

THE CROQUET GAZETTE

ISSUE 313

APRIL 2008



CA Contacts

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

Hon. Secretary
Dr. Ian Vincent,
29, Thoresby Road, Bramcote,
Nottingham NG9 3EN
Tel: 0115 925 3664
E-mail: ian.vincent@cantab.net

President
Bernard Neal
41 Asquith Road, Cheltenham
GL53 7EJ
01242 - 510624
bernard.neal@tesco.net

Chairman of Council
Jonathan Isaacs
Meers Fram, The Hollow, West Chiltoning,
West Sussex, RH20 2QA
01798812028
jonathanisaacs@btinternet.com

Vice-Chairman of Council
Patricia Duke-Cox
171 Witham Road, Woodhall Spa, Lincoln LN106RB
01526 354878
duke-cox@hotmail.co.uk

Treasurer
Dr Roger Bray
Street Cottage, Polstead Hill, Polstead, Colchester,
Essex CO6 5AH
01206 - 263405
rwbray@fiscali.co.uk

CA Council Committee Chairmen

Administration
Dave Kibble davekibble@iee.org
AC Laws
Ian Vincent ian.vincent@cantab.net
AC Selection
Phil Cordingley phil_cordingley@tiscali.co.uk
AC Tournament
Nigel Graves nigel.graves@blueyonder.co.uk
Coaching
Lawrence Whittaker flwhittaker2@waitrose.com
Development
Barry Keen barry.keen1@ntlworld.com
Equipment
Alan Pidcock pidcock@manorh.plus.com
Executive
Jonathan Isaacs jonathanisaacs@btinternet.com
GC Laws
Bill Arliss bill.arliss@ntlworld.com
GC Selection
Tim King tmktmk@ntlworld.com
GC Tournament
Bill Arliss bill.arliss@ntlworld.com
Handicap
Ian Parkinson ianparkinson@aol.com
International
Phil Cordingley phil_cordingley@tiscali.co.uk
Management
Patricia Duke-Cox duke-cox@hotmail.co.uk
Marketing
Jeff Dawson jeff.p.dawson@gmail.com
Publishing
Derek Trotman derek.trotman7@virgin.net

CA Federation Representatives on Council

Croquet North - Charles Waterfield
01642 712551

North West - Barry Keen
01565 632420

Yorkshire - Julian Tonks
01904 791254

East Midlands - Lawrence Whittaker
0116 270 7396

West Midlands & Wales - John Handy
01788 810572

East Anglia - Arthur Reed
01923 445714

Southern - Pat Kennett
01794 322209

South West - Roger Buckley
01934 811735

London & South East - David Mooney
020 8789 7707



THE CROQUET GAZETTE



Issue 313 April 2008
Front Cover: Ian Lines in play during the WCF World Golf Croquet Plate Event

Next Issue Published 21st June 2008

Copy Deadline May 21st 2008
Photos in this issue by Ian Lines, Tim King, David Appleton, Tremaine Arkley, Tom Weston, Alice Fleck.

Disclaimer

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

CONTENTS

Chairman's Column	3
Editor's Column	3
Letters	4
News & Information	6
Obituaries	8
Report of Council Meeting	10
The Laws - Double Taps	11
Winters Silver Lining	13
People in Croquet - Liz Larsson	15
WCF World Golf Croquet Championships 2008	16
Tournament News	18

Publication details

Gazette Editor
Gail Curry
22 Cranbourne Terrace, Stockton on Tees TS18 3PX
Tel: 07752356880
gazette@croquet.org.uk

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 21st of the month before publication is due. However if you have something that you think

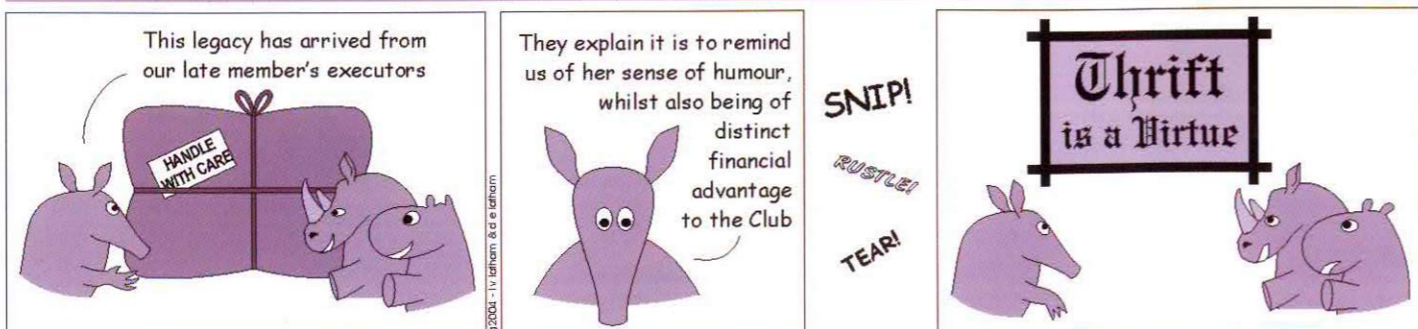
the Editor may be willing to expand this deadline for please contact her direct before making any assumption.
Email contributions, including tournament reports should be sent direct to the Editor, or copied to the Editor if they are being posted to the Nottingham List. Digital images are the easiest to work with, but coloured photographic prints are also acceptable. Please send digital files jpeg or tiff format files. Please accompany all images with a description of the subject of the picture. If you require any material to be returned please enclose an SAE.

Tournament Reports & Results
Emailed reports are welcomed. Attachments may be sent in Microsoft Word format, or text format. Handwritten reports are no longer acceptable due to the illegibility of most. Queries regarding the delivery of the Gazette to members should be directed to the Secretary of the Croquet Association and not to the Editor.

The Croquet Gazette is printed by Billingham Press, Central Avenue, Billingham, Stockton on Tees.

HOOPOTAMUS

by Victor



Chairman's Column



This year has started on a successful note with Chris Clarke winning the World Association Croquet Championships in New Zealand. Our English representatives performed exceptionally well and justifiably demonstrated our strength as the leading Association Croquet nation.

At the 2008 World Golf Croquet Championships in South Africa, the Egyptians again dominated the world stage. However we are getting closer. Chris Clarke and Stephen Mulliner both performed very well and Reg Bamford got to the final.

At Council we discussed actions that could be taken to raise our GC standards enough to beat the Egyptians. A working group, which includes Stephen Mulliner & the WCF President David Openshaw, has been created to come up with and implement a plan to further raise standards.

By the time you receive this edition Liz Larsson will have taken up her post as CA Manager based at Cheltenham. I am sure you will join me in wishing her the best of fortune in this new post. I would also like to put on record my thanks to Klim Seabright for the service he has given the Croquet Association during his 3 years in office as CA Secretary.

The appointment of Liz Larsson means that over half of the restructuring exercise has been completed. Once Liz has found her feet we will start to absorb some of the external functions into the CA Office. From June onwards the PR function will be handled by Liz & during the summer some of the bookkeeping work will be brought into the office. In the autumn will be appointing a second person to assist Liz and hopefully prior to Christmas the CA Shop will be transferred to Cheltenham.

Some may be confused as to who to contact under the new structure. If in doubt, contact the CA office and they will direct your enquiry to the right person.

At the last Council Meeting we held an interesting debate on the CA Selection Policy covering both Association & Golf Croquet. As a result of the discussion a

revised policy is being drafted for consideration and we hope to publish this early during the 2008 season.

Earlier this year Enfield Croquet Club contacted the CA to ask for help in their bid to gain Charitable Status. I was very pleased to hear that this has been granted and was even based on the old rules. This acceptance could be important in that the Charity commission have now accepted that there are health benefits from playing croquet.

Whilst it would be dangerous to assume that every new application will be automatic, this decision is very encouraging, and if other clubs wish to consider Charitable Status can I suggest they contact Ian Vincent, our Honorary Secretary, for further advice.

Finally can I wish all of you a most enjoyable season.
Jonathan Isaacs

Editorial

Welcome to the slightly restyled issue of the Gazette. The start of the season here seems to have thrown some rather interesting weather our way, and although it interrupted some events, and produced an interesting result at Surbiton (the snowman), some events have escaped unscathed and the season is now safely underway.

As you will see in the letters page the whites debate continues; so do we have a solution, or a decision - is anyone brave enough to do that? Is the issue simply black or white, metaphorically speaking of course. Will it take a brave decision to change that rule, or a braver person to challenge it on the croquet court? By asking the question

have expectations of some players been raised and others dashed, or will we continue the debate ad infinitum, adopting our usual passive positions? If nobody else expects a response this season, I do. Otherwise I see no point in posing the original question. So are we remaining all white, or are we allowing colour into the game?

Unfortunately nobody has yet volunteered to monitor the 'Nottingham List' for me, and compile any interesting items, so I am asking again, but this will be the final time.

I have been saddened by the news of the deaths of some players in recent weeks, that I was fortunate enough to have met and played. There seems to be some timidity in forwarding obituaries. I would always encourage clubs and friends to send obituaries, as often we don't see old friends from one season to another and it is good to share the news and to learn more about some of the characterful people who play our sport.

Starting with the next issue, Chris Clarke, the current World Champion, will be starting his regular column on ways to improve your play. So thanks to Chris for that, and in due course he will also be interviewed, so if you have any question you would like to ask please forward them to me.

As yet all of my plans to hit a ball have been thwarted, mostly by snow or torrential rain, perhaps twenty two years ago when I started to play, I would have persevered more. One of my freinds accused me of getting soft in my old age. My reply, "less of the old, I still feel 19". I'm just a bit wiser now and not quite as waterproof as I used to be - but the pull to play has definitely returned and by the time you read this I should have made a few breaks, hit a few long shots and blamed my glasses for every mistake I made over a pint of guinness - old age indeed!!!

Gail Curry
Editor

Late News

Lionel Wharrad, a Vice-President of the Association, died on Saturday 12th April after a short spell in hospital. He was Chairman of Council from 1984-1986 and elected a Vice-President in 1987. He was also President and a founder member of the Surbiton Club.

Letters

Is white smart?

As a relatively new croquet player, and a relative youngster by croquet standards, I would like to support the Editor's view that the time has come to follow virtually all other sports and drop the clothing rules that require everyone to wear white.

In the season before last I was browbeaten into wearing white clothing, at considerable expense since it is not that easy to get hold of. I did put up some resistance, but nothing compared to what I would have done in my much younger days, to the extent that I would probably have stopped playing rather than kowtow to rules which to me at least make no sense. I firmly believe clothing is a barrier to attracting young players since what young people do not want to do is to be told what to wear.

The only reasons put forward to me at the time were that it looks smart and that it shows a sense of team spirit. I can accept the argument for looking smart, but this is not limited purely to white clothing and indeed I am sure we have all seen people in white clothing playing croquet who look anything but smart. As for showing a sense of team spirit, I could understand this if in team matches we had a team colour. But how is the casual observer to work out who is on which team when we all wear white? And clearly this is a non-argument for individual competitions.

As all things change over time it is inevitable that the old guard who favour tradition over progress will lose the battle and someday all over England croquet lawns will be occupied with players wearing every colour of the rainbow.

Lee Hartley.

Dressing down

So dear Editor, you see no problems in abandoning the practice of wearing whites. Allow me to enlighten you

A few years back, many employers followed a fad known as "dress down Friday". All of a sudden, we were being given a treat like school children; Friday mornings became a torture of indecision as to what to wear; and a competitive element

of the best dressed-down person was introduced. In practice, it proved easier to dress normally on a Friday!. Women office-workers must have reached a similar conclusion, because they now solve these problems by mostly wearing black. (Should we experiment with men wearing whites and women in blacks?).

If wearing whites is abandoned as a result of your support of our Chairman's suggestion, all my whites would become redundant. I would have no alternative but to send them to you both to dispose of! Our replacement wardrobes would have to be vastly bigger, because it would help spectators, referees and double-banked players no end if we wore a variety of two coloured clothing to match the balls we are playing with.

Lastly, we already have a small foretaste of what may come. I have noticed the beginning of a practice on the part of some men (including, I regret to say, my brothers) of wearing red caps while playing. Years ago, a researcher discovered that men who wore red braces suffered from repressed sexual desires. Would this also be true of men who wear red caps?

Rodney Parkins

P. S. Curse it! My elder brother, in his capacity of selector of the Kent team (of which I am one) for the Inter-Counties, has bought team baseball caps displaying the Kent motif. Guess their colour: ouch!

Oh so glad I bought navy blue for Northumberland, the boys would never forgive me. Ed.

Still being debated

I am writing in response to letters in Issue 312 Feb 2008 "Change of Image - Yes Please." I would like to bring to your attention letters written some 12 years ago in Issue 243 May 1996 (copy below) titled "Whiter than White". One of which was sent by Len Hawkins.

Twelve years on and I am the said wife, now widow, mentioned in his letter. All the For's and Againsts about wearing white were covered in that May Gazette of 1996 and I have to report that the "All White" rule still reigns supreme at Ramsgate.

During this period I can recall two problems regarding players' appearance that have caused the Committee concern. The first was when a very keen new-comer visited the club shop and purchased all the correct playing apparel before being accepted as a member. The second was

when a new young lady member appeared on a club day wearing a white frilly see-through blouse and white short shorts. The men on the committee felt no rules were being broken!! Before you hasten to join Ramsgate to enjoy the scenery, that particular lady has moved away.

Perhaps to "Change The Image" we should follow the All England Tennis and Croquet Club at Wimbledon by Being British and stubbornly sticking to the white clothing, but have the Southwick Croquet Academy invest in a COVERED court.

Zoë Hawkins

Let's throw bisques away

I refer to John Baker's proposal (Issue 312 Letters) to give the weaker player a number of hoops start instead of bisques.

One of the advantages of bisque play is that it enables the weaker player to build breaks and thereby encourages them to employ the sort of tactics that will help them improve. In my opinion it also makes the game a fair and interesting contest.

Advancing the clips and doing away with bisques will make it very difficult for a significantly weaker player to gain the innings, let alone build and make a break. Unless the clips are advanced far further than the current handicap difference it will significantly favour the stronger player and will not in my opinion be a fair contest. On the other hand if the clips are advanced too far and the weaker player only has to make a handful of hoops it becomes less like a normal game of croquet than the bisque game that John Baker so decries.

Ian Parkinson

Chairman, CA Handicap Committee

Hoops or Bisques?

John Baxter's suggestion in the February edition of replacing bisques with a hoop headstart is an interesting one and not without merit. There would, however, be at least two problems that I would foresee:

1. Learning the game

Whilst my handicap has now fallen to 2.5, I started playing handicap croquet at my local club off a mark of 8. What the bisque system allowed me to do was to learn how to build and continue breaks, playing an aggressive game with the safety-net of a couple of bisques. This meant that I was able to get a significant amount of practice

against better players. Had I been playing level, especially with those approaching scratch, openings would have been harder to instigate (I couldn't join up then use a bisque to get in) and breaks become a lot riskier (no get out of jail card if I break down). Using bisques, high handicappers are guaranteed lawn time in a game, giving them the practice they need to improve. Even complete novices will have the chance to run a couple of hoops and experience the game.

2. Timed games
It can be frustrating for a low handicapper to have to wait an hour or so whilst the high handicapped player monopolises the lawn through using their bisques, but all but the very slowest players will eventually run out and let the low handicapper in with a chance of winning the match. In the example that John used of a 0.5 v 14 there is a very real danger that the 14 could play a slow and deliberate tactical battle to ensure that his hoop lead is never extinguished. Slow play by high handicappers can cause problems in tournaments and I fear the problem would be exacerbated through using a hoop headstart.

With all that said, as a relatively low handicapped player, the hoop headstart would mean that I'd be engaged in the match from the start, rather than after a long wait punctuated by uprooting a few bisque pegs. This would be an improvement, though I wouldn't get to read my paper. On balance though, it is far preferable that high handicappers wishing to improve are given a chance to build a break or two through using their bisques than simply 'giving' them a few hoops.

Tim Lloydlangston

Calling North London croquet players

The City of London has agreed to promote a public croquet lawn on Hampstead Heath. It will have modest beginnings, with a small lawn (20 by 16 yards) in Golders Hill Park by the tennis courts, but in time we hope it will develop into an oasis in the croquet desert of North London.

There will be a club, for which the subscription will be modest, but non-members will also be able to play for a small green fee. The City will attend to lawn care and equipment, but if the venture is to succeed and develop into a club with one or more full-size lawns, it needs players to use it, to administer the club and to help

newcomers to the game.

If you live or work in North London and would be interested either in using this facility or, even better, helping with the club or with coaching, please get in touch, on 020 7406 1111 or at heathcroquet@hotmail.co.uk. Alternatively, come to the Open Day at the Golders Hill Park tennis courts - provisionally scheduled for 1.30 to 4pm on Sunday May 18 - when there will be an opportunity to inspect and try out the new lawn.

Gabrielle Higgins

Alternate Stroke Question

In the hypothetical case of playing out of sequence in Alternate Stroke Doubles that David Appleton raised on p5 of the last issue, the players appear to have overlooked Law 22(e), which states that "If the end of turn prevents a limit of claims being reached, the limit becomes the first stroke of the next turn". (The wording, but not the intended meaning in level play, changed in the recent revision). Gail's earlier out of sequence play, and the two breaks, therefore stand, but Rob was correct to forestall Gail's attempt to take her side's last shot, as David should play given the sequence established by Gail's previous attempt.

Ian Vincent,
AC Laws Committee Chairman.

Is there an age record?

Brian Rees and I will be going in for the Hurlingham men's doubles with a combined age of 161. I'm not claiming this to be a record, but please does anyone know what is the age record?

Tony Fathers

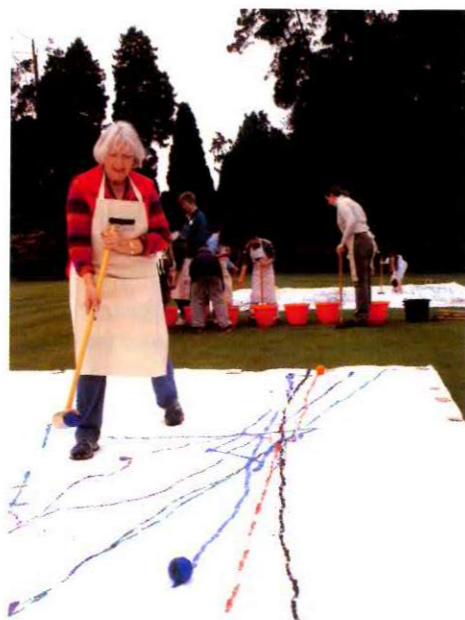
Croquet's image

Mr. David Turner in his letter (issue 312) expresses a swell of concern regarding Hurlingham's application of their "whites only" rule to competitors - surely an unfortunate turn of phrase to use, particularly at a time of modernising croquet's image.

He continues (surely tongue-in-cheek) with the surmise that the all white wear rule for tournament players is one of sheer snobbery to deter the hoi polloi from joining croquet clubs. Which immediately brings to mind the wonderful Groucho Marx one-liner - 'I don't want to belong to any club that will accept me as a member'

Chris Hague

News & Information



The 'BIG DRAW' - a new way of playing croquet

Last autumn, Crawley Croquet Club were approached by a lady from our borough council to see if we would take part in "The Big Draw". This turned out to be a scheme to encourage members of the public to engage in drawing as a way of becoming involved in their community. Since our club plays in a park belonging to the council and the park is in line for a Heritage Lottery Grant (and we are hoping for some upgrading of our lawns and facilities) we said "Yes".



Various activities were due to take place in other parts of the town but a local artist, on seeing our lawns, decided that we must offer the public the chance to play "Crazy Croquet". His idea was to lay down huge rolls of paper on our practice lawn and let children make patterns by rolling tennis balls dipped in poster paint across them. I borrowed some garden croquet sets (as regular mallets are too heavy for children) he brought the buckets of paint and balls and we waited for our customers. Almost before the equipment was out the children were there. So were their parents! No attempt was made to play any kind of game - the activity was fun enough.

This spring a booklet has been published detailing "Big Draw" activities that have taken place all over the country. Some of the participants were towns or cities like ourselves, some were from schools and universities and museum societies. The first big surprise was that one of our photos was chosen for the cover and inside was another showing a lady enjoying the activity. Then it turned out that Crawley was a "Winner"! We had no idea that there was anything competitive involved - we were just seeking to publicise the game and perhaps pick up a few new members.

It was not an activity that we would seek to repeat but we hope it has given us and the game a bit of extra publicity - that can't be bad.

Things you will never hear them say

On a recent Nottingham List posting by Nick Parish, the following was offered.

You'll Never Hear Them Say:

Golf Croquet is the future - Rob Edlin-White
Live and let live, that's what I say - David Maugham

No, there's nothing about that on the Oxford Croquet website - Ian Plummer

No more beer for me, thanks - that's quite enough for one day - James Death (or Jack Wicks, or Chris Farthing, or Russell Bretherton)

That ball wasn't supposed to finish up over *there* - Robert Fulford

Don't you have any alcopops? - George Noble (or Dave Kibble)

There's too much slow play about these days - David Goacher

That may be in accordance with the rules as written, but what about the spirit of the game? - John Riches

How do I qualify to play for England? - Reg Bamford

B*gger tactics - just bash the ball through the hoop and see what happens - Chris Clarke

I couldn't agree with you more - Martin Murray

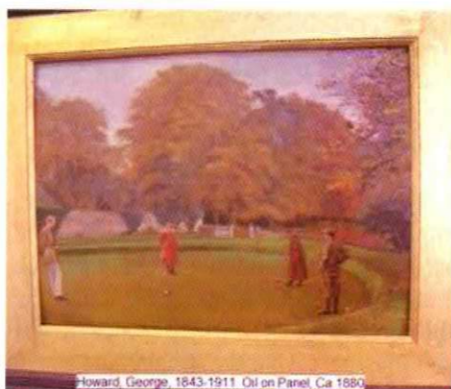
There's no place like home - Jerry Guest
Australia are hot favourites for the next Mac - Anyone

I have far too many contributions for the next Gazette - Gail Curry

...after which...

I have lots of friends in the croquet community - Nick Parish

Another generous gift, and step to save the history of croquet



In early July Tremaine and Gail Arkley will return a painting to Naworth Castle, by the 9th Earl of Carlisle (George Howard) of his children playing croquet at Naworth Castle.

The painting is to be hung in the Old Library and it is hoped that weather is sufficiently good for a game to be played on the lawn after lunch.

Tremaine and his wife are thrilled to be able to return the painting to its original location and continuing his goal of saving the history of croquet through the art and relocating paintings and other related items when he is able to do so.

Later in this issue you will find the story of Tremaine's gifts to the Scottish Croquet Association.

Solomon Trophy Team announced

The Solomon Trophy is an annual test match between GB and the USA hosted alternately by the two nations.

This year's test will take place Wednesday 2nd through Saturday 5th July at Bury Croquet Club, Heaton Park,

Manchester - spectators are very welcome.

The GB team is as follows (in alphabetical order):

- * Keith Aiton (capt)
- * Jonathan Kirby
- * Tony Le Moignan
- * Ian Lines
- * Dave Maugham
- * Stephen Mulliner.

Congratulations to everyone who has made the team and thanks to everyone who made themselves available for selection.

Yards of history for sale

A golden opportunity to purchase some of the earliest history of the CA is being made possible thanks to Bath Croquet Club.

Bath CC offered the CA original back copies of the Gazette so that its holdings of originals could be completed. The CA has replaced the issues taken with bound photocopies and the restored run is now to be sold by closed auction. The proceeds of the sale will go wholly to the Bath Croquet Club.

Lot 1: Complete run of volumes 1 (1904) to 33 (1936)

Volumes 1 (1904) to 3 (1906-7) are bound photocopies.

Volumes 4 (1907-8) to 5 (1908-9) are bound originals.

Volume 6 (1909) is a bound photocopy.

Volumes 7 (1910) to 33 (1936) are unbound original issues except for volumes 16 (1919) and 17 (1920) which are unbound photocopies.

There are also 6 individual issues missing from the period 1911 to 1931, viz. issue numbers 25 (Vol 8), 407 (Vol 19, 1922), 572 (Vol 24, 1927), 590 (Vol 25, 1928), 603 (Vol 26, 1928) and 678 (Vol 28, 1931) which have been photocopied.

(Guideline estimate: £800 - 1,000.)

Lot 2: Issues 141 (October 1976) to 281 (September 2002)

Complete run of original issues except for issue number 184 which has been photocopied.

(Guideline estimate: £200 - 400.)

More detailed information can be obtained from Patricia Duke-Cox via duke-cox@hotmail.co.uk, who will also be able to make arrangements to inspect the copies which are currently held at the CA Office.

In 2005, a run of Gazettes from 1904

to 1981 together with other materials, bound by an amateur into 20 volumes with over 5 volumes photocopied, fetched £2,000 at auction. Another, broken, run from 1904 to 1933 with other materials fetched £1,200.

The condition of the set is "used" and the buyer can expect some damage. The successful purchaser should be aware that both lots must be collected from the CA Office.

Anyone wishing to make a bid at or above the lower guideline figure should place it in a sealed envelope marked "Bath Gazettes" and send it to the CA Vice-Chairman, Mrs P Duke-Cox at 171 Witham Road, Woodhall Spa, Lincoln LN10 6RB by 1 June 2008.

The Big Ask - from the WCF

This consultation is about the last three WCF World Championship events in 2007 and 2008 and the future operation of the WCF Sports Regulations.

WCF World Championships

In 2007 and 2008 to date, WCF has held three World Croquet Championships.

- * 2007 WCF Women's World GC;
- * 2008 World AC;
- * 2008 World GC Championships.

We want to know about the experiences of all that played or officiated in these events

WCF Sports Regulations

The Regulations have now been operative for over two years at each WCF World Championship. Although amendments have been made in that time, it is now time to take stock of where improvements or change can take place.

We want to know what you think of any of the Regulations or how you think they should be changed.

Responses can be made to both consultations by:-

- * Using the on-line form
- * Email
- * Letter

Note: The on-line form via the WCF web site is suitable only for those using the following browsers.

- * Internet Explorer 6 or above;
- * Firefox.

The Apple Safari browser is not

suitable for this method of communication.

The closing date for this consultation is 31st May 2008

* http://www.wfcroquet.org/WCF_Consultation_2008_Information.html

Changes made to Golf Croquet Ranking System

Two changes have been made to the Golf Croquet International Grading System, which are reflected in the 12 March 2008 ranking lists:

* Grades and indices are now based on the same scale as the Association Croquet rankings. An old grade/index of N will now be expressed as N x 10 + 1000. Hence, grades of 80, 100 and 150 will now be 1,800, 2,000 and 2,500 respectively.

* Appearance in the International and UK ranking lists now requires 10 games played in the last 24 months.

Discussions were held at Cape Town about the possible inclusion of Egyptian domestic data in the International Rankings. If this becomes reality, consideration will be given to adopting a variable alpha as currently used in the Association Croquet rankings.

M C Percival Mallets

The new proven TM range of mallets are available with proven Carbon fibre or ash handles, mallet weights are adjustable by +/- fl to 3ozs 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 or repairs are undertaken to any mallet (over 350 completed so far).

Contact Michael Percival, The Laurels, Heath Road, Hessett, Suffolk IP30 9BJ
Telephone 01359 270 200 M o b i l e 07780677943
Email: michael@croquetmallets.co.uk
Web: www.croquetmallets.co.uk

Obituaries

Maisie Peebles – 1909-2008

Maisie joined the Cheltenham Croquet Club in the spring of 1983 aged 74 and remained an active member for 25 years. Another Maisie joined at the same time, Maisie Balmer – a robust sort of lady. So to avoid confusion Maisie Peebles became and remained Little Maisie.

Little Maisie enjoyed the company and the chat at the croquet coaching sessions and the croquet came a distant second. However with her accurate shooting and her turn of speed about the lawns, she developed into a very competent player achieving a handicap of 12. Maisie would discuss with Bo Harris, chief coach, at the beginning of every season which events to enter and Maisie took on the croquet-playing world which came to Cheltenham. An opponent seeing Little Maisie would perhaps anticipate an easy victory against this apparently frail old lady, but two or three hours later would be seen leaving the lawn wearing a very puzzled expression.

In the last couple of years, say from the age of 96, Little Maisie's stamina dwindled in the afternoon and her tactics suffered accordingly. But draw her as an opponent in the morning and nothing was assured. She loved the tournament atmosphere, all the people and the activity. She felt she was on holiday having lunches and teas at the Club. Her favourite menu was poached salmon with a few vegetables followed by something that was mostly meringue and cream.

David Magee first met Maisie some 15 years ago when he rejoined the Club. Maisie needed a lift home and the usual drivers were in play, so David offered his car. When they were at the gate, David wanting to know whether to turn left or right, asked Maisie where she lived. Maisie smiled mischievously and said "Bristol". It was a long time before David returned to the Club, but all those who gave Maisie lifts home knew that she would relish a long chat when she got there. At the Club lunch on her 90th birthday, during her memorable unscripted speech she announced suddenly, to David's consternation, that apart from her husband and her son Douglas, David was the only man that she had ever taken into her bedroom!

This year, Maisie decided that she would at last be giving up tournament play, washing the tea-room laundry and baking her famous scones. Fortunately we have the gift of memory and memories of Little Maisie will drift around the Cheltenham Club for a long, long time.

Eileen Magee

Margaret Roberts

It is with great sadness that Plymouth Croquet club has to report the death of Miss Margaret Roberts. Margaret died on December 23rd 2007 after a long illness and

will be sorely missed, not only by our own club, but also by the many visiting teams who appreciated the wonderful teas and lunches she provided.

In 2005 Margaret received a CA award for her services to croquet, in recognition of her most valued support and contribution to the life of Plymouth Croquet Club.

We were sorry that Margaret was never well enough to enjoy the new kitchen facilities which the club installed twelve months ago but affectionately called our 'catering manager', Margaret and her team of helpers set high standards, which we will endeavour to maintain in her memory.

John William De Morbray Jeffrey

2nd January 1933 – 27th December 2007

Members of Nailsea and District Croquet Club were saddened to hear of the sudden death just after Christmas of former club member John Jeffrey.

John joined the Club in 1983. He loved croquet and was very competitive. He improved rapidly and quickly became one of the two best players in the club and gained a handicap of 2½.

John qualified as a coach and was Nailsea Croquet Club's first referee and handicapper. He was the Club's Tournament Secretary for several years and led the Federation League team to victory in 1986. He was the Club's Chairman from 1987 to '91 and again from 1994 to '98. He was President of the Club from 1998 to 2001 and has been an Honorary Member since that date.

John was the main driving force behind the design and building of the Club's pavilion. He submitted the plans to the council, applied for and obtained grants and loans from the Town Council, the District Council, the Sports Council and the Croquet Association. He also completed the application and obtained a substantial grant from the National Lottery, which enabled the pavilion to be built. John, together with a few other club members spent many hours laying the wooden floors, fitting the kitchen, making mallet racks and building the lockers. He also carved the wooden silhouettes of male and female croquet players that are fixed to the changing room doors and donated the crockery and cutlery. He raised sufficient money to provide a large sit-on mower and other machinery and equipment, which has served the Club well for many years. The pavilion was completed in 1998.

When the Laws of Golf Croquet were substantially changed so that a ball, stuck in the jaws of a hoop, could finish running the hoop in a subsequent turn and also allowing jump shots he became a very keen player of the game and in October 1998 he assisted with the management of the World Golf Croquet Championships at Leamington Spa. He encouraged Kriss Chambers to enter and raised money from club members to help with Kriss's expenses. Not only this, but he also entered the Championship and came 40th in a very strong field.

In 2006, the Club's 25th Anniversary, he donated the flagpole to the Club.

John did a huge amount for the Club before moving to Stafford. Nailsea Croquet Club, which is now thriving, will always owe a lot to John for its continued success.

John leaves a widow, children and grandchildren and will be greatly missed by those who knew him.

Peter Dyke

Andrew Potter

Died on 16th March 2008 aged 80

Andrew was looking forward to his 80th birthday and had arranged a party to celebrate: Sadly, it was not to be. He entered Frenchay Hospital with pneumonia, from which he did not recover.

Andrew was taught the rudiments of the game of croquet by his father Stephen Potter, well known as the author of 'Gamesmanship' and its extensions to other areas of life, but he did not play the game regularly until he joined the Bristol and Cheltenham Clubs in the 1980s when he was nearing the end of his career as a schoolmaster. He soon became a familiar personality at tournaments and interclub matches in the Southwest, and a deceptively formidable B-class player. I believe his handicap had been as low as 3, probably due to his very accurate shooting. His health had suffered in recent years and although trying to play the odd game at Cheltenham, he struggled with painful legs and back.

All my memories of Andrew are happy or amusing and one is poignant at this time – Easter week. For a number of years now, Andrew as his contribution to teas, used to bring a good supply of hot cross buns and butter for the Easter Tournament.

He 'appeared' on Radio 4 a couple of years ago, maybe the Today programme. There had been some sort sporting cheating occurring. Andrew, as son of Stephen Potter author of the Gamesmanship books, was being asked the difference between cheating and gamesmanship. Andrew said something like this. "If a golfer on hitting his ball into the rough, finds a ball other than his own and says 'found it', that is cheating. If a golfer, watching his opponent ready to tee off, says to him, 'I have been admiring your swing, the way you wiggle the clubhead on your follow through'. Needless to say, his opponent shanks the ball somewhere out of bounds, now that is gamesmanship".

During tournaments, Andrew quite often passed the time by having the odd bet via the club phone. His bets were very modest and so we believe were his successes.

Some years ago, Andrew offered his services locally as a housesitter. Often taking people to the airport, then housesitting before collecting them at the end of their holiday. He asked me if

COACHING TIPS

The CA Coaching Committee wishes to collect recommendations which will help existing Coaches to do an even better job!

Do you have advice to pass on?

How do you teach people to hit the ball? To remember the sequence of strokes? To line up a take-off? To rush confidently? To plan ahead? To take bisques? How do you diagnose problems? Can you enable players to play better? Have you used video techniques? Do you have recommended practice routines?

Please send the fruits of your experience to

David Mooney
121 Highlands Heath
London SW15 3TZ
mooneyd@pbworld.com

could put up one of his housesitting advertisements in the Cheltenham clubhouse. I read it and saw that among the usual services such as dog walking, plant watering etc, was instructing any resident parrot in a new and unusual vocabulary.

He was a good neighbour and for many years gave John Exell a lift to tournaments. He managed one of our ongoing club competitions - The Sturdy Senior - and I had only arranged with him about three weeks before his demise to find him a caretaker manager for 2008.

Was it pure coincidence that like John Exell who also died just before an Easter tournament, that atrocious weather occurred during the event, or was it a moment of celestial pique as they had been prevented from playing in the event themselves.

Andrew played to win, but win or lose, those 'two impostors' did not affect his enjoyment of the game, his gentle geniality, or the pleasure we found in his company. In recent years he had been fighting increasing pain and infirmity which restricted his croquet, though fortunately not so much his bridge, but he still turned up to Club afternoons when he could, his only concession being to ask to play on a half-lawn if it was convenient, when he was happy to give beginners the benefit of his craft — though one wonders how many of them were aware of the depths of his amiable guile. We shall smile when we think of him, a stooped figure in cream pullover and shorts, carrying an opened black umbrella in one hand, his mallet in the other and 'hurrying' across the lawn to some distant ball he had just roqueted.

Hamish Hall & Eileen Magee

**South East Croquet Federation
Golf Croquet Coaching Course
Sat 5th & Sun 6th July 2008
At Sussex County Croquet Club (Southwick)**



This course is offered to players who would like an introduction to Golf Croquet or to those already playing it who would like to improve their game. It is open to players with handicaps ranging from 0 to 6, and will be directed by CA qualified and approved coaches supervising groups of four. The weekend course offers all coaching, demonstrations, tutored games, morning coffee & biscuits, a buffet lunch and afternoon tea for an inclusive fee of £40. For more details and an entry form, contact :- Daphne Gaitley, Tel : 01903 767174 or email daphne.gaitley@virgin.net

Official Business

The Croquet Association

Report of Council Meeting held on 29th March, 2008

Council met on Saturday, 29th March, at the Victory Services Club (instead of Hurlingham, who were hosting the Oxford team for the Boat Race). Andrew Hope was welcomed to his first meeting as a Vice-President.

Formal business included the approval of the 2007 accounts, which showed a surplus of some £13K transferred to the General Fund, due mainly to a reduction in applications for development grants.

The budget for 2008 was approved and a proposal to raise subscription rates in 2009 broadly in line with inflation was agreed. 31 new members were elected. The membership statistics showed about a 2% increase last year to about 1670.

The public liability insurance scheme is being extended to offer cover for individual Members undertaking private coaching, at a cost to them of £100 pa this year and subject to certain conditions. The scheme already provides cover for coaching given on behalf of clubs and federations.

The appointment of Elizabeth Larsson as Manager of the Association was confirmed and Klim Seabright was thanked for his work as Secretary. Amendments to the constitution to reflect the restructuring were agreed for approval at the AGM. Plans were outlined to extend the office at Cheltenham to provide a toilet, cloakroom and storage for the CA shop.

The main debate of the afternoon was on a proposed selection policy and procedure, drafted by Dave Kibble on behalf of both the AC and GC selection committees. It was broadly supported, but some changes were agreed and an updated version will be circulated to Council for ratification, by e-mail so that it can be published this season. The principal decisions were that, for individual and major team events, the aim should be to select the players with the best chance of winning the event, with developmental potential only to be used as a tie break and no specific requirement for a recent playing record.

Working parties, to be led by David Openshaw and Stephen Mulliner, were set up to consider ways to raise the standard of our top Golf Croquet players and to consider where responsibility for team development (for both AC and GC) should lie. Stephen Mulliner is also to draft a consultation document with a view to achieving a common laws revision process for both games.

A paper reviewing the role and relationship of Federations

with the CA was considered. It was agreed that the Regional Representatives on Council should be renamed Federation ones and that it would be counter-productive to insist that Federations require their clubs to be members of the CA, though they were asked to strongly encourage them to join it.

It was reported that the Enfield Club had become the first club to be registered as a Charity and had written to thank the CA for its support for their application. This could be a useful precedent for other clubs.

There will be six vacancies for election as individual members of Council at the AGM, with only three current members standing for re-election. Derek Trotman and Phil Cordingley were warmly thanked for their service on Council and it was agreed with acclamation that Derek should be awarded the Council Medal, to be presented at the AGM.

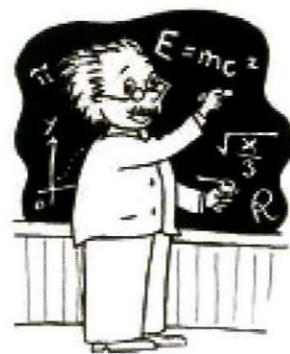
Ian Vincent, Hon. Secretary.

Election of Council Members

As an update to the notice about the election of Council Members on p12 of the last (February) issue, it is now expected that there will be six vacancies, with only three current members seeking re-election.

Nominations should be sent to Ian Vincent, the Hon. Secretary, by 1st June. If you might be willing to serve your fellow players by becoming a member of the governing body, but wish to ask about what that might entail, please contact Ian or the Chairman of Council, Jonathan Isaacs.

**South East Croquet Federation
Summer school
Mon 21st July - Fri 25th July 2008
At Sussex County Croquet Club (Southwick)**



**You don't need to be an Einstein to play croquet. It's relatively easy.
Enrol now in the summer school.**

Contact Daphne Gaitley, 38 Monks Close, Lancing, West Sussex BN15 9DB. Telephone 01903 767174 or email daphne.gaitley@virgin.net

The Laws

Double Taps

Ian Vincent, Chairman, Laws Committee

1. Introduction

On p9 of the February Gazette, Jeff Dawson described the high speed photography undertaken at Bowdon and promised some advice from the Laws Committees about the implications for players and referees. This is it and has been written following the recent revisions of both the Association Croquet (AC) and Golf Croquet (GC) Laws, which were undertaken in the light of the findings. It covers strokes in which it is suspected that there may have been more than one contact between the mallet and the ball hit by it (the striker's ball, SB), and hence which might have been faults under Law 28 in AC, or striking faults under Law 13 in GC.

2. The Law

For AC, the relevant parts of Law 28 are:

"28(a) DEFINITIONS Subject to Law 28(d), a fault is committed if, during the striking period, the striker:

(7) (A) in a croquet stroke, or continuation stroke when the striker's ball is touching another ball, allows the mallet to contact the striker's ball visibly more than once; or

(B) in any other stroke, allows the mallet to contact the striker's ball more than once; or

(C) in any stroke, allows the mallet to remain in contact with the striker's ball for an observable period;

(8) allows the mallet to be in contact with the striker's ball after the striker's ball has hit another ball;

(d) EXEMPTIONS

(1) Contact between the mallet and the striker's ball is not a fault under Laws 28(a)(7) or (8) if it occurs after the striker's ball:

(A) makes a roquet; or

(B) scores the peg point; or

(C) hits a ball pegged out in the stroke.

However, exemption (A) does not apply if the striker's ball

Manor House Mallets

The originators of carbon fibre shafted mallets now offer a truly comprehensive range, from the 'Basic' at £87.50, the well established T-series (£137.50) to 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 £230
3000 model with D-shaped ends £265**

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

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://John-Hobbs-croquet-mallets.mfbiz.com>

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

has hit another object after making the roquet."

For GC, the relevant parts of Law 13 are:

"13(a) A striking fault can only be committed from the time the striker's ball is struck by the mallet until the striker leaves the stance under control. It is a fault if, in striking, the striker:

(6) "double taps" the striker's ball by striking it more than once in the same stroke or allows the striker's ball to retouch the mallet;

(8) causes the striker's ball while still in contact with the mallet to touch another ball, unless the balls were in contact before the stroke;

(9) maintains contact with the striker's ball by pushing or pulling the ball with the mallet;"

Although the wording in the two codes differs (partly due to different revision timetables), the intent is the same, except for the additional complications of roquets and pegouts in AC.

Note that these laws only apply during the striking period: in AC contact between a mallet and a ball outside this period is not penalised, though the ball may have to be replaced under Law 33; in GC it might be a non-striking fault under Law 12.

There are other faults which cover touching a ball other than the striker's ball with the mallet, or having the SB in contact with the mallet and a hoop or peg simultaneously (a crush). These are not covered here, except to note that the filming confirmed the view that crushes are unlikely (most potential ones were found to be double taps instead) unless the SB was touching or very close to the upright or peg at the start of the stroke.

The standard of proof required to declare a default is defined, in Law 48(d)(4) for AC, to be that the referee or striker believes it more likely than not that a fault was committed.

3. Single Ball Strokes

These are strokes in which the SB is not touching, and does not subsequently hit, any other ball.

The filming shows that there is only a single contact between the mallet and the SB if the ball is hit with a free swing and there is nothing to prevent the ball escaping from the mallet. The contact time is of the order of 1/1000th of a second, which is not considered to be "an observable period", by either sight or sound, under 28(a)(7)(C). Thus no fault is committed in a normal single ball stroke.

A fault may occur, however, under 28(a)(7)(B) or 13(a)(6), in at least four special cases:

a) the SB hits a hoop or the peg (unless, in AC, it is pegged out) and bounces back into the path of the mallet. This is a serious risk in close, angled, hoop attempts

b) the striker hits steeply down on the ball (e.g. in a hammer stroke or poorly executed jump stroke);

c) the striker has a restricted backswing and so has to hold the mallet further down the shaft than normal (thus increasing the effective weight of the head) and force the mallet forward to get sufficient energy into the ball;

d) the striker deliberately makes the mallet catch up with the ball (perhaps to steer it). Prolonged contact between the ball and the mallet could also be faulted under 27(a)(7)(C) or 13(a)(8), but, as with crushes, apparently continuous contact is likely in fact to have been multiple contacts. However, either way trying to steer a ball is a fault and a referee can declare it as such, even if not able to state with certainty which sub-law it came under.

4. Clearance and Scatter Shots

These are strokes in which the SB is not touching another ball, but subsequently hits one (to clear or promote it in GC, or to scatter it in AC).

If the balls are more than a centimeter or so apart and hit flat along the line of centers, a double tap will occur unless the mallet is stopped before it catches up with the SB. This would be a fault under 28(a)(7)(B) or 13(a)(6) (like in case 3(a) above). On the other hand, if the balls are very close, say a few millimeters apart, then the mallet will still be in contact with the SB when the SB hits the other ball. However, there is no escape for the striker, as this is caught by 28(a)(8) or 13(a)(8). Again, a referee does not need to decide which sub-law applies, provided that he is satisfied that one or other does.

In the case where the SB is being hit straight at the other ball, it is very easy to tell if a fault has been committed. It will have been a clean stroke if the SB stops after hitting the other ball. Conversely, if it carries on more than for more than an eighth of the distance that the other ball went then the strike will have been a fault, even if it sounds clean, unless it is clear that the SB jumped partly or cleanly over the other ball. The reasoning is that more energy must have been imparted to the SB after it hit the other one and this can only have come from the mallet.

Things are less clear-cut if the balls move apart at an angle, but as a rule of thumb the stroke will be a fault if they move apart at much less than a right-angle.

5. Roquets and Rushes (AC only)

This section covers the case when the SB makes a roquet: readers who only play GC can skip it.

A stroke that would be a fault if the ball that the SB hit was dead (see 4 above) is exempted from being a fault, by 28(d)(1)(A), if the ball was live. The reason for this is that it would otherwise be impossible to lawfully roquet a ball that was very close to the SB. Note, however, that the exemption only applies if the potential fault occurred after the SB made the roquet, not if it results from an attempt to get the SB to reach the ball in a hampered stroke (as an experienced player once tried to convince me when a newly qualified referee).

However, there are two special cases to consider:

a) In the case of hoop and roquet (Law 17(a)), the striker gets the benefit of the exemption provided that the SB ends up

having run the hoop, even if it would not have done if the mallet had not hit it again. (However, see (b) if the SB also touches an upright).

b) The exemption does not apply (and thus a fault may be committed) if, between the roquet and being hit again by the mallet, the SB touches the peg, a hoop upright, or a third ball. This can apply in angled hoop and roquet positions, or if the striker is making trying to promote a third ball into court when playing a rush (after a previous gentle cannon). To complete the story, the exemption does apply if the SB hits a hoop, then makes a roquet, and only then does the mallet catch up with it.

Time for a test question to see if you have been following this. Suppose Blue (B), Red (R) and Black (K) are all on the yard-line in that order, with about a 2" gap between R and each of the other two balls. K is 7 yards south of corner II and it is the start of Bab's turn. If she hits B and follows through so that all three balls end up in corner II, will she have committed a fault? (Answer below)

6. Croquet Strokes (and Clearance or Scatter Strokes with the Balls in Contact)

Although Jeff's article said that no particular problems were shown by the filming of croquet strokes, it should be noted that contact times were many times greater than for single ball strokes and that there was at least a suspicion of multiple contacts in the half-rolls, even though they would be regarded as perfectly acceptable. It is for this reason that the word "visibly" is included in 28(a)(7)(A) and "observably" in 28(a)(7)(C). The intention is to exclude multiple taps that could only be detected by photography, not the the human eye, from being faulted, to ensure that the game as we know it can lawfully be played. Another reason for doing so is that the striker generally gains no advantage (in terms of where the balls end up) by playing a dirty rather than a cleanly executed stroke.

Thus few, if any, ordinary croquet strokes would be expected to be faulted for double taps or maintenance of contact, and the same applies to scatter strokes or, in GC, strokes in which SB starts in contact with another ball. However, it is still a fault to blatantly shepherd the SB in a hoop approach, or to play an extreme pass roll in which the mallet has clearly hit the SB a second time. See also sections 4 and 5 above if the SB hits another ball in the stroke (a cannon).

Answer to Laws Question
The likely sequence of events in the stroke is:
1) Mallet hits B (the SB).
2) B hits R (a roquet).
3) Mallet hits B.
4) R hits K.
5) B hits R.
6) Mallet hits B.
Since both 3 and 6 occur after R has been roqueted, and B only hits R and not K, then the multiple taps are exempted under 28(d)(1)(A) and so no fault would be committed.

Winter's Silver Lining

David Appleton describes how the SCA came by some old trophies

The Scottish Croquet Association has a gold medal, an inch in diameter, which (in very small letters) records the names of the winners of the Scottish Croquet Championship from 1875 until 1879 and again from 1898 until 1906. On two bars attached to its ribbon are listed the winners from 1907 until 1914. This medal had disappeared for many years until it was found in Gleneagles Hotel in 1990 and presented to the SCA.

Late last October I decided to see if I could find out something about the winners and perhaps determine the names of the runners-up to put them in the SCA *Handbook*. I invoked the help of several people, principally Ian Wright, who has written extensively about the early years of Scottish croquet, and Chris Williams, the CA's very amenable archivist.

It is astonishing what you can find out these days without leaving home. Chris's website has many old results and there is a huge amount of information in Prichard's invaluable *The History of Croquet*. The *Scotsman* newspaper has recently digitized its archives, early censuses are on line, as well as other records at Edinburgh's Register House and the UK National Archives at Kew. By early November I was doing quite well and it occurred to me to email Tremaine Arkley (whom I knew from having once coached with him in Florida and played him there – at pool as well as croquet) to ask if he could let me have a photograph of a trophy presented to the 1913 winner, which I knew he had recently bought on eBay. That, I thought, would nicely illustrate my researches.

I timed my request well. It was afternoon in Newcastle and morning in Oregon and within the hour I had my photograph. Plus one of the trophy for 1906 which Tremaine also had. It turned out that the winner had his name recorded on the 'Gleneagles'



The 1906 trophy

medal, but from about 1901 until the First World War brought the competition to an end, he (or she, for Scotland's champion was a lady as early as 1877) was also given a valuable silver cup to keep. The donor of these trophies was Mr Charles Woolston, a maltster and corn merchant of Wellingborough, the father of several croquet-playing brothers including Geoffrey who won the Championship in 1900, as well as three times taking the Champion Cup (now the President's Cup) in England.

But Tremaine didn't just send the photos. He and his wife Gail also offered the SCA the cups themselves. Oh wow! Yes please! And then there was a medal inscribed 'United All England Croquet Association' won by a Miss M Fenwicke. The bar on it said 'Edinburgh 1898'; would we like it? Not forgetting a medal



The United All England Medal

showing King George V and Queen Mary, in a box with a Glasgow jeweller's address; what about that too? The engraving and hallmark on the back indicated it had been presented to Craiglockhart Croquet Club in 1911. That's Craiglockhart in Edinburgh where the Championships were held from 1897 until 1914 (and where, soon after, when the hydropathic hotel had been turned into a hospital, Wilfred Owen was to meet Siegfried Sassoon). Thanks to John Burnett of the National Museum of Scotland, the man who had the medal made was soon identified as Sir Daniel Macauley Stevenson, a truly remarkable Glaswegian; the appreciations of his life fail to mention that he was a talented croquet player, but I'm working on that.

I'm getting ahead of myself. I didn't find out the details about the medals till later. I was distracted by Tremaine's next offer. Would we like a painting, executed in 1864 by the Scottish artist William Crawford, showing the Middleton children William Frederick and John Henry and their 'Nana' Elizabeth Anne Lochart



The 1913 trophy



The medal presented to Craiglockhart in 1911

playing croquet? Well, I would have jumped at the offer if I could have thought where to hang it, but, though the clubhouse at the SCA National Centre at Meadows West is perfectly adequate qua clubhouse, it is not too well provided with space to step back and admire a painting which, in its frame, is 5' 6" high and 4' 6" across, and it also lacks the temperature and humidity controls and the security personnel that your average art gallery finds necessary. (It's just as well I didn't jump at the offer; the iniquitous VAT the SCA would have had to pay on such an expensive present would have severely dented its finances.)

Although I couldn't see how we could possibly accept this amazing gift (which some of you might have seen at the CA's centenary exhibition at Wimbledon in 1997), I was certainly intrigued enough to do some research on the Middletons. From the children's birth certificates I could trace the family as it moved



Tremaine and Gail Arkley, the generous croquet benefactors

from Barony parish (now part of Strathclyde University) via Campsie (in Stirlingshire not far north of Glasgow) to various addresses in Edinburgh's new town, and in the 1871 census I found them (as well as a substantial number of servants) at Kinfauns Castle near Perth. Any will in the National Archives of Scotland can be downloaded for £5; I invested in that of John Middleton, the father of the two boys in the painting. The outlay proved to be sound as I got 137 very legible handwritten pages for my fiver (though the arrival of 69 jpeg files did take a little time). John's will is just a bit longer than my own, but then croquet players were well off in those days; when he died in 1880 John left close on £300,000, so the family had obviously been wealthy enough to buy several of these new-fangled croquet sets. I also discovered that the girl in the painting was the boys' second cousin.

Being sure now that the painting was not only by a respected Scottish artist, but was probably of Scottish children, I passed on to Tremaine the email address and telephone number of the Director of the Scottish National Portrait Gallery; if he and Gail thought the Middleton children should come home I wasn't going to stand in their way. Again it was morning in Oregon and Tremaine wasted no time. The gift the SCA had reluctantly declined was accepted with alacrity by the Gallery; the Director described it to me as "this very generous and fascinating offer", as well he might. When some structural changes to the Gallery have been completed the painting will be the star attraction in a room of Scottish Victorian sport.

Anyone wishing to know more about the cups, the medals and the history of the Scottish Croquet Championship should look at the SCA website: www.scottishcroquet.org.uk. Even English (and Irish and Welsh) players could find something to interest them, for the Scottish Championship was often won by a visitor, as indeed is still the case!

I am grateful to Gail and Tremaine not only (on behalf of the SCA) for the gifts themselves, but also for enabling me to pass the close season so enjoyably and extend our knowledge of Scottish croquet up to 1914.



The painting by William Crawford

People in Croquet

My Life in Croquet (so far)

By Elizabeth Larsson, Manager of the Croquet Association

Croquet can be a life changing experience. How many players have said: I wish I'd found the game earlier? How many have found a game that they find so absorbing? How many have found that it lead to marriage and new job?

In 1996 I started to plan my future as I was due to leave the Royal Air Force in 1997. Part of this plan was to build up a life outside RAF St Athan in the Vale of Glamorgan, so I went along to the coaching course at the nearby Dyffryn Croquet Club. Standing in the gentle rain (this was Wales) I started to hit balls and by the end of five weeks I could hit a ball, had a rudimentary knowledge of the game and had started going out with Chris Williams. The memories of the course itself were vague, but watching visiting player Brian Wislang from NZ jumping over a ball to run a hoop still stands out clearly. Here was a skill we beginners hadn't even dreamed of!

The following year Chris and I got

married, and I played in the B League and entered the Easter tournament at Cheltenham. I found I preferred the social side of the game as opposed to playing and so I don't really play any more. I have played, however, in the Inter County Championship even though I can't claim to be at county standard, but Glamorgan needed someone to play for two days one year!

My first day out with Chris was to see the Mac at Cheltenham, which was a portent of things to come: travelling a lot to see top class croquet. Over the past eleven years, I've travelled to NZ (twice), Australia, the US, Switzerland, Canada, Italy and all over Britain supporting Chris playing for Wales, Glamorgan, Dyffryn and also for Cheltenham. I've also served on the CA's Marketing Committee and run a one-day course on generating publicity for croquet clubs.

And yet I've been aware of croquet from early age: at my grandparent's house in the 1960s watching my parents and grandfather play; playing the odd game at Ross Priory, on the banks of Loch Lomond; watching New Zealand visitors on the BBC News Southwest in 1974; playing at



Budleigh Salterton one summer in the early eighties with my sister Kate. (I've known Budleigh Salterton all my life: my grandparents, great aunts and uncles lived there.) Even the dissertation for my MSc in Public Relations focussed on PR in Sport, and the then Chairman of the CA took part in my research.

So that's my life in croquet so far and at the time of writing, I have just started my job as CA manager. Klim has been most helpful, and I'm getting a real insight into the administration of the game. It's still fun and I hope that I can make a real contribution to the game that has given me great pleasure over the past 10 years.

David Barrett

New designs added to the exclusive POWERFLEX Croquet Mallet Range for 2008

High Tech materials as specified by NATO are used in POWERFLEX Mallets, which enable Players to achieve great control and added distance when hitting shots.

Jump shots and Stop shots are said to be easier. With the EXTRA BONUS that POWERFLEX also helps ease any problems with aching wrists and fingers.

2008 Designs @ 2007 Prices
£135 and £160 dependant on length of head plus £10 P&P (UK) For details contact:



David Barrett, 61 Heywood Hall Road, Heywood, Lancs OL10 4UZ Tel:01706 368214 Mobile: 07957 103417 Email: davidbarrett.db@tiscali.co.uk

Making Contact

Following the restructuring of the CA's administrative staff, it now has both a Manager, Elizabeth Larsson, who is working in the CA Office at Cheltenham, along with her assistant, also confusingly called Liz (Budworth), and a part-time Honorary Secretary, Ian Vincent, who works wherever his laptop is!

Their contact details are on the inside front cover. The Lizzes will initially be dealing with both club and individual membership administration, tournament entries and trophies, public relations and general enquiries. Ian deals with matters relating to meetings of the Association, Council and its Committees. If you are unsure, please feel free to contact any of them and they will try to ensure the matter is dealt with.

WCF World Golf Croquet Championships

Jottings on the WCF Laidlaw World Golf Croquet Championship

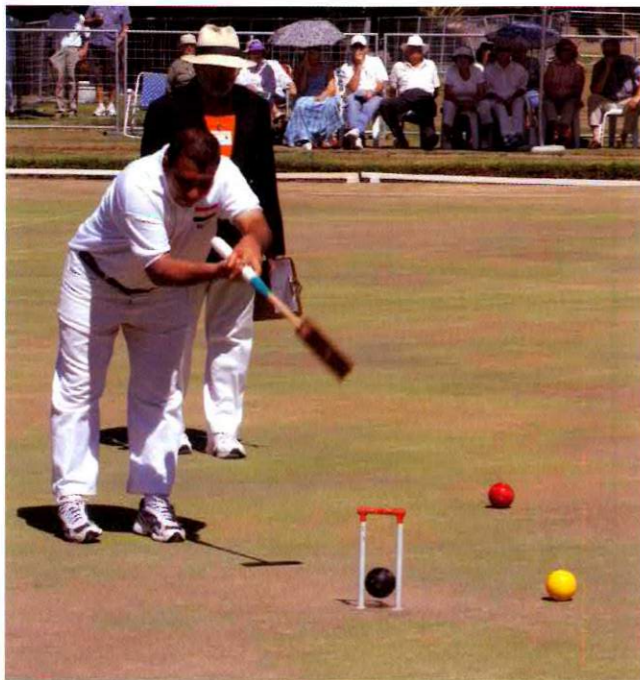
8th - 16th March 2008

Report by Tim King

The results

By now, many readers will know that Ahmed Nasr of Egypt won the final in four games against Reg Bamford of South Africa. Reg faced destiny: a proud South African who would have reinforced legendary status with his home fans had he managed to succeed. In his semi-final against Mohammed Nasr (brother of Ahmed and top seed), Reg was impressive in his sang-froid; he seemed to have no sense of pressure. But he never quite reached the same heights in the final.

Under perfect blue skies, the wind blew relentlessly for the semi-finals. Reg stood firm and Mohammed never found his best distance or accuracy. Ahmed also suffered much angst as the strong gusts distracted his preparations for big shots. However, he had just enough composure to take himself past Chris Clarke of England, winning on the final hoop of the third game. The winning shot took an age as Ahmed addressed the ball several times, on each occasion withdrawing because he was unsettled by the next blast of wind.



Ahmed Nasr, 2008 World Champion, in action

In the final, the lack of wind seemed to ease Ahmed. He ably demonstrated one of the fundamentals of Golf Croquet: consistent, accurate approach shots to hoops provide the bread-and-butter pressure on the opponent. Reg was that fraction off the same level and he was always playing catch up. He did manage to find some great form in game three; a series of excellent jump shots gave him a great win. However, Ahmed rose to the challenge and shut the door in game four.

England can be proud of some success. Ian Lines played with his usual steady and highly effective style and won the Plate. He comfortably beat New Zealander Peter Batchelor, 7-5, 7-5 on the Sunday morning before the final.

Some statistics

One can look at the results in various ways. Egypt had ten players at the Championship and all qualified for the main knockout. England sent a squad of twelve and Tom Weston added to the number by qualifying from the Qualification Tournament (Richard Brand also took the bold step of playing in that event but he, unfortunately, fell short). Of the thirteen, seven reached the main knockout.

Another view of the Egyptian strength is to consider net game points in the block games. Even by only taking the top ten English performers, the contrast is stark. The mean Egyptian game score was 6.59 for and 4.35 against, with a difference of +2.23



The photograph shows Court C at Kelvin Grove, one of the two bowling greens in use for the Championship in addition to the two croquet courts. This is where the final took place on Sunday afternoon. The surface is excellent; very true. The cloud is the "table cloth" above Table Mountain.

hoops per game (83% games won). For England, these scores are 5.87 to 5.13, a difference of +0.74 (61% games won). As an average across ten players and around 300 games, these figures suggest the extent of the gap between the two countries. Individually, Chris Clarke achieved a mean points difference of +3.07, behind only Ahmed El Mahdi (+4.00), Mohammed Nasr (+3.60) and Reg (+3.13).

Location, location, location

Cape Town is a great destination for travel. The drama of the mountains combines with that of the sea and provides an inspiring backdrop. The weather was always interesting and we only suffered one rainy morning during the Championship. Many of the players took advantage of the various sight-seeing highlights. Wine was a firm favourite; the tournament dinner was at one of the local wineries and the evening was highly enjoyable.

The headquarters for the Championship, Kelvin Grove, is a club similar to Hurlingham; croquet is one of the sports, along with tennis and bowls. An impressive feature is the club being an immediate neighbour to both the Newlands stadia for international rugby and cricket. Furthermore, being in the shadow of Table Mountain and Devil's Peak provides extra atmosphere and standing on the courts at Kelvin Grove gave one a strong sense of being in some form of sporting paradise.



Reg Bamford, runner-up complete with war paint.

The logistics

In order to take place on 12 courts, the Championship took place across the four clubs of Kelvin Grove, Rondebosch, Somerset West and Helderberg Village. An extremely effective fleet of minibuses shuttled everyone around (the latter two clubs were about 40 minutes from the former pair). Only one or two players failed to read the timetable properly(!); but local individuals were gracious and jumped into their own cars to sort the problems.

At times, one could be forgiven for thinking that the animals were loose in Cape Town. In order to counteract the feared aggression of the Egyptian ball striking, the solution was extensive use of security fencing to protect the courts. The result was almost gladiatorial. In the event, the courts were of sufficient quality to cause limited problems with flying balls. Perhaps next time, a slightly less dramatic solution will be sufficient to ensure spectator safety.

The positives

After a series of eight, the Championships appear to be settling into a fairly stable routine. Top-level competitive Golf Croquet is a worthy sporting spectacle. The spectators can readily grasp the tension around the match and each hoop point or long-range clearance is an opportunity for acclaim. Across the entry of 64, players at whatever level get an opportunity to test themselves against their peers, experiencing a range of styles and abilities.

The South African Croquet Association put in a superb effort to organize the Championship. The size of the Association is less than a tenth that of the CA, so almost everyone had to provide a helping hand. The hoop setter came down from Johannesburg and the Western Cape clubs provided almost all their resources in

terms of court space and volunteers.

The negatives

At times, one could have been fooled into thinking that the Championship had been a disaster. But only if one listened to the idle chatter of some of the less charitable players. A more reasonable attitude seems to be to seek the highest standards but to accept where volunteer effort has understandable limitations. Certainly, the WCF has taken the important step of asking players to submit their thoughts on their experiences of the recent World Championships in both codes, so we can all learn from any weaknesses.

Some of the block games were not a good advertisement for Golf Croquet. But this discredits the importance of those games to the players involved. Although the World Championship should have an appropriate focus on excellence, the participation of 19 nations is also part of the value of the event. Any lack of quality highlights the challenge to continue to develop the sport in all the member nations.

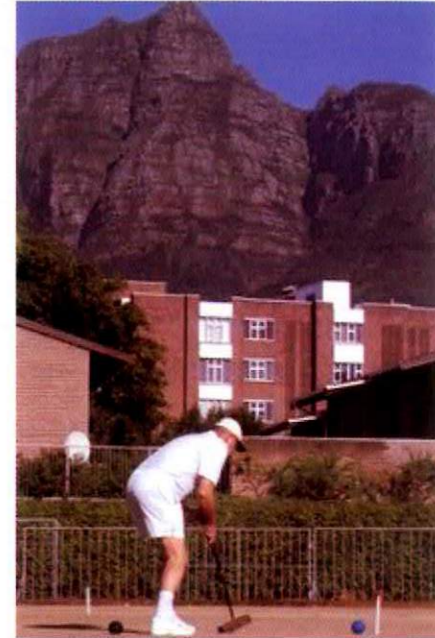
The performances of Klaus Gollhofer (Austria), Paolo de Petra (Italy) and Anton Varnas (Sweden) show that talent already exists in even some of the smaller Associations.

The courts were variable in condition. However, one could argue that this posed a valid sporting challenge in terms of players showing the ability to adjust to conditions. Undoubtedly, we all had greatest pleasure from playing on the bowls greens at Kelvin Grove and Helderberg Village. Once the quality of those at Kelvin Grove became apparent, the Tournament Manager took the welcome step of extending the loan of the greens for use for the semi-finals and final.

Some lessons to be learnt

The WCF has moved to adopt the flexible Swiss format for the consolation events at both the Association and Golf Croquet World Championships. However, the early evidence suggests that internationally currently neither management nor players are fully familiar with the format. But the Cape Town experience suggests that this format can work. Some players were not willing to play in the consolation event. Others withdrew when they found their form disappointing. What this did not do was to ruin the experience for the rest of us who wanted to continue competitive play. In the end, eight players were on the cusp of qualifying for the Plate quarter-finals and an tense play-off round identified the three players to fill the remaining places.

Next time round, some better communication and preparation would help to ease the misconceptions players have about the format.



Tim King in play



Dick Strover (ENG) had chances to beat Khaled Younis (EGY) on the 13th hoop but did not quite get there

Future steps

The WCF has invited the CA to consider hosting the World Championship in 2010. Pros and cons exist for this proposal and Council members and other interested parties are still expressing their views. If CA members have a strong view then they are most welcome to contact me or any other member of Council with their thoughts.

The other major question about the Championship is where next for English Golf Croquet? Since Cape Town, the Nottingham List has been abuzz with various discussions about the merits of Golf Croquet. The CA Council has also requested David Openshaw to lead a review of how to improve the standard of our play. I think we know where we stand with respect to Egypt; we lack a strength and depth to match that country. However, the success of Chris Clarke and Stephen Mulliner indicates that we can challenge the very best. With Reg also playing in the UK, we have some valuable resources to stimulate play in this country. Some of the talent that we could use is definitely among the top Association Croquet players and some potentially in those who prefer to concentrate only on Golf Croquet. Egyptians play tough, competitive Golf Croquet almost all the year round; what system can we put together that can produce a similar standard of player?



Ian Lines, winner of the 2008 Plate Event.

Tournament News



David Maugham has trouble running hoop one with the white ball.

**Pendle & Craven Tournament
6th – 9th April 2008**

Report by Alice Fleck

A pure white blanket blotted out the world that is my haven. The place where I play croquet, at the club Pendle and Craven. The disappointed players came, looked on in deep despair. Then they started rolling snowballs with a cavalier air. The team work was amazing as we all pulled together. The scene was overwhelming, despite inclement weather. A game of croquet was impossible as everybody feared. But we toiled on until lunchtime when lawns one and five were cleared.

We had a break for lunch and with all the hard work done. We looked across at two and three. They had melted in the sun.

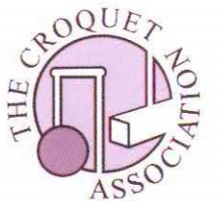
A young Geordie from Newcastle's club, he's a lad that's going far. He was the outright winner, his name is Jacob Carr. Jacob came down with his family, there were three generations. They spurred him on with full support and he won with adulations.

Overall winner: Jacob Carr 11/11
Fastest Game: Jacob Carr – beat David Maugham in 42 mins
Most games played: David Maugham 12 games
Low Bisque Winner: Lee Hartley
High Bisque Winner: Howard Bowron.

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, X-Act, George Wood** and **Jaques**. The popular George Wood Original mallet at £79 + 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.

Standard blue cover	£20.00
Padded blue cover	£24.00
Large blue cover up to 12" head, 40" shaft	£24.00
Large padded blue cover up to 12" head, 37" shaft	£28.00

CLOTHING

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

Breathable wet weather jacket	£40.00
Breathable jacket & trousers	£56.00
Fleece reversible windcheater jacket	£37.00
Fleece jacket	£26.00
Fleece reversible gilet	£27.00
White trousers	£30.00
Pullover	£29.50
White shorts	£26.00



ODDS & ENDS

Timer	£10.50
Silver Earrings (mallet or hoop & ball)	£12.00
Hoop setting feeler guage	£3.00
Canvas ball carrier bags	£15.00
Croquet Posters - B&W prints	£6.00ea
Ball markers (pack of 10)	£1.00
Croquet Girl cards (pack of 8 - blank)	£4.50
Croquet Christmas cards - 10 pack	£8.00

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
The Laws of Golf Croquet	£2.50
A guide to Golf Croquet	£5.00
Golf Croquet Tactics	£11.00
How to play Croquet	£4.50
Alternative Croquet	£7.00
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
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

DVDs AND VIDEOS

Learn Croquet (DVD) Association	£19.00
Mastering Golf Croquet (DVD)	£19.00

All books 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** - Dawson and Sunshiny
- HOOPS** - Omega, Aldridge and Jaques
- Corner flags, yardline markers, pegs, clips, gauges.

JAIQUES 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

JAIQUES
LONDON

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

