burrow beat Brown +16tp, Beijderwellen beat Patmore +3tp.

Round 11

Patmore beat Dawson +26, Brown beat Goacher +11, Beijderwellen beat Evans +15tp, Burrow beat Lines +17tp.

Round 12

Brown beat Beijderwellen +8otp, Patmore beat Burrow +26tp, Dawson beat Lines +26tp, Goacher beat Evans +16.

Round 13

Patmore beat Lines +5, Brown beat Evans +11, Beijderwellen beat Goacher +26tp, Burrow beat Dawson +25tp.

Round 14

Burrow beat Goacher +26tp, Beijderwellen beat Dawson +5tpo, Evans beat Lines +9tpo, Patmore beat Brown +18.

Semi-finals

Beijderwellen beat Burrow +14tp, Dawson beat Goacher +26tp.

Final

Dawson beat Beijderwellen +26tp.

Spencer Ell Cup

Bowdon 7th-11th September 2005

Report by Jack Wixy Wicks

Sam Tudor stabs his way to the title

This year's Ell was held at Bowdon, the conditions were very easy and the standard of play was excellent. The club provided brilliant cold and hot lunches, and the atmosphere was very friendly, with a few locals coming down to watch in the afternoons.

Of the 56 games 19 were won with triples. And possibly for the first time all the players finished with at least 1 TP. Paul Smith left his triple a bit late, he waited for the 14th round after he had failed to convert 3 earlier chances. At one point Wicks had a run of 8 TPs for and against him!

There was some controversy on the first day, it came to light that not all of the balls (Dawsons) were the same size. The ROT, Panther, had spent ages the night before (trying) to set the hoops perfectly, but made a schoolboy error and used the same black ball to set all hoops on each lawn. In the third round, Tudor had to play Heap and became suspicious when Heap, after winning



In the picture (L to R): Michael Heap, Jack Wicks, Richard White, Roger Jenkins, Paul Smith, Jenny Williams, David Harrison-Wood, Sam Tudor

the toss, chose red and yellow, due to black being larger than the rest. This put Tudor off a bit, but after having trouble at hoops 1 and 2 he managed a convincing victory.

Thursday was all going well, until the manger decided to try and persuade everyone to start the 7th round early in the rain, his argument being that there would be heavier rain the next morning. Most of the players were willing to get wet, but not Jenny Williams, she insisted on going home to get her contact lenses before starting, because apparently she couldn't play with her glasses on in the rain. But by the time she got back it was raining so heavily that she was no longer expected to play. Heap vs. Wicks was pegged down after the 7th turn, no hoops made. But Paul Smith made the decision that he wanted to get to 4-back and carried on in the driving rain, with some lying water on the lawn.

On Thursday evening the President's Cup people came over to Bowdon to indulge in a Chinese take away. However when they turned up there were still games going on luckily, because the highlight of the tournament was Mark Avery refereeing a David Harrison-Wood hampered shot. David only just grovelled through penult and called on Mark to ref in front of a 20 strong crowd. Panther lived up to his reputation and took about 5 minutes over the shot, this was far too long for Mark, and he just couldn't concentrate. First of all Mark got himself in to what looked like a very uncomfortable position, crouching at 90 degrees to the hoop but he couldn't keep this position up so had to lean forward on his knuckles, but then after 2 seconds he decided to lean back again, and so it went on. He couldn't watch the ball for longer than 20 seconds when he would look up, or clean his ear out. It was a priceless moment, with everyone laughing so much no one really noticed that Panther had missed.

Many of the players commented on how nice it was to have 2 eights close enough to meet up and no one could remember this ever occurring before.

All players were to arrive on at 9:30 on Friday morning, to finish, or start in the case of Williams vs. White round 7. Heap had a nice tidy turn to 4-back against Wicks, who then had a TPO. Heap eventually hit a 16-yarder, after Wicks got hampered after

penult leaving a ball in the middle, and played a good roll to get a 3 ball break, which he took round from hoop 4 to win +3otp.

On Saturday four rounds were completed with the exception of the Panther vs. Jenkins match. Michael couldn't make a management decision on how to approach the final day. Only one round was to be played, plus the pegged-down game. At first Michael wanted Jenkins and Panther to turn up at 9:30 to finish their game, but Panther wasn't happy and let Heap know that that wasn't going to happen. Heap then decided in his wisdom that we had to play round 14 before the pegged-down game and so we were all to arrive at 9:30. Nobody agreed, so there was a rebellion against the manager who eventually came to his senses and agreed at 10:00 start for everyone, with the pegged down game being played after round 14 at the same time as a play-off, if one was needed.



Sam Tudor receives his trophy from Jackie Grainger-Brown at Bowdon

To win the tournament Tudor needed to beat Panther in round 14, or hope that Jenny lost as well if he did, to avoid a play off. Am not sure of the exact colours of the balls, but Tudor vs. Panther went something like this:

Tudor goes in with U & K, U supershot ball. R Corner II. K hits R, plays very good pass roll getting R level with 6 in front of 2 and K within 4 yards of U. K tonks U to somewhere near 1, but under approaches and fails the hoop. Y hits ball at 1, goes to 4-back. K misses long lift. R rushes poorly to 1, blobs the hoop. U hits from 2 and goes to 4-back. R missed short lift. K finishes an untidy triple, doing the rover peel going to 2-back and then failing to get any pioneers within 3 yards of any hoop! Jenny and Richards game was quite good as well. Jenny got to 4-back & peg against 1 & 3. Richard hit his last shot with hoop 1 ball and went to peg and pegged Jenny's peg ball out. Leaving his hoop 3 ball in VI and peg ball in II. Jenny tried to roll out of VI to 4-back, didn't, took position at 4-back. Richard took on a sweaty shot with hoop 3 ball somewhere between 2 and 6 at peg ball in corner II to win. Hit that and finished. Wicks had a 7th turn TP against Heap.

Paul Smith had a good TP turn against Roger after Roger had failed his TP attempt. Roger then did complete his own TP, in the pegged down game against Panther. Although the last one to get his TP it was actually in round 11. Afterwards Roger commented that he didn't want to feel left out.

The presentation was made by Jackie Granger Brown who fittingly had known Sam since he first started playing. Various pictures and things are on the Bowdon website.

Oh, and if you were wondering about the title - Sam didn't stab anyone, he has very little follow-through so every stroke is a stab!

Final standing

	Won	TP
Sam Tudor	11	4
Richard White	9	2
Jenny Williams	9	3
Paul Smith	8	1
Jack Wicks	6	4
David Harrison-Wood	5	2
Roger Jenkins	5	1
Michael Heap	3	2

Results

Round 1

White beat Harrison-Wood +21tp, Tudor beat Williams +16tp, Smith beat Heap +21, Jenkins beat Wicks +9.

Round 2

Jenkins beat Heap +16, Williams beat Harrison-Wood +14, Wicks beat Smith +2, Tudor beat White +5.

Round 3

Tudor beat Heap +23, Harrison-Wood beat Wicks +15tp, White beat Jenkins +15, Williams beat Smith +26tp.

Round 4

Jenkins beat Harrison-Wood +17, Tudor beat Smith +26tp, Williams beat Heap +4, White beat Wicks +17tp.

Round 5

Wicks beat Williams+26tp, White beat Heap +16, Harrison-Wood beat Smith +13, Tudor beat Jenkins +17.

Round 6

Smith beat White +13, Williams beat Jenkins +16tp, Wicks beat Tudor +26tp, Harrison-Wood beat Heap +16.

Round 7

Heap beat Wicks +3otp, Tudor beat Harrison-Wood +21, Williams beat White +26, Smith beat Jenkins +20.

Round 8

Tudor beat Williams +4, Heap beat Smith +10, Wicks beat Jenkins +3tp, Harrison-Wood beat White +16.

Round 9

Smith beat Harrison-Wood +3, White beat Jenkins +6, Tudor beat Heap +24tp, Williams beat Wicks +16tp.

Round 10

Tudor beat Jenkins +3, Harrison-Wood beat Wicks +17tp, White beat Heap +7, Smith beat Williams +26.

Round 11

Williams beat Heap +21, Tudor beat Wicks +15, White beat Smith +26, Roger Jenkins beat David Harrison-Wood +11tp.

Round 12

Wicks beat White +7, Heap beat Harrison-Wood +6tp, Williams beat Jenkins +23, Smith beat Tudor +5.

Round 13

Jenkins beat Heap +3, Smith beat Wicks +26, White beat Tudor

+4, Williams beat Harrison-Wood +5.

Round 14

Tudor beat Harrison-Wood +17tp, White beat Williams +4, Smith beat Jenkins +4tp, Wicks beat Heap +26tp.

Treasurer's Tankard

Nottingham 7th-11th September 2005

Report by Chris Williams

Chris Willams wins Tankard after play-off

In round 10, rain stopped play for a considerable period of time. When they restarted they were double-banking due to standing water on some lawns.

The final round saw Chris Williams on 9 and Sarah Burrow on 8 with a pegged down game to complete against Nick Parish. Nick is 4-back and peg, having pegged out Sarah. Sarah is 4-back with a lift and with K on the west boundary about level with 6 and U about 6 yards away in the lawn towards the peg. Sarah missed the lift at black from the end of B-baulk. Nick joined up in corner 3 with Sarah in corner 1 giving, according to Nick, a 31-yard shot. Sarah hit and finished to force the play off.



In the picture (L to R): Jerry Guest, Chris Daniels, Martin Murray, Nick Parish, Sarah Burrow, Gerard Healey, Chris Williams, Jed Allen

Final Standing

Pos.	Player	Won
1=	Chris Williams	9
1=	Sarah Burrow	9
3	Jed Allen	8
4=	Jerry Guest	7
4=	Martin Murray	7
6=	Chris Daniels	6
6=	Nick Parish	6
8	Gerard Healy	4

Round 1

Nick Parish bt Chris Williams +25, Jerry Guest bt Jed Allen +8, Sarah Burrow bt Martin Murray +13, Chris Daniels bt Gerald Healy +15.

Round 2

Martin Murray bt Gerard Healy +24, Sarah Burrow bt Chris Daniels +18, Jed Allen bt Nick Parish +8, Chris Williams bt Jerry Guest +17.

Round 3

Sarah Burrow bt Jerry Guest +2, Nick Parish bt Gerard Healey +16, Chris Williams bt Chris Daniels +7, Martin Murray bt Jed Allen +6.

Round 4

Chris Daniels bt Nick Parish +15, Martin Murray bt Jerry Guest +13, Jed Allen bt Sarah Burrow +14, Chris Williams bt Gerard Healey +16.

Round 5

Gerard Healey bt Jed Allen +2, Sarah Burrow bt Chris Williams +23tp, Martin Murray bt Nick Parish +17tp, Chris Daniels bt Jerry Guest +15.

Round 6

Chris Williams bt Martin Murray +9, Chris Daniels bt Jed Allen +4, Jerry Guest bt Gerard Healey +13, Sarah Burrow bt Nick Parish +15.

Round 7

Gerard Healey bt Sarah Burrow +16, Jerry Guest bt Nick Parish +20, Jed Allen bt Chris Williams +4, Martin Murray bt Chris Daniels +18.

Round 8

Jerry Guest bt Jed Allen +3, Martin Murray bt Sarah Burrow +4, Gerard Healey bt Chris Daniels +4, Nick Parish bt Chris Williams +17.

Round 9

Martin Murray bt Nick Parish +16, Chris Daniels bt Chris Williams +10, Sarah Burrow bt Gerry Guest +12, Jed Allen bt Gerard Healey +17.

Round 10

Nick Parish beat Gerard Healy +4, Jerry Guest bt Chris Daniels +16, Jed Allen bt Martin Murray +24, Chris Williams bt Sarah Burrow +3.

Round 11

Jed Allen bt Sarah Burrow +17, Jerry Guest bt Gerard Healy +4, Chris Williams bt Martin Murray +17, Nick Parish bt Chris Daniels +1.

Round 12

Chris Williams beat Gerard Healy +24, Sarah Burrow beat Nick Parish +5, Jed Allen beat Chris Daniels +13, Jerry Guest beat Martin Murray +17.

Round 13

Sarah Burrow bt Chris Daniels +14, Gerard Healy bt Martin Murray +17, Chris Williams bt Jerry Guest +26, Jed Allen bt Nick Parish +5.

Round 14

Nick Parish beat Jerry Guest +2otp, Chris Williams bt Jed Allen +10, Chris Daniels bt Martin Murray +26, Sarah Burrow bt Gerard Healy +25.

Play-Off

Chris Williams beat Sarah Burrow +16.

Nelson Morrow won the Selectors' Weekend

Surbiton 9th-11th September 2005

Report by Samir Patel

Day 1 saw a range of performances, with the first result a decisive +25TP by Dave Trimmer over Andy Davies. Others found the quicker conditions harder, and with some tight patchy games. Closest was Louise Bradforth's +1 win over Mark Gooding in over three hours, although there were three other first round games still in play at

this point, all three completing after Dave had won his second game (over Kevin Carter). The last first round game finished just after 2pm, without having broken for lunch.

The aim of completing a minimum of three games each looked to be just in reach when a thunderstorm temporarily suspended play a little before 6pm. When Beverley Brook (running past the North boundary of all lawns) burst it banks twenty minutes later, play was abandoned for the day. By 7:30, lawns 3,4,5,6 and 7 were completely under water (up to 2 inches deep).

This left a confused situation, with some players only having completed two games (others have completed 3). The top four players in the Swiss (plus ties, reduced minimum of 5 games) progress to the knockout stage at the end of Saturday. In theory, all 16 players are still in contention, although the likelihood is that only 9 are still in a with good chance of making the cut.

The morning of day 2 saw the waters drained, and the previous day's pegged-down games resumed. Trimmer completed his game as efficiently as he had completed his first game yesterday with a +26TP win two turns after the resumption over Richard Dickson. Dave retained his unbeaten run, until a loss to Mark Gooding, who was rising from the bottom of the Swiss after losing his first game -1 to Louise Bradforth yesterday.



Nelson Morrow in action at the Selector's Weekend.

Surbiton's climate held, with almost unbroken sunshine until 5pm - which was the cut-off for final games. This saw four certain qualifiers for the knockout stage, with Trimmer clear on 5/6, and Kevin Carter, Nelson Morrow and Philip Brabazon tied on 4/6. While overcast for the rest of the day, the rain held off for the final few games.

Of these, the most important was Ian Vincent playing Gooding. Mark had the best of early play, taking advantage of Ian's failure of hoop one to establish a break. Mark had progressed to 4-back and peg before a disintegrating vertical spread forced a rough OSL which Ian hit. Four breaks later (and several missed shots by Mark, including a final pawn-brokers from B-baulk into corner IV after Ian's 4-back and peg leave) Ian pegged out to claim the fifth and final place in the knockout.

The other evening entertainment (for the crowd at least) saw a potential 5th turn TP by Richard Dickson against David Mooney fail after Richard over rushed to rover. He proceeded to peg himself out (having forgotten that partner was still for rover),

with David still for 1 and 1. David set about 2-balling the remaining hoops, trying for some wires, but leaving Richard lots of shots, at targets of various sizes (including some shots at rover), while David refused to attempt a 3-ball break. With David progressed to rover and peg, laid up on W boundary level with hoop 1 with a rush to rover and Richard on the boundary North of 3, Richard finally hit, rushed to rover and pegged out to win +3.

So the five players in the knockout were Dave Trimmer, Kevin Carter, Nelson Morrow, Philip Brabazon and Ian Vincent.

Nelson had the best of his game against Kevin, getting to 4-back on 4th turn, and after two missed shots nearly completed a 8th turn TP, only to collide with peelee after making rover. Nelson pegged one ball off, but Kevin hit his lift, and completed a 3-ball break to the peg, joining near corner 1, with Nelson between hoop 3 and corner III, but offering slightly more than a single ball target, which Nelson hit (the rear ball) to win. Morrow +14.

Meanwhile Philip Brabazon had progressed to 4-back, but broke down at hoop 6 on the second break. However, Ian Vincent was unable to repeat his form from yesterday, and failed hoop 2 with his chance, and never took croquet again. Brabazon +25.

In the second semi-final, Dave Trimmer took an early ball to 4-back, with a poor spread. Nelson hit, and after some interaction progressed to 4-back and peg (against 1 and 4-back) with a vertical spread. Dave shot at the ball by rover, missing into A-baulk, leaving himself cross-wired, but with the ball by rover

hampered from most of the NE quarter of the lawn. Nelson however, played two good rolls into 4-back and penult, both from around 5 yards, and made both hoops and went on to finish and make it through to the final, despite being the lowest-ranked playing the in the event. Morrow +17.

The final between Philip Brabazon and Nelson Morrow got under way at around 1:30, which Nelson eventually won +17.

Final Positions

Pos	% /Wins	Swiz	Name
1	77%	+45	Nelson Morrow
2	75%	+46	Dave Trimmer
3	62%	+24	Kevin Carter
4	62%	+23	Philip Brabazon
5	50%	+5	Ian Vincent
6	62%	+11	Richard Dickson
7	60%	+10	Andy Davies
8	50%	-3	Tom Weston
9	57%	-5	Ken Cooper
10	42%	-12	Lawrence Whittaker
11	40%	-15	Mark Gooding
12	37%	-17	Richard Smith
13	33%	-21	Gary Bennett
14	28%	-28	Louise Bradforth
15	22%	-30	David Mooney
16	33%	-32	Andrew Gregory

CLUB FOCUS

Taunton Deane Croquet Club

THE FIRST TWENTY YEARS

By John de Winton

The Club started in 1985 with one and a bit lawns, a small wooden hut and no room for expansion. The lawn sloped from north to south and in very dry conditions, a ball approaching corner 4 was likely to gather speed and head down Cheddon Road towards the town. However, the club had a number of dedicated enthusiasts (who knew about corner 4 when playing home matches) and were keen to improve. After several years a second lawn became available in the grounds of the Somerset Nuffield Hospital about two miles away. Sadly, this lawn could not survive hospital expansion and by 1997 was under concrete. If you happen to be in the loo in room 28 of the new ward you will be in good position to run hoop 5 if you are so inclined.

By 1991 it became apparent that if the club was to survive and prosper we had to find a new home, particularly as the Borough Council, who owned the land, were contemplating housing development. We scoured Taunton, following up many leads and false trails but eventually struck a deal with Taunton School for a twenty year lease on flat land beside the entrance to their playing fields. We laid out two and a half lawns with drainage and bought a new hut, all financed by members and started playing there in 1993. Membership expanded with improved lawns and space but over time the lack of convenient toilet facilities, involving a long walk to the school, the proximity to a busy road and more recently, increasing vandalism caused problems. By 1999 it had also become apparent that Taunton School had potential development plans for the area which could be fatal. We started looking again and this time we struck lucky. I had a chance meeting with a farmer



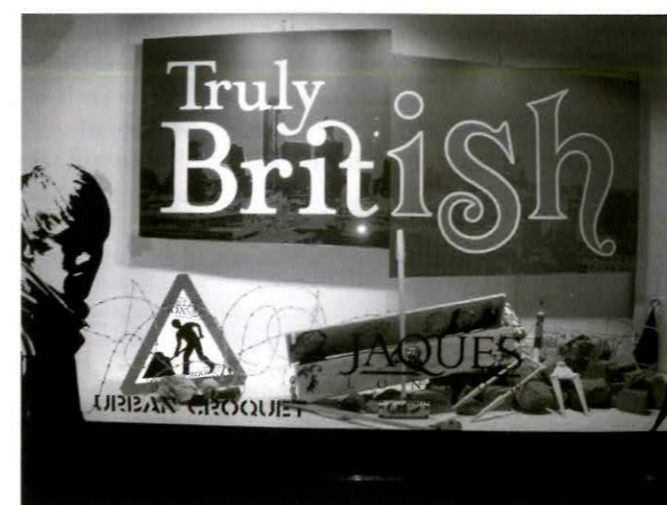
Saturday June 4th, opening ceremony group Photo.

friend nearby who also happened to be the chairman of the Taunton Vale Sports Club (TVSC), then in the final stages of plans to move from one side of Taunton to another, not far from our Taunton School lawns. The TVSC was the parent body for Taunton Cricket and Hockey clubs and their plans showed a rectangle of land not required for other purposes which, if levelled, would provide space for three croquet lawns and a club hut.

Throughout 2000 we held preliminary discussions with TVSC, identified a consultant landscape architect (who had drawn up the TVSC plans) and set about trying to identify sources of financial support. By early 2001, it became clear that we were going to have to move sooner rather than later and that we had the chance of getting our hands on space for three new lawns provided we paid for their construction. If we moved, we would also benefit from association and membership of a soon to be completed sports club facility with a fine clubhouse. However, problems remained over the exact demarcation of the northern boundary of the new lawn land and until this was resolved we

could not ask the croquet club members to authorise proceeding. In July that year the club held a Special General Meeting at which the members were briefed on the options and there was unanimous approval to proceed. From then on the subcommittee authorised to run the project, Derek Beard, Brian Toomey and myself, were let loose. Our tasks were to get contractors' estimates, through our appointed landscape architect, negotiate a lease with TVSC, investigate sources for funding and start negotiations with Sport England prior to making a Lottery Bid Application. From the outset it was clear that the project depended on a substantial grant from Sport England. Much help was received on Lottery "tactics" from Bob Whittaker, the then Development Officer of the CA Southwest Federation and also from the experiences of Jolyon Kay in his Blewbury Croquet Club bid. But Sport England required evidence of substantial financial support from other sources. Here we were fortunate in getting an offer of support from the Croquet Association through the help of Hamish Hall and we persuaded the Taunton Deane Borough Council of the merits of our case. We also had the prospect of a sum from Taunton School as severance payment for the early termination of our lease. A further vital source of funding was provided by the generosity of our croquet club members. However, half the members funding contribution had to be kept apart, so that we could buy a decent mower as our ageing Ransome was not up to the job of keeping new lawns properly mown.

The lottery application was submitted to Sport England in March 2002 with a request for a grant of 52% of the total project costs, approximately £30000. The total cost included lawn construction, design fees, legal fees, planning fees and extra croquet equipment for a third lawn and an increase in members. As prime mover on the lottery application and dealings with Sport England it was an experience. I was even invited to do a course in "Lottery Speak" but having spent many years trying to speak and write Plain English, I declined with "regret". Some aspects of the application were quite difficult to write, particularly on the need to satisfy requirements for the ethnic minority, the handicapped etc. Taunton has a very low ethnic population and at times it was difficult to make the case compelling, given the predominantly white, middle aged, reasonably sighted and self-propelling nature of most of our members and prospective members. However we



Can anyone guess the shop window this display appeared in?



Graham Jones, Senior Development Manager for Sport England South West, presents John De Winton, Chairman, Taunton Deane CC

scored on women as we have as many ladies as men and of course we are all equal on the lawn. I found it very useful to write a concise but comprehensive statement paper at the start, which spelt out all about the club, what we wanted for the future of the club and how we planned to make this happen. I used this quite a lot in helping to fill out the application form. All a bit like playing croquet really - You need to win the toss and get in. Make sure you hit your objectives. Run the hoops that appear before you and prepare good pioneer plans for the ones to come. Above all keep focussed, with your eye on the ball, know the rules, however arcane or abstruse they may be and remain confident. It also helps to have an understanding and long-suffering wife (and a PC).

Much to our relief, our application bid got through Sport England's first selection process and went to Stage 2. This required the preparation of comprehensive Sports Development and Marketing Action Plans, to show how all our good intentions spelt out in the application were to be monitored and achieved and at what timescale. This was where time had to be spent on subjects such as Equity, Sports Development Pathways, Valuing Volunteers and Child Protection to mention but a few. Meetings were held with Sport England representatives and in September 2002 we were given the good news that our bid had been successful and that the full grant award requested would be given, subject to the confirmation of the funding required from other sources.

If we had been turned down I could have got on with my life and even tried to live up to my handicap, but now we had to get on and turn all our plans into reality. Lawn levelling was delayed by weather until the summer of 2003 and seeding was carried out in the autumn. Fortunately, we were able to continue on our Taunton School lawns throughout 2003 and we were allowed to stay on again throughout 2004, as a combination of drought or heavy rain delayed the completion of the lawns to our satisfaction. Much work was done on the surroundings by club working parties and it became clear that we would be in a position to move and start playing in 2005. I was at Cheltenham for the over 50's something or other in September 2004 and asked Bernard Neal if he would open our lawns. He very kindly agreed and a date was fixed for Saturday 4th June. Everything came together early this year with the erection of a new club hut and store, completion of fences and gates and erection of weather shelters. We also bought our new mower, an Allott C24, which was kept in the TVSC equipment and machinery store. By this time we had established good relations with the TVSC volunteer ground staff and we were able to use their rotary sit-on mowers to keep our surrounds down.



Mayor, Councillor Richard Lees, being congratulated on running a hoop by Bernard Neal, President of the CA, John De Winton Chairman of Taunton Deane CC and Mrs Lees, Lady Mayoress.

We actually started to play on the lawns in early May, to make sure that everything worked and we had a small champagne ceremony after the first ball had been hit in by the chairman. Come June 4th we had an excellent turn out with invited guests from all those who had helped the project over the years. The opening ceremony was conducted by Professor Bernard Neal, President of the Croquet Association and Councillor Richard Lees the Mayor of Taunton Deane Borough Council. This involved the mayor hitting a ball through a red papered hoop under the instruction and guidance of Bernard Neal. This was successfully done at the first attempt, a magnificent achievement given that the mayor was blind and there were a number of hands on the mallet. Immediately afterwards, Sport England handed us a large presentation cheque for the award amount and a group photograph was taken. Everyone then repaired to the TVSC bar and dining room for refreshments.

So, after many years, Taunton now has a fully operational 3 lawn croquet club in pleasant surroundings, protected from the prevailing westerlies by a nice high hedge and with membership of a thriving sports club with excellent facilities. The club has had a successful first season at our new home, given coaching to new members and had considerable success in the South West League competitions, winning the Intermediate Cup and reaching the semi finals of the B league. If you want to enjoy croquet in a friendly club in Somerset, in nice surroundings come and join us. It has all have been worth it but don't ask me to make another lottery application!

News & Information

World Croquet Federation election results.

Nominations for the elections for President and Management Committee of the World Croquet Federation (WCF) closed on 15th November 2005.

At that date, no nomination had been received for President. The current President, David Openshaw, has sought re-election and consequently he is automatically deemed to be elected for a second and last term of office in accordance with WCF Rules 105.1 and 105.5.1

At that date, one nomination had been received for membership of the WCF Management Committee from Australia - Max Murray. Current members, Amir Ramsis Naguib, Peter Payne and Graeme Roberts have sought re-election and with one vacancy currently unfilled, Max Murray and Naguib, Payne and Roberts are automatically deemed to be elected to the WCF Management Committee in accordance with WCF Rule 105.5.1

All those elected will serve until a date no later than 15th May 2008.

New Lawns for Fylde Croquet Club

After fifteen years FCC is leaving their lawns at Hope Street.

For most of this time the club has enjoyed the simple facilities provided at a council recreation park. The lawns were maintained by the council and club members paid a modest green fee to use them. These lawns were located in an enclosed and locked area together with three tennis courts. Access to this area was by ticket only and the park ranger maintained order. The club shared a pavilion with the bowling club.

Two years ago, due to cost cutting, the council removed the ranger. Their idea was to leave the tennis and croquet area unlocked. The result was immediate vandalism to the tennis nets, invasion of the croquet lawns and the spread of litter and broken



Fylde Club members celebrating Trafalgar day and new lawns

glass in the area. The Council then decided to lock the area and allowed the croquet membership to have keys and this provided us with some improvement although the local youth, having once had free access, obviously thought it was now within their rights to climb the fences and abuse the facilities as before.

The problems at the park continued to get worse as word got around there were no rangers there. The worst day for the club was when we had advertised a 'come and try it day'. The response was exceptionally good and there were many promising players trying the game for the first time. A group of about 12 youths on foot and bike arrived and occupied the lawn. They taunted men and women alike. We failed to get many new members that year and started to lock the gates when using the lawns.

Gradually the membership realised that it was no longer a pleasure to be there. There was a serious incident of assault on a bowler and other attacks on the public were witnessed by the membership. The facilities were not comfortable for visiting teams. The club would simply have to move or fold.

We have been extremely fortunate to find South Shore Tennis Club within 10 minutes drive of the old lawns and in fact much more accessible to visitors, being just 2 minutes drive from the end of the M55. They have a disused area, once three grass courts, which is big enough for two full lawns. This area needs much work to bring the surface back but a start has been made. The CA provided us with £1000 for the lawn improvement and other grants are being considered. The NW Federation development officer has also provided invaluable assistance.

In order to maintain the lawns after improvement we will have to pay the Tennis club ground staff. Our membership fee will have to rise considerably in order to meet this cost. But in return the croquet club has raised its profile and hopefully been strengthened by the move. The Tennis club benefits from our social membership, bar patronage and the maintenance of the otherwise unused lawns at the croquet club's expense.

The Tennis club has an active social life and also hosts Snooker and Pool competitions and many members have already expressed an interest in learning Croquet. FCC faces a difficult year but there is a determination to succeed.

www.fyldecroquet.co.uk

Golf Croquet World Championship 2006

Following the award of wild cards to Stephen Mulliner and Ian Lines and the withdrawal of Don Beck, the

following players remain on the CA's suggested wild card list submitted to the WCF. Dick Strover, David Hopkins, Mark Hamilton, Par Badhan, Julie Hudson and Chris Clarke.

Bill Arliss, Chairman Selection Committee



The railway station at Lillestrom with a croquet court in the foreground. the historian of the Strandpromenaden Krokkeklubb (Croquet Club), Willy Hauge, concludes that this is the version taught to the players of Lillestrom by English 'railwayworkers' (engineers etc.) and used in Britain before the 1922 Willis setting.

Missing link found, in Norway! by Tore Gulbrandsen

During a visit of The President of the Croquet Association of Norway to Strandpromenaden Krokkeklubb, Lillestrom. The Croquet Society found out that the players at the court in Lillestrom played a version of croquet which must be a missing link: a missing link between Association Croquet and 9-wicket croquet.

The players said they believed their fathers for generations had played according to the same rules and they believed they had learnt it from English railway workers around 1850.

The court is very much the same as in Croquet, Norwegian Standard or American 9-wicket, but the surface is hard sand, not grass. The equipment is short mallets held by only one hand, and small balls.

The Croquet Society thinks that 1850 is too early. Croquet is considered as entering into Norway around 1860. In 1850 it became known in England, but not among the workers, though it quickly became very popular. Then it seems that it has always been played with long mallets in Britain. However a club in Glasgow have been found that played it on gravel with short mallets using one hand only. On the other hand a picture from the last half of 1800 from Bjoerkelangen, in the vicinity of Lillestrom, shows that they used long mallets too.

The Croquet Society believes the one-hand-croquet to have originated in Denmark. They have got 6000 players still playing it. From Denmark it spread up the south-west coast of Norway with seamen.

But watching the game at Lillestrom one has to confess that it resembled very much Association Croquet in tactics. It could be the missing link or Olde English still alive and kicking, being played in the good old Kingdom of Norway!!

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Talking Croquet

The continuation of a series of interviews with players and administrators of our sport.

Brian Storey - Secretary-General of the World Croquet Federation

Interview by Bob Alman, founding editor of www.CroquetWorld.com, www.CroquetAmerica.com, and www.Malletball.com, lives in West Palm Beach, Florida, and consults on marketing and development at the National Croquet Center. This interview is adapted from the online version at www.CroquetWorld.com and reprinted by permission.

Introduction

Brian Storey of England took on the unsalaried job of Secretary-General of the World Croquet Federation in early 2005 and immediately set about moving the organization to a new level of awareness among both croquet players and the general public – in tandem with its new president, David Openshaw. He soon expanded and greatly improved the organization's website, and as the northern hemisphere summer approached, he began blanketing the media with news bulletins on the WCF's major 2005 events. Storey, 57, retired from his job as a Detective Inspector in a Child Protection Unit in the late 90's and then became the secretary of the only full-time professional ice hockey league in the UK and later its CEO. He currently has a full-time salaried position in the Child Protection field for the Salford City Council. He has long taken an active role in his local croquet club. He lives with his wife in a suburb of Manchester.

BOB ALMAN: Brian, I'll start with a big, open-ended question anybody would have who has watched the development of the World Croquet Federation over the course of the last decade or so, and that is: What are the respective roles of the President and the Secretary-General? The reason I ask is that Chris Hudson clearly is credited with starting the WCF, and the first couple of presidents certainly made contributions, but they were not the front-and-center personalities that Hudson was in the post of the Secretary-General. When Hudson stepped down, Tony Hall took over as president, and he as the President was clearly the public face of the organization, globetrotting to all the events and doing what seemed to be the most important work of the organization, while the Secretary-General, in Australia, took a back seat. Now it's all flipped again and you, the new Secretary-General, have a very public role, while David Openshaw as president is hardly visible - at least in my view, over here in America. Please, explain this working relationship.

BRIAN STOREY: I have to start with a big thank you, on behalf of the croquet community, to Chris Hudson who, as you say, was the leading light in the formation of the WCF and its development, until his retirement in 2001. He was the main force of the organisation through conception and birth and I believe his vision can still be found within the WCF objectives. I am sure he would be the first to thank his colleagues on that early WCF Management Committee too, particularly Ashley Heenan, the first WCF President, for all the assistance he gave. That early relationship laid down markers as to how the organisation should develop, with its members support. The presidency developed



Brian Storey, Secretary-General of the World Croquet Federation, in the garden of his home in Cheshire.

under his tutelage and his successors Fred Rogerson of Ireland and Bill Berne of America.

BOB: And then there was Tony, and that was a big change.

BRIAN: When Tony Hall took over the presidency, he had the personal opportunity to promote the organisation like no one had before, which he did with great gusto and very effectively too. He seemed omni-present and his enthusiasm was well received everywhere. In a sense, though, it emphasises the Achilles heel of the WCF in particular and the sport of croquet in general where it seems all croquet clubs, associations and federations around the world rely on volunteers, who seem ever decreasing in number, to carry out the varied functions that promote the sport. The WCF is no different in that respect. However, the amateur status of the sport does not mean it should not be run along professional lines.

BOB: That's always going to be a huge challenge, to have a volunteer-based amateur association operate like a professional organization. Typically, there is a low level of actual accountability and follow-through, and that can cause endless grief for the people who actually are trying to get something useful done.

BRIAN: To directly answer your question, I think a useful analogy can be drawn with the structure of a trading company although the aims and objectives are of course different in WCF terms. At the "bottom" you have shareholders, (WCF National Associations) who have an investment in the company. They want to see it prosper and develop to achieve their aims. That may be money-motivated in corporate terms, but whatever it is, they decide on the Board of Directors (WCF Management Committee) who then set out an agenda to achieve those aims. A slight departure here is that the Board of a trading company will then elect from within a Chairman of the Board; but in the WCF it's actually the members that elect a President. The Board of the trading company then appoint a Chief Executive (WCF Secretary-General) to run the organisation along the lines dictated by them to achieve the aims and objectives of the company and satisfy the shareholders (WCF National Associations).

Of course that is an analogy. While it is accurate, it only tells part of the story. The relationship between a President and Secretary-General is a particularly important one. The President is the main public face of the organisation, the main link to the "executive" and the policy driver within the Management

Committee. The Secretary-General on the other hand is the "executive" and carries out the wishes of the Management Committee, communicated via the President through an administration (albeit small) with the help of those around him. WCF is lucky in having a small band of people from around the world that have offered their help and advice in specific key areas and form part of that administration on an ad hoc or regular basis.

BOB: But Brian, so far, it seems that you as Secretary-General actually have a more visible and pervasive "public face" than the president of the organization, just as Chris Hudson had in the early days when he was the "founding" Secretary-General.

BRIAN: The current WCF President, David Openshaw, is well known throughout the croquet world, having a very impressive international career that is not over yet, so I would not say his profile is a low one. I guess the only reason I may be "seen" more publicly at this time is through the development of the WCF website and my objective of trying to achieve a higher profile for the organisation. My natural inclination is to be very much behind the scenes.

BOB: Certainly you - and the WCF currently - have a very high profile on the Nottingham Board [email newsgroup]. It seems that every few days you put out a news release on something or other. Currently, most of them are about the players selected for the world championship upcoming, or the first Women's Golf Croquet World Championship in November. I acknowledge that the - what, 500? - subscribers to Nottingham are certainly the prime target for croquet publicity, but is it possible you're over-doing it? What's your aim with all those press releases? How will that affect the success or economic viability of a world championship that typically gets very little media attention and therefore not many sponsorship bucks?

BRIAN: I think in your question you have hit the nail on the head. The key word here is "publicity". I am sure all of us involved in croquet are well aware of the relative small stature of the sport and the difficulties we have had in getting the exposure it deserves. It hardly measures on the "Richter scale" of large popular sports that would otherwise allow us the opportunity to advertise a game that calls for great skill and tactical prowess. While in mature croquet-playing nations there are a number of high quality events taking place, the closest we come to on a global scale are the WCF World Championships of the Association and Golf Croquet variants. WCF objectives include the encouragement, promotion, teaching and developing the recognised versions of the game of croquet internationally at all levels. I believe the best way to publicise the sport is to use the WCF marquee events to achieve those objectives.

As for over-doing it, well if we could say, with some authority, that Neil Armstrong had found a croquet set on the moon, we would be well pleased. The type of coverage that we need will have to be self generated in one form or another; we can't wait for the media to come to us. Media Releases can take many forms but I have concentrated at this time on the lead-up to the 2005 WCF World Championship. I not only circulate it to WCF Members, WCF Friends and the Nottingham Board, as the most widely read within the sport, but also to a growing list of mainstream media contacts. It's a bit like sowing seeds, if you sow enough some will grow, and the pictures of the World Championship entrants is a perfect opportunity to give a message that there are two WCF World Championships taking place this year. On a lesser scale, it gave me the opportunity to ensure that

the WCF website ticks over with, ideally, a story a day – which gives it more prominence on the search engines.

On a bigger scale though, this publicity projects the sponsor's name. For the World Association Croquet Championship, the Croquet Association (of England), rightly take pride in obtaining the sponsorship from Mitsubishi Motors but I definitely think we should all play our part in assisting in that process. Every opportunity must be taken to portray their name in a positive light.

BOB: Working so long with the hockey league must have taught you a lot about the business of sport. Does any of that experience carry over to your WCF job?

BRIAN: Oh yes! Sport is a business, and it matters not that it is primarily amateur or fully professional, the approaches must be the same, although the end results may differ. It needs a strong Board of Directors who will not shirk from making the hard decisions that ensure that the organisation remains financially viable and lives within its means. That can sometimes lead to dull, slow progress but it's worth it in the long term.

BOB: Now, unless you want to interview me further, I think maybe we're getting close to the end of this. So I think we should end on a personal note, like, When do you sleep?

BRIAN: At this time the job for me is more of a fact-finding mission, I have so much to learn about the organisation and how it works, particularly the politics. So at the moment things are going smoothly and I sleep very well.

BOB: But how long can you put up with a volunteer job this intense?

BRIAN: Well, I anticipate that from August onwards the job will become pretty hectic. If all the proposals that have been made for the WCF General Meeting and Management Committee Meetings are accepted and passed, there will be a considerable amount of work involved to bring those ideas to fruition. For me, that's actually the enjoyable part, seeing the development of ideas manifesting themselves into actual action. It can give all involved a feeling of satisfaction. I have given myself about three years as a sort of tenure on the job before the WCF probably gets sick of me but really it's the sort of position where a regular re-evaluation is required from everyone involved to ensure that it does not become a sinecure.

BOB: But in the meantime, how can you afford to spend so much time doing an unsalaried job?

BRIAN: A limited number of jobs are eligible for claiming an honorarium, at the discretion of the Management Committee and members, at year's end, including the Secretary-General. I haven't decided yet whether to do that. It depends on what the overall workload for the whole year is, how I feel, how poor I feel I am and if my wife wants a night out.

BOB: But you're really a high-level volunteer, and that might have some benefits: Haven't you noticed that the very fact of your volunteer, unsalaried status actually gives you power you wouldn't otherwise have, the power to do what you think needs doing? Power you wouldn't have as a salaried administrator, where people would be more likely to treat you like a clerk?

BRIAN: Ah! Power without responsibility and tomorrow the world! I don't see it that way myself. I guess I have some latitude, in that apart from the WCF Rules and decisions already made on their interpretation, I have complete freedom to operate. In reality it does not work like that. Personally I always work to try to find consensus and of course the continuing dialogue with WCF Management Committee members gives an insight into how

things are viewed around the world. I think all the Management Committee are given the task of taking things forward and it's not just me or the President that have that responsibility but we are in a better position because we are more central to the processes involved and hence hopefully have a better overview. Of course that in itself does not necessarily lead to better decision-making, perhaps a better-looking committee camel, but it gives us a head start.

In my involvement with a few sports over the years, I have always been critical of the lack of an impact assessment, particularly where decisions are made "on the hoof" without previous thought or discussion. I remember on one occasion when a Director of a Sports League I was involved in made a proposal from the floor to change the number of points awarded for a win in overtime. It had not been promoted by the League Executive, of which I was part, nor even suggested by anyone prior to the meeting. It was proposed and without any sort of assessment made was passed because the person making it had the force of character to do so. It was overturned three weeks later when the Executive showed the likely impact would actually harm the sport, given the mental approach of the players and coaches. Those kinds of things are burned in my brain as good lessons on how not to do things. No, the sport is too small to start to work as a maverick. That route will only lead to to disaster.

BOB: *Okay, just to make sure we've covered everything, I think I should ask you what, in your view, are the "burning issues" of the WCF right now?*

BRIAN: There are a few things that do need sorting. All of them are up for discussion in August at the next WCF General Meeting. Chief amongst them relate to Child Protection Procedures and Anti-Doping.

On the former, as you would expect with my background, I am a strong believer in making sure that kids introduced into the sport are protected from those that may take advantage of them. It would serve the sport no good at all if a coach was involved in something unsavoury that would or could have been preventable. I am aware that a lot of Member Associations already have procedures in place to satisfy local ethics and domestic regulations, but an awful lot do not. By adopting the UN Conventions on the Rights of the Child, the WCF can give assistance to those that want it whilst gaining experience from those members that have had good and bad ones in the past.

In relation to Anti-Doping, many member associations already have adopted the WADA protocols and I believe that the WCF must do so too. I think it is too important not to. I know there is resistance to it in some quarters, but we must overcome these if we ever to be taken seriously by the International Sporting Fraternity. It is an essential element in the building of the organisation.

The other important bits are the building of current Rules, but adding those bits like Regulations to make them work in a practical way. That will help administrators such as me but also be a valuable reference guide on how we do things.

One interesting piece of future work is to identify and recognize the personalities that have contributed to croquet throughout the world over the years. The concept of a WCF Hall of Fame is not a new one and will, to some extent, mirror those already in existence, but from a WCF perspective will be more International in flavour. There will be proper guidelines for induction processes but it will be web-based on the WCF web site. We need to recognize those contributions in some way. In the early days we will have to phase in players and builders that are long dead, like say, Peel. It will take a few years to do that – just catching up purely from a logistic point of view.

Probably the most significant part of the current year and into next will be the development of the WCF Business Plan. Based on the current objectives of the WCF, the current draft plan identifies the component parts and will lay out the progress to be made on key issues that will take us well into the next five years. It goes without saying we will need volunteers to make it all work.

Finally, a thing close to my heart: development. The big four countries have mature organizations with a significantly large membership and the experiences of yesteryear. That is not the case with the smaller members who are desperate to emulate the big four. They need help, whether it is grants or loans for equipment and infrastructure or access to experienced people. WCF can and must help with that. I see that as the legacy that WCF can build and be proud of in the future. Ideas are now well developed and we only now need the discussion and vote to make it happen.

Life in the WCF may be very interesting in the next two years or so.

BOB: *Which brings me, I guess, to the last question: From a personal perspective, what would you like to accomplish during your tenure as Secretary-General of the WCF?*

BRIAN: My main objective is to ensure that the WCF is administratively strong, with a definite sense of purpose for the benefits of all members. Sounds like a sound bite I know, but that's how I am approaching the job. Part of that is the draft WCF Business Plan and how it will allow the WCF to maintain or attain its objectives in the future. My ultimate aim would be to see Croquet as a Summer Olympic sport because if we ever got that far, we know that the WCF has really matured. Okay, I know its pie in the sky at the moment, and I will not live to see the day, but we should have a dream, shouldn't we? Even if we get part way down that path then we will have contributed enormously to the enhancement and awareness of the sport. I want to be have been part of that when I leave.

BOB: *If you achieve only a quarter of what you're shooting for, the sport will be well advanced. Good luck to you, Brian.*

Obituary

Leslie Yoxall

Dr A.L. Yoxall, who was a life member of the Cheltenham Croquet Club, died in October at the age of ninety-one.

As a brilliant young mathematician with a Cambridge doctorate, he was one of the first to be recruited to the famous code-breaking team at Bletchley Park in 1941. At first he worked on the German naval *Enigma*, and devised an important technique which became known as 'yoxallismus'. Later he switched to supporting the US effort on the Japanese naval cypher.

After the end of the second world war he continued as a cryptographer with GCHQ for the remainder of his career, first at Eastcote and then, from 1953 and apart from short periods overseas, at Cheltenham. He retired from government service in 1974 but continued to live in Cheltenham for the remainder of his life.

Despite being a keen croquet player Leslie had little time for competitive play and was normally confined to playing in weekend tournaments. Despite this he achieved a handicap of scratch and became one of few 'examining referees' during the 1960's. He became Club Chairman in 1967 but then had to relinquish his position after only two years when he was posted to Washington.

After a long absence from the Club and from croquet, it is only in recent years that Leslie has been able to attend a number of our social gatherings. We are proud to have numbered him amongst us as a member of 49 years standing.

jdb

A note on the 300th Issue Front Cover

The front cover for this issue was designed and painted by Liz Taylor Webb. Liz is also a long time member of the Bowdon Club and has been painting professionally for the last twenty-five years. During this time her work has been exhibited as one-woman shows in Paris, London and all parts of the UK.

Her friendship with her mentor the late L.S.Lowry with whom she studied, greatly influenced her early work and led to her regular exhibitions at Salford Art Gallery and Museum. Her work is in many public and private collections throughout this country and abroad.

Her latest series of quirky figures cover subjects such as Golf, Tennis, Cricket, Rugby, Croquet, Music and conversation pieces. They are painted in acrylic and printed in limited editions using the latest method of 'giclee' printing. If you would like to see more of Liz's work please visit www.liztaylorwebb.co.uk



Advice & Information on Choosing a Mallet

Following recent requests from new players who are pondering on the purchase of their first mallet, Dr Ian Plummer, author of www.oxfordcroquet.com, gives a guide to the many different types currently available.

If you visit a croquet tournament you will see very few traditional round-headed mallets, mallets are now mostly square-headed with plastic faces. The Laws of Croquet put few limitations on the form of a mallet (Law 3e). In essence it must be symmetrical with identical faces. There are no other requirements on the weight, length or size of the mallet.

If you have no other constraints a standard mallet would weigh 3 pounds total (1.362Kg), have a 36" shaft and a 9-11" head length. This is what would normally be supplied by manufacturers and be a good average for club use.

The weight of a mallet should be concentrated in the head. The shaft should be as light as possible since a heavy shaft serves no purpose. The balance point of the mallet, when resting the shaft on a finger, can be anywhere from 3" away from the head (good) to say 10" away. It is currently considered desirable to have the weight of the head concentrated at the faces. This feature is available from the more specialised mallet



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manufacturers.

Heavier mallets favour a straight swing and are hence good for hitting-in with, and they are also good for playing roll shots on a heavy lawn. They are not ideal for stop shots or delicate strokes.

Conversely lighter mallets have better touch and produce good stop shots. Heavy rolls with a light mallet can give tendon strains in wrists or forearms.

Changing the weight of a mallet: heavy mallets can be symmetrically bored out to reduce the head weight and light mallets can either have a 'sole plate' of metal screwed to the bottom of the head, or lead can be put in bored holes to make them heavier. The self adhesive 'wheel balancing' lead weights, sold for car wheels, seem practical as they can be added to or removed easily from the head. Some hollow shafted mallets can have sand poured down their shaft to increase their weight.

Mallet Heads

The material from which a mallet head is made is inconsequential, except if it is a soft material then gathering balls (trundling) with the side of the head will cause it to wear. The faces of modern mallets are usually a hard plastic composite (Tufnol, Perspex, etc) or metal (metal faces were formerly banned). Ideally the corners and edges of the face of the mallet should have a 1/16" - 1/8" bevel. If the edges are sharp then they may crack or flake during a mis-hit or cut the ball.

Long mallet heads have two advantages: with the weight of the head concentrated near the faces, the mallet head will resist a yawing action (a rotation about the axis of the shaft). Long heads also make roll shots easy, but conversely it is slightly more difficult to play stop shots with them. Short mallet heads are good for stop shots. Many top players use 12" long mallet heads.

The 'diameter' or face area of a mallet is normally between 2.25" - 2.5" square. Some expert players favour a very narrow head. Unless you are an expert though this mallet will produce horrendous mis-hits with the slightest deviation. A narrow head can prevent you from being hindered by a hoop or another ball.

The latest 'high-tech' mallet heads are made of large diameter (~2") carbon fibre tube, faced with ~3/8" thick brass disk faces and filled with polyurethane foam to prevent them sounding like a toy drum.

Mallet Shafts

There are three main choices of material at the moment: wood, fibreglass and carbon fibre. The main variables are the weight and stiffness of the shaft. Wooden shafts can either be a single piece of wood or have a short strengthening splice running up from the head. Manufacturers tend to use ash, hickory or similar woods. Fibreglass shafts comprise of perhaps 12" of fibreglass rod which is recessed into the head and a wooden handle. Carbon fibre shafts are similarly constructed although there is now a model where the carbon fibre rod or tube runs the entire length of the shaft with the grip being comprised of two sections of firm foam glued together encompassing the rod. Metal shafts (heat treated aluminium tube) were popular but these seem to be out of favour at the moment for no good reason.

As indicated above the shaft wants to be light - about 14oz (398g) is typical. The choice then really is how rigid a shaft do

you like to play with? The carbon and glass fibre ones tend to be more twangy or whippy than the wood or metal ones. A metal one can smack the hands a little on very hard hits.

For club use the fibre glass or carbon shafts have the advantage that they are almost indestructible.

The cross-section of the grip on most mallets is either octagonal or an elongated octagon. A few mallets have round grips. It is a matter of preference which you use. A round shaft forces you to check that the mallet is pointing forward, whereas an octagonal one gives a tactile feedback as to the orientation of the head. One manufacture (Hobbs) produces a shaft which can be locked at any rotation so that when the shaft lies in your hands the mallet head can be pointing forwards.

Mallet Length

The length and girth of the shaft is a matter of personal choice and style. Unlike many sports there is no simple measurement of the body which will relate to the length of shaft which would be best for you. Some tall people have very short mallets and *vice versa*. If you hold the mallet using the Solomon grip (i.e. sink plunger grip) you would require a longer mallet than someone using the Irish grip (golf-like grip). My general advice would be to get one an inch or two taller than you think you need - you can always saw off the excess whereas it is difficult to extend a shaft.

Tips

Use lead self-adhesive car wheel balancing weights to make a light mallet heavier.

If you have a wooden mallet ...

Store the mallet vertically over winter so that the shaft does not warp. Avoid hot dry storage places as the wood will shrink and the head become loose.

If the head becomes loose, a short term cure can be to leave the mallet in a bucket of water overnight. The water will swell the wood and make the head tight on the shaft. This treatment can last for a number of weeks. Check the head is aligned before you soak it!

A more permanent fix is to invert the mallet and, holding the shaft, bang the end of the shaft on a pavement or large rock. The momentum of the head will cause it to be forced onto the shaft. The wedge should be tapped home after this.

If you make a new wedge for a mallet shaft, make it out of a hard wood. Soft wood wedges do not grip for long.

Recommended Mallets

The inclusion or omission of a manufacturer depends on whether I have seen their wares and does not imply anything else.

It is always better to have your own mallet if you play seriously, you will be accustomed to it and do not need to get used to a new mallet each time you play. You should however try as many mallets as possible before you make up your mind (e.g. use different mallets at a club). Many of the world's top players have played with unspectacular mallets - high tech or high price does not mean better. You need to find one you are happy with. Generally it is the player who defines the standard of play not the mallet!

For club or personal use there are a reasonable number of mallets in the £65 -£100 range.

The Croquet Association (CA) shop deals in a number of



mallet types of which the **Jaques** "Hurlingham" mallet is reasonable value (£93). It has white synthetic faces, a well-balanced head and a wooden shaft. **Percival** Mallets are popular with tournament players and exhibit a high degree of craftsmanship incorporating exotic woods and marquetry; from £140.

Moving up in price there are the fibreglass and carbon fibre shafted mallets:

The **Manor House (Pidcock)** range of mallets includes solid and hollow carbon-fibre shafted models. The heads are normally made out of sustainable hardwood but other exotic woods can be selected for custom mallet manufacture. The heads are faced with fibre glass sheet although bare brass-faces are now an option. The carbon fibre rod shafted mallets start at £82.50 up to £160 for the carbon fibre tube ones. The top of the range mallet, the "2001 Model", has a head made of lightweight round carbon tube, heavily end-weighted, with milled solid brass ends at £220

John Hobbs produces a range of custom-made mallets (prices £150). His main line is one with a rotatable aluminium shaft which has been adopted by some of the top players. Custom mallets can be made to order.

The **Jackson** Mallet is manufactured in New Zealand and can be obtained from there by mail order. The heads are faced with hard nylon, polycarbonate, Tufnol and PVC. The sides of the head do show wear if you trundle balls with them. You may wish to buy the mallet as a present for someone in which case the parcel can be marked appropriately by arrangement, and you may avoid import duty. Bob Jackson lives at 65 Goodwood Drive, Manukau, Auckland, NZ. He can be contacted at phone 0064 9 2639135.

The standard **Puckett** mallet from New Zealand is peripherally weighted, but Ray Puckett has developed a variety of mallet heads; his "Premier Series" has brass on the ends - inside the industrial tufnol hitting surface. Handles range from Carbon fibre "Flex" through to Carbon "Rigid". Price for overseas purchases of the standard mallet is £120 or \$US 190. Price include delivery charge to nominated address. Contact Ray Puckett at Lovell Mews Unit 5A, 400 Rosedale Rd, Albany, Auckland 1311, New Zealand. Phone: 0064 9 414 4564, Fax: 0064 9 412 7408, e-mail: mrbinz@ihug.co.nz. (Nov 2002).

Robert Fenwick Elliott in Australia produces "high-tech" which have the head mass concentrated at the faces and use specially formed carbon fibre shafts. He has an excellent grasp of the physics involved in ball-mallet interactions and has designed the mallets accordingly. These mallets have been extensively prototyped and are now reaching the market. They are not cheap at around £200. <http://www.insearchofthepperfectmallet.com/>

Kevin Brereton makes mallets in Australia - see www.members.iimetro.com.au/brereton/

The Australian Croquet Company supplies Dawson Mallets - these have a metal framed head: Bryan & June Dawson, Australian Croquet Company, P.O. Box 19, Littlehampton, South Australia 5250. Email: auscroquetco@picknowl.com.au

This article is meant as a guide. All of the manufacturers will happily discuss your own requirements or answer any questions you may have. Equally Jeff Dawson at the CA Shop is happy to discuss your requirements and is able to supply from most of the manufacturers listed above.

SECRETARY'S COLOURS

The editor said "write something about your first six months in post. It can be serious or light hearted, just as you like". I think perhaps it is best, since it is the festive season/new year, to stick to the latter and leave the more serious stuff for the next invitation, if one comes!

Most of the more bizarre things that happen tend to be related to croquet but come from outside and they cause cartoons or contra images in my head.

Like.... The telephone call from the press to enquire what time the "Turnstiles will be opening at the Open Championship at Hurlingham". I resisted the temptation to say something like "10.00 o'clock, just after the meat pies arrive!"

Like.... The TV production company who wanted to know if I could provide them with a "croquet player who plays badly" who might be prepared to spend two weeks on a desert island filming some kind of reality show. I called it my "who-op approach!"

Like The day a player (a keen bird watcher) was sat in my office with his back to the window (and therefore framed by lawn nine, which is at about head height). I was expressing some surprise at the lack of bird variety in such a large open area when a pair of partridge walked in through his left ear and out through his right!

Best wishes for the 2006. I suggest the following New Year resolutions. "I will pay my subs on time"; "I will return my trophies to the CA office well before the 1st April"; I will forgive the CA office for any mistakes made during the year!

Klim Seabright

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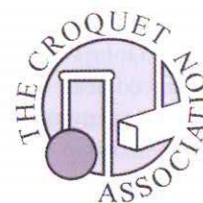
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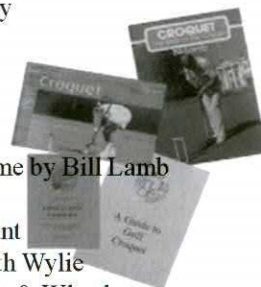
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