

THE

AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 2011

CROQUET

GAZETTE



USA Retain The Solomon Trophy

Great Britain team defeated by an 11–6 score after four days of play



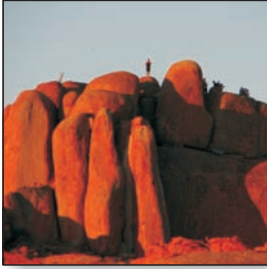
Reg Bamford Wins 8th Open Title

Record entries, advanced laws and a new venue at Surbiton Croquet Club

ISSUE 333

THE MAGAZINE FOR MEMBERS OF THE CROQUET ASSOCIATION

Namibia



Fish River Canyon

Ngorongoro Crater - Tanzania

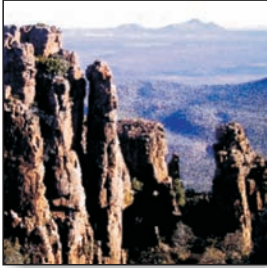


Zanzibar



Idyllic Moments

Valley of Desolation



Scheduled group tours to

AFRICAN HIGHLIGHTS

in South Africa, Namibia, Tanzania, Botswana, Zanzibar and the Vic Falls area



Serengeti Plains

Okavango Delta



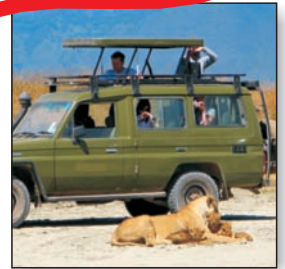
STOP PRESS
CROQUET TOUR TO SOUTH AFRICA FEB 2012
Including touring, friendly croquet, and the Western Province CA Tournament in Cape Town. See letters page.

INCLUDING

Addo Elephant Park



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Game Safaris

Kalahari Desert



Okavango Delta

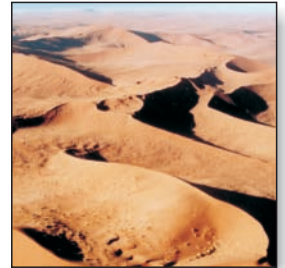
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Namib Desert

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Garden Route



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Sabi Sand Reserve

South Africa



CHAIRMAN'S COLUMN AUGUST 2011

You will have read in the last Gazette that the CA aims to target its recruitment strategy at the more competitive type of player in the future. There are various reasons for this approach. Clubs find it is relatively easy to recruit the type of member who joins the club for a social get together both on and off the lawn, but is not very interested in competitions and does not normally want to play away from his or her own club. While this type of member provides a lot of support to the club, both financially as well as helping to run the social activities at the club, the lack of competitive players could lead to the isolation of the club from activities in other clubs which is not good for the future of croquet. It is therefore judged desirable to encourage these clubs to take part in the wider field of competitive croquet both within their Federation as well as nationally. Another reason is that a strong base of competitive players in clubs is needed to support individual tournaments at both Federation and national levels. The Marketing Committee is working on ways of helping clubs recruit competitive players and intends to have material available for clubs to use in 2012. The strategy is a long term aim to prevent any decline in competitive croquet. The number of players entering CA Fixture Book events is gradually reducing, though this could be partly due to the rising costs of accommodation and travel. Whilst the CA can do little about this, it does seem right to try to increase the pool of players willing to play in these events. However, the picture is not as bleak as it may appear, as the decline in entries to Fixtures Book events is offset by an increasing number of Federation events held throughout the season. In addition to the well supported league events, there are other special Federation tournaments held across the country.

I visited a Golf Croquet one day tournament held at Kenilworth for the clubs in the Midlands. The games were keenly fought and with one round to go any of three teams could have won. There was certainly no lack of competitive spirit there! I also managed the North West Federation Festival of Croquet in June at Southport. This competition is held over two days with up to 100 players from 10 clubs in attendance on each day. Over 300 games were played overall with trophies awarded for Golf Croquet, 18 point Handicap, Short and One Ball Advanced Croquet. The event is supported by many players who have never played away from their clubs before and is an excellent introduction to tournament play with the pleasure of mixing socially with players from other clubs who share their enjoyment of the game.

With the continuing support of the Federations and the CA, I believe that the future of competitive croquet is looking good, provided that we continue to recruit more players to replace those players who are retiring from playing in tournaments as they grow older. However, you may have different ideas. If so, why not come to the CA AGM to be held at Hurlingham on 15 October at 11.00 and air them. I shall be asking for views from members at the meeting on the topics covered in this column as well as any other matters which members may wish to raise.

Barry Keen

Chairman
The Croquet Gazette

ISSUE 333 AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 2011

FRONT COVER:

Play in progress at the Solomon Trophy at Hamptworth.
Photo by Julie Kaye
www.juliekayephotography.com

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DISCLAIMER

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Letters

CAN YOU SOLVE
THIS MYSTERY?

WHAT
IS THE
SIGNIFICANCE?

I have an interesting old croquet peg, which I acquired over 40 years ago in a boxed Jaques set. I wonder if any of our members can date it and, in particular, explain the significance of the numbers down it.

John Taylor

SEARCHING FOR COMPATRIOTS

I send this missive in case there's anyone out there who fancies a bash at entering the excellent Inter-Counties tournament. Norfolk entered on three occasions a few years ago and we had a splendid time but, having been mercilessly eliminated in a qualifier by those fiendish beasts from Wiltshire, we haven't been able to muster a team since.

I can find four or five but not the requisite six players. This has led to consideration of a joint team with an adjoining county such as Cambridgeshire or Lincolnshire who don't enter at present. So – if you would like to spend four days in sunny Sussex in May 2012 in the company of a cheerful bunch of chaps who are there to enjoy themselves, please give me a call.

Jonathan Toye

BAMBURGH CASTLE

I found this engraving in Volume 1 of *The Book of Days*, published by W&R Chambers in 1863. Comparison with the delightful cover of your Issue 331 suggests that someone is to be congratulated on a fine job of levelling the site for croquet! The descendants of the outside agencies wandering along the path have also no doubt been persuaded to use another route.

Lawrence Whittaker



BAMBUROUGH CASTLE.

AN INVITATION FROM SOUTH AFRICA

South Africa's Western Province CA holds its annual Croquet Tournament in February/March 2012 in Cape Town and Somerset West and, as usual, there will be a fair field of UK players entered for the Association Croquet events to be played at Somerset West from February 18th to 25th. The Golf Croquet events (offering opportunities to all standards of player) will be held immediately afterwards from February 27th to March 2nd. These will be in Cape Town itself.

To encourage UK entries for the GC section, and if the support is strong enough, Western Province is arranging a special introductory tour by luxury air conditioned coach with expert/driver guide with some friendly croquet thrown in on the side. It is planned that players arriving in Johannesburg from London will connect with a flight to East London on the Indian Ocean coast for two nights, playing a friendly tournament with the St Andrew's Croquet Club. From there, a short drive along the coast to Port Alfred will see another, similar, tourney and a stop-over before going to the Addo Elephant Park and then along the famous Garden Route and the Little Karoo before being dropped at your selected residence in Cape Town near the croquet lawns.

Details for this tour can be obtained from stephen@landscapetours.co.za, while entry forms for the Association and Golf events will be sent to you by Peter Millson (President Somerset West CC) at millson@iafrica.com. Vacancies are limited so it will be on a first come, first served basis.

There could be an optional extra competition in Johannesburg to be taken in on your return trip to UK. If you have been before you will already know of the warm welcome you will receive, while newcomers will feel comfortably "at home" as soon as they arrive.

Anne Oxtan, President, Western Cape Croquet Association

A SMALL CONTRIBUTION

Regarding the Golf Croquet history query raised by Brian Dawes. Perhaps I may point out that in David Drazin's croquet bibliography, he has an 1896 reference to *The New Game of Croquet-Golf: A Game for Garden Parties* by F H Ayres, which moves back by five years the date Brian Dawes gave in the last issue of the *Gazette*. The first reference to "golf-croquet" is from 1934 and "golf croquet" makes its appearance in 1949.

I'd also like to add that Paul Hands' 'Who is Sylvia' article had me laughing out loud in several places. More from him please. He didn't even mention Lady Carmen Bazeley so he must have lots more stories. I can't help but wonder what he would have to say about the men folk?

David Appleton

HOLD ON TO YOUR HATS!
WINDY WEATHER PROVED
A CHALLENGE FOR THOSE
WEARING BOATERS



EDWARDIAN CROQUET IN THE SOUTH WEST

Mid June saw the production of a two day Edwardian Garden Festival in the lovely private garden of Coombe Trenchard in West Devon. Inspired by the presence of an old croquet lawn and a photo of ladies resting by the lawn in the early 1900s the owners, Sarah and Philip Marsh, asked the CA if some croquet event could be mounted. The Exeter and Cornwall croquet clubs took up the challenge and provided a comparison of Edwardian Croquet with the Modern game, splitting the lawn into two halves.

Unfortunately the weather was not entirely with us. Exeter took the stage on the first day, 17th June, amidst pouring rain and a howling gale, but croquet players are stoic and an Edwardian game was duly started though Boaters went flying and the participants were soon driven into the adjoining shelter.

Cornwall manned the second day, 18th June, which provided better weather and enabled two of the club's ladies to recreate the pose of the early 1900s. A number of games were played from both croquet eras.

Despite the weather, quite a lot of interest was created and a number of visitors took up the challenge to play a round of Golf croquet with us on each day.

Adam Wimshurst



CURIOUSER AND CURIOUSER

I like very much the new-look Gazette, and feel the latest front cover definitely has an 'Alice in Wonderland' look to it! As you are probably aware, my grandfather's second wife was Lewis Carroll's niece, so this is a great association. Incidentally, I recently happened to meet, in the old car world, Adrian Liddell, now over 90, who raced cars in the 50s and whose grandmother was the real Alice (Liddell)!

The reason for my writing is that I was really interested in the letter you received from Dick Patterson regarding the game "Cage and Bell" that he and a small group of enthusiasts are still playing. When I was working full time for the Company, over a number of years I gradually assembled a collection of old Jaques games, mainly through people writing in and wondering whether we would be interested in acquiring them, and amongst these was a game we had produced in the 19th century containing a cross hoop and bell. It came in a croquet style box with ordinary hoops of a similar age, but, regrettably, with no rules.

We have always wondered how the game was played and now it would appear that we have the answer! Through the memory of someone who played it with his grandfather the

rules are amazingly still around and indeed the game is still being enjoyed by a small group of people.

I would be really excited to receive a copy of Dick Patterson's rules and would be grateful if you could pass on my address to him as I would like to get the old game I have back into use. It is not inconceivable that, if we feel the game is interesting enough, we could even start producing a replica of it in our "old games" range. Recently we have reintroduced a number of our old garden and indoor games and inventions and found them very popular, so this is a distinct possibility. The fact that a group of people find the game as interesting, if not more so, than Croquet would seem to be a good start.

Please can you pass this on to Dick and I will be pleased to hear from him.

Chris Jaques

WE WOULD LOVE TO HEAR FROM YOU!

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or post to: Editor, 127 Haswell Gardens, North Shields,
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05



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Letters

YOU ARE YOUR OWN COACH, YOU ARE YOUR OWN REFEREE

Do you believe these two statements about Golf Croquet? If so, spread the word. If you have not thought about either of these possibilities, read on.

If you play Golf Croquet, you will have had some form of introduction, either from a qualified coach or from other players. Or you may have used the few books available. But as you make progress and look for something in the way of advanced coaching, it is difficult to get the sort of help you can put into practice. Because the game changes after every stroke, it is impossible to find any written guidance, which leads you through a succession of strokes. Michael Hagues' book details individual strokes but cannot follow a sequence. So it is up to you to become your own coach if you want to improve your game. First of all, the practice of mallet skills will increase your accuracy and playing friendly practice games will allow you to identify your strengths and weaknesses so that you can build up your tactics. Because the game changes after every stroke, you have to work out tactics for yourself. A top-class player may give you suggestions, but you need to play your own game with strokes that you know you can achieve. You will be thinking primarily of the next ball to play and consider your options, which will probably be at least two, sometimes more. Your decision may even be affected by the third and fourth balls to play. Did your ploy work out? Did you rely too much on your opponent's weakness? Did your accuracy let you down? Too often, your opponent plays a different stroke to the one you expected!

Each time, you repeat your thought process because this is as much a thinking game as a mallet and ball game. You begin to recognise the strokes that work for you and those that don't, so you learn to play within your limitations. As you improve you learn how to take the initiative, how to play defensively when necessary, always aiming to keep your own balls threatening the hoop and your opponent's balls well away. To achieve this, you need a reliable and effective stop shot. You may decide to sacrifice immediate, but only possible, success (e.g. a ball in a hoop) by letting your opponent remove it (which may not happen!) against a delay to ensure later success in running the hoop if your other ball is in a good position and there is no danger from opponent balls. There are many useful tips to be acquired from other players and various publications (see below) including the Gazette.

You may feel you do not need to be familiar with the Laws and can leave it to other players. Not so. The Laws state that every player is their own referee (Law 15 a). This means you! So if you and your opponent know the Laws you should be able to agree about the correct procedure if either of you anticipates a possible fault. A referee is only an arbitrator over a problem; you may want to call a referee if one is available (or another player if not), but generally in club play you should be able to agree without dispute. It is good practice in club play to mention the possibility of a fault to your

opponent, which may be that of yourself or your opponent. Once the stroke has been played it is too late to point it out. You may ask your opponent to watch your shot if you anticipate a possible fault. This shows respect for the Laws and helps to produce a fair game. If you make a fault, it is fair to declare it rather than cover it up.

The Laws often seem confusing, especially to new players. Perhaps you will be able to obtain the unofficial A4 sheet which abstracts the Laws for club use. Once you have these clear, then you can go back to the CA booklet containing the full Laws. More experienced players can contribute to the game by drawing the main faults to the attention of newer players when there is a possibility of a fault arising in the game. You may feel that this is all rather unnecessary, but if you play competitively at all, then it is important. For club players, it is particularly essential in League games which are growing more numerous in the Federations.

Jennet Blake

PAYMENT PROTECTION

Thank you for publishing Elizabeth Larsson's helpful update on progress towards the abolition of cheques by 2018. As Elizabeth notes there is a particular concern for clubs and societies requiring multiple signatures.

I am Treasurer of a local Rotary Club, which requires any 2 signatures out of 3 on our cheques, and was one of about 200 participants nationwide in the Payment Council's consultations last autumn which particularly examined clubs and societies. They issued an excellent report on this topic last December, available on the Payments Council website. I waited for 3 months and then contacted our bank's National Electronic Payments Centre to see whether they had any plans to allow our Club to make online payments with the same important "2 out of 3" safeguard. Firstly they told me to let one of us do everything online by himself, and when I protested at this their second suggestion was to let all three of us operate online as independent individuals any time we liked! Both approaches are fatally flawed of course, but it does confirm Elizabeth's point that the banks seem to be trying to force us to use just one signature.

Whilst many croquet clubs handle only smallish sums of money, every Treasurer is going to be the prime suspect if money goes missing when only a single online operator is allowed. A local Music Society lost a 5-figure sum through fraud recently when the "trusted" Treasurer, operating on his own, turned out to have a secret gambling habit and had been stealing (via cheques) for years. So I urge every Club to hold out for multiple electronic signatures when the time comes, and I applaud Elizabeth's stand to make sure that Payments Council members are forced to provide such functionality.

Tom Banfield



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News & Information

NOTICE OF MEETING

The Annual General Meeting of the Croquet Association will take place at the Hurlingham Club on Saturday 15th October 2011 commencing at 11.00 a.m.

AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence

2. Minutes of the previous meeting held on Saturday 16th October 2010

The minutes are in the documents section of the members' area of the CA Website and will be sent to Home Members on written request to the office.

3. Chairman's Report

There will be an opportunity to ask questions and discuss the report of the Council's activities, including the proposed Growth and Recruitment Strategy.

4. Accounts for the year to December 2010 and Hon Treasurer's Report

These accounts and brief commentary were published in the June 2011 edition of the Croquet Gazette. Copies will be available at the meeting together with a more comprehensive report, which will be sent to members on request to the office.

5. Election of Hon. Secretary

Dr. I. G. Vincent offers himself for re-election and is the only nomination.

6. Election of Hon. Treasurer

Dr R. W. Bray offers himself for re-election and is the only nomination.

7. Election of Reporting Accountant

8. Election of Council Members

The following members of Council retire by rotation and seek re-election under clause 18 (a)(i): Mr. W. A. Arliss, Mr. D. J. Kibble, Dr P. J. Kirby, Mr. N. R. Graves and Mr. D. B. Maugham, . In addition, Mr R. A. V. Staples has been proposed by Dr. F. L. Whittaker and seconded by Mr. B. A. Keen, so there are 6 candidates for 6 vacancies and an election is not required.

9. Benefactors' Book

The names of benefactors will be read.

10. Proposal to elect Mr. J Isaacs as a Vice President

Council has proposed that Mr. Jonathan Isaacs, a past Chairman of Council and founder of the Croquet Academy at the Sussex County club, be elected a Vice-President of the Association under clause 17(b) of the constitution. The proposal is subject to a postal or electronic vote under clause 19. Both Individual Associates and Member Clubs may vote by post or at the meeting. Individual Associates may alternatively vote electronically on the CA website. Votes before the meeting must be received by the CA Office no later than 5th October.

11. Presentation of Trophies for the Most Improved Players

12. Presentation of Awards to Clubs

The Townsend award has been made jointly to the Bury and Swindon clubs. The Apps Heley award goes to Chester. No nominations were received for the Millennium award.

13. Presentation of Coach of the Year Award

The Coach of the Year award is to be made to Michael Lester of the Budleigh Salterton club.

14. Presentation of Council Medal

The Council Medal is to be presented to George Noble, a founder member and Chairman of the Surbiton club.

15. Presentation of Croquet Association Diplomas

16. Any Other Business

17. President's Closing Remarks

Dr. I. G. Vincent

Hon. Secretary

14th July, 2011

THE CROQUET ASSOCIATION – BALLOT PAPER FOR ELECTION OF VICE-PRESIDENT

The Council of the Croquet Association proposes that Mr. Jonathan Isaacs, a past Chairman of Council and founder of the Croquet Academy at the Sussex County club, be elected a Vice-President of the Association under clause 17(b) of the constitution. If you wish to vote, either as an Individual Associate or on behalf of a Member Club, please indicate your agreement or otherwise by placing an "X" in the appropriate boxes, then sign and return this ballot paper to the CA Office. Alternatively, a facility for Individual Associates to vote electronically is available on the CA website. You may also vote on the motion at the AGM on 15th October, 2011. Votes before the meeting must be received by the CA Office no later than 5th October. If you require further copies of this ballot paper, it may be photocopied or downloaded from the CA web site.

In Favour of the Motion

Against the Motion

Name of Officer (if on behalf of a Club):

Name of Individual Associate or Member Club:

Signature:

MONTH-BY-MONTH CROQUET LAWN MAINTENANCE SCHEDULE

The Lawn Company have a wealth of experience turning around the fortunes of croquet lawns whether they are managed professionally for a club or privately owned by keen croquet players in the garden at home. It is worth noting that the following should be used as a guide only, but in association with prevailing weather patterns, growing cycles, and ground and soil conditions.

OPERATION	OCTOBER	NOVEMBER	DECEMBER
Aerate	Solid Tine – two passes	None – Keep Traffic on Lawn Minimal	Solid Tine if ground conditions permit
Disease Watch	Red Thread & Fusarium	Fusarium	Fusarium
Fertilising	None	Slow Release MU – Autumn & Winter	Spoon Feed Sulphate of Iron
Moss Control	Spoon Feed Sulphate of Iron	Spoon Feed Sulphate of Iron	Spoon Feed Sulphate of Iron
Mowing	Rotary – 10 to 12 mm when mild & growth	Rotary – 10 to 12 mm when mild & growth	Rotary – 10 to 12 mm when mild & growth
Pest Watch	Leatherjackets & Chafers & Worm Casts	Worm Casts	Worm Casts if not done
Renovate	Yes – Renovation Programme	None	None
Scarify	Thatch Removal Reel – Two Passes	None	None
Seed	Mechanical Over Seed – All Areas	None	None
Selective Weed Control	None	None	None
Top Dressing	Yes – as part of Renovation Programme	None	None
Verti Cutting	Yes – as part of Renovation Programme	None	None
Watering	Reduce but promote Seed establishment	None	None
Wetting Agent	None	None	None
Additional Functions	Remove Dew each morning with Dew Switch or Drag Brush. Keep Autumn Leaves Off!	Remove Dew each morning with Dew Switch or Drag Brush. Keep Autumn Leaves Off!	Remove Dew each morning with Dew Switch or Drag Brush. Apply Fungicide before Christmas Holiday

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Obituary

Eric Black

It is with great sadness that I write of the passing of Eric Black on Friday, 8th July 2011 – one of Bowdon Club's oldest members both in age and also in years of membership. Eric was an excellent croquet player who was almost certainly one of the last to play side style but which – in his prime – did not prevent him from being a formidable opponent. If my memory serves me correctly, Eric's handicap went as low as scratch.

Together, with his sister Sheila, they were ardent fans of croquet, to the extent that they even arranged their holidays around visits to Australia and elsewhere in order to watch the MacRobertson Shield being played "down under". or wherever! When age and poor health prevented Eric playing, nonetheless, you would find him and Sheila coming to the Club each weekend (or whenever tournaments were being played) so that he could watch, enjoy and occasionally pass comment upon the state of play and how he would have done something different! A true supporter and fan of the game.

Eric helped the Club with many voluntary activities. He was a craftsman of quite extraordinary ability – something that many of you may not have appreciated unless you visited him at Sunrise – where he and Sheila resided in the last 15 months or so – and saw the artwork that he had made. Because of Eric's skills, he made or repaired tables and chairs and generally used his "services" to the Club's advantage – perhaps you've been sitting on one of Eric's wooden chairs in the past.

Eric and Sheila were inseparable and hence the delight to know that they were able to secure a "companion suite" at Sunrise when it became necessary for them to move from their Apartment at Silverdale in Altrincham. I know that Sheila and Eric conversed, cuddled and cried in each other's arms shortly before his passing and her brother's loss will be a great blow to her – as it will be to the Club. One half of a remarkable duo has passed on and it means that we are slowly heading towards the close of another era. Eric was the epitome of a bygone age when manners, values and respect were paramount.

He will be sorely missed and may he now rest in peace.
Mike Sandler

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Club News

MIDLANDS GOLF CROQUET CHAMPIONSHIPS AT KENILWORTH

By Adrian Morris

As part of the annual Kenilworth Festival, Kenilworth Croquet club invite Midland clubs to compete for the Golf Croquet Kenilworth Festival Trophy. This is always an enjoyable day with a convivial lunch in the clubhouse.

As we have only two lawns, we are constrained for space, but this year six clubs were represented, playing doubles, all play all. Kenilworth, represented by Adrian Morris and Derek Fairburn, finished fourth with victories over Woodhall Spa from Lincolnshire and Himley (West Midlands). The Derbyshire team from Bakewell were third. Stuart Smith and John Guy, the Broadwas team from Worcestershire, took the trophy with five wins. The Edgbaston team of Nick Hyne and Paddy Heath were second.

Adding extra spice to the day, Barry Keen, Chairman of the Croquet Association, arrived to watch some of the play and over lunch was able to discuss some of his plans for the future of croquet. A lively discussion ensued.

The event was originally instigated to help publicity for the Club's Open Day the following week and again this was a successful event, with five new members joining on the day. Kenilworth has now had to close membership for this year and we are starting a waiting list!



ALL SIX TEAMS WITH BARRY KEEN, CHAIRMAN OF THE CROQUET ASSOCIATION HOLDING THE TROPHY.



MARY AND JASPER WITH SCC MEMBER JOHN SMALL

CROQUET MASTER CLASS AT SWINDON'S FFORDE FFIESTA

By Mary Bedells

'The klaxon went off and the game started with renewed aggression. Biffo whacked the yellow ball in the direction of the up-end hoop and hit the Whackers' ball. Warg took the roquet. With an expert swing the opponent's ball tumbled into the Italian sunken garden, and ours sailed straight as a die over the rhododendrons; a distant clack was mirrored by a roar from the crowd, and I knew the ball had been intercepted by Grunk and taken through a hoop.' Doesn't sound like any game of croquet you've ever played, does it? But it is 'extreme croquet' as described by Jasper fforde in his Thursday Next series of books about an alternative Swindon, where croquet is the national game, the Crimean War still rages, Wales is an enemy republic and the heroine (Thursday) can travel between the 'real' and fictional worlds. These books are enjoyed by hundreds of people world-wide, and every year about 80 of them gather in Swindon for the 'fforde ffiesta' to celebrate Jasper and his books. If you haven't read them, give them a try. They are a bit like Marmite – you'll love them or hate them. The first is called 'The Eyre Affair'. Try it and go on from there.

As the books feature croquet I contacted the ffiesta organisers and asked if Swindon Croquet Club could be involved. They welcomed us with open arms and we arranged to give a 'master class' on a piece of fairly rough parkland adjacent to the event hotel. In practice this turned out to be a small bit of coaching and a few games of golf croquet, which were much enjoyed by all the participants, many of whom arrived in fancy dress, and accompanied by toy dodos. (Dodos have been re-engineered and are kept as pets in the books.) The author Jasper is a keen croquet fan, playing garden croquet regularly and spectating and playing all over the world. I distributed leaflets about the Croquet Association to all players, who came from all over the country, and indeed some from the US. There was also an advert in the event's programme, encouraging people, if they had enjoyed their taster session, to contact a local club with a view to taking up the game. I should be very interested to hear if any clubs gain new members because of this initiative. Please let me know via the Gazette.

CHESTER CROQUET CLUB

CLUB FOCUS FEATURE



GRAND OPENING OF NEW PAVILION IN WESTMINSTER PARK

By David Guyton

Chester Croquet Club and members of the bowls clubs enjoyed a gala opening of the new croquet and bowls pavilion in Westminster Park on 9th July. Guests at the opening included the Lord Mayor of Chester, Councillor Eleanor Johnson, and her Consort, Derek Johnson, and the Chairman of the Croquet Association, Barry Keen, who performed the opening ceremony. Also present were the MP for Chester, Stephen Mosley, and Councillors for the local wards, Razia Daniels and Neil Sullivan for Handbridge Park, and Alex Tate for Lache. The former Councillor for the old ward of Westminster Park, Richard Short, was unable to be present as he was away on holiday, but his interest in Westminster Park and support for the new pavilion over many years have been greatly appreciated. Among other guests were David Barrett, the Chairman of the North West Federation of Croquet Clubs, and Allan Stobie and Norman Trott representing the Friends of Westminster Park. Members of Chester Croquet Club were also delighted to welcome Margaret Povey who was one of the founder members of Chester Croquet Club when it was formed in 1977.

Introducing the guests, the Chairman of Chester Croquet Club, David Guyton, recalled that the original croquet and bowls pavilion in Westminster Park was destroyed by arson fifteen years ago in 1996 and since then the clubs have been

DAVID GUYTON, CHAIRMAN OF CHESTER CROQUET CLUB, (CENTRE) SPEAKING AT THE OPENING OF THE NEW CROQUET AND BOWLS PAVILION WITH THE LORD MAYOR OF CHESTER AND HER CONSORT (RIGHT) AND BARRY KEEN, CHAIRMAN OF THE CROQUET ASSOCIATION, (LEFT) WHO PERFORMED THE OPENING CEREMONY

using a temporary and rather cramped Portakabin. The new pavilion installed by Cheshire West and Chester Council with support from the Croquet Association, the NW Federation, Deelux Kitchens on behalf of the bowls clubs, and an earlier grant from the National Lottery *Awards for All* represents a tremendous improvement and is another much appreciated addition to the excellent community recreation facilities offered by Westminster Park.

Barry Keen formally opened the pavilion by cutting a multi-coloured tape representing the four primary colours of the game of croquet: blue, red, black and yellow. After cutting the tape, he then presented the Chairman of Chester Croquet Club with the Apps Heley Award which is granted by the Croquet Association every other year to the club which has achieved the greatest progress. David Guyton was pleased to accept the cup on behalf of the club and thanked the many members and volunteers who had contributed to the successful development of the club from modest beginnings to the large and active club that it now was, with four full lawns and a new clubhouse. After the opening, members and guests enjoyed a glass of champagne and tea and cakes provided by members, and many took advantage of a fine summer afternoon to have a game of croquet on the lawns which were looking lush and green after rain during the previous week.

Club News

KING FOR A (ST. GEORGE'S) DAY AT EDGBASTON CROQUET CLUB 23RD APRIL 2011

by Ian Slater

The treeline at Edgbaston's World Championship-holding grounds has been looking rather different of late, with a gap like a ten-year-old's teeth where our friend the Old Ash used to stand. Believed by some to have been planted by a descendant of Richard Coeur de Lion (*mais qui peut dire?*), this mighty monument had become riddled and raddled and was possibly in danger of falling down. Some of us know the feeling! Professional advice was that Something Must Be Done. A bit of a shame, that, for many have been the balmy evenings when, at the end of a hot day's AC/GC, members have speculated on how many mallet handles could be made from the volume of wood – "More than the number of Astras in the observable University Car Park" quipped one player, apparently inspired by Merlot the Magician. And so it was that a team of eminent surgeons (why are they always 'eminent'?) arrived to perform the tree-age. Options seemed to be: chop it down or dig it up,



LONG
LIVE
GOOD
KING
RICHARD!

when someone had the bright idea of carving the bottom six feet into a throne. Huzzah! No sooner a word than a chainsaw! To inaugurate its use and find a *Roi* or *Reine* to be enthroned, a delightful afternoon's competition was held – a series of short, eliminating GC rounds followed by a penalty shoot-out. The unambiguous and popular victor, who swept all before him, was Sir Richard de Hardd-Wyкке (pictured, ennobled) whom all agreed made a wonderful King For A (very enjoyable) Day. The throne remains, and long may it do so. With a cosy lining, it will make an excellent observation post for Harry and Shirley's little dog, Jimmy. Ruff! Bark! Ruff! Bark!



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The Introduction of Croquet to England

By a Jersey Sleuth

DM C Pritchard in *The History of Croquet* mentions that Dr. Prior writes in his book *Notes on Croquet* “one thing only is certain; it is from Ireland that croquet came to England and it was on the lawn of the late Lord Lonsdale that it was first played in this country”. He then goes on to say “this statement has been slavishly copied into book after book. Once a fact gets into print it is preserved like a fly in amber, and the more it is repeated the more axiomatic it becomes; one man’s opinion becomes an established authority”. He continues, saying “if pressed for an answer, this writer would not be prepared to go further than to state that a game resembling croquet, possibly of foreign origin, existed in Ireland perhaps as early as the 1830s and was thence introduced into England by a person or persons unknown about 1851”.

It seems that little or no consideration has been given to the possibility of the game having been introduced into England from another source. Yet there is a good case to support the possibility that it was introduced to England from the Channel Islands or, as they are also known, les Îles Anglo-Normandes, either Guernsey or Jersey. Given the close relationship between the les Îles Anglo-Normandes, very much closer than any such between Ireland and France, it does not seem to be beyond the bounds of possibility that it was introduced to the islands before it arrived in Ireland, though no evidence can be found to support this other than the close proximity of the islands to France and the close family ties. Many islanders today still have relatives living in France and many can trace their roots back to ancestors living there, principally in Normandy or Brittany.

The Guernsey Lawn Tennis & Croquet Club was formed in 1857. As tennis was not patented by Major Wingfield till 1874, the club was solely a croquet club – making it the first croquet club to be formed in the world (the Oatlands Croquet Club in Ireland was not formed till 1858) For the club to have been formed the game must have been well known and widely played to

a set of rules by a number of people some time before this date. This raises the question of when the game was first introduced to Guernsey and by whom. Unfortunately nothing has been found to enlighten us on this matter. In Jersey the game did not develop as rapidly and it was not until 1866 that not one but two clubs were formed (in an island that had a population of just 56,000).

It is possible that the game was introduced to the islands by the French relatives of islanders or immigrants – or by the ‘proscrits’ coming to the islands to avoid political persecution in France. It is worth mentioning that when Victor Hugo arrived in Jersey on 5th August 1852 he was greeted by his wife and daughter as well as some sixty ‘proscrits’ already living there. By whatever means the game was introduced to the islands, it would have been a much easier and quicker journey than that to Ireland. The possible introduction of the game from the islands to England poses no difficulty. DMC Pritchard in his book says that “so croquet came to England in about 1851”. Given that the Guernsey club was formed in 1857 it must have been played some time before that – as in Jersey although the clubs there were formed later – and as many Guernsey and Jersey families had sons and daughters and other family members living in England it is quite plausible to think that it was introduced there by them. Furthermore a strong link has always existed between the Lieutenant-Governors of the islands (the first president of the Caesarean Archery & Croquet Club in Jersey was Major-General Burke-Cuppage) and the army garrison stationed on duty. A British garrison was regularly stationed in the islands and officers of the regiment doing their tour of duty were given concessionary rates of membership; it is quite possible that on returning home they may have introduced the game to family and friends.

Though no evidence has been found to substantiate the above claims the accepted belief that the game was introduced from France to Ireland and thence to England is based more on hearsay than proof. The possibility that it was introduced from France to the Channel Islands and thence to England is a distinct possibility and ought to be given some credibility. *RS*

BELVOIR BAY ON HERM, GUERNSEY. COULD CROQUET HAVE COME TO ENGLAND VIA THE CHANNEL ISLANDS?

Championship News

SOLOMON TROPHY 2011 USA BEAT GB 11-6 TO RETAIN THE TROPHY

Report by Phil Cordingley

The following teams represented Great Britain and the USA in the Solomon Trophy at the Hamptworth Golf & Country Club (Salisbury) Tuesday 28 June to Friday 1 July 2011:

GB Ian Burrige, Tony Le Moignan, Ian Lines, David Maugham, Stephen Mulliner (Captain), Samir Patel.

USA Jim Bast, Doug Grimsley, Danny Huneycutt (Captain), Chris Patmore, Ben Rothman, Jeff Soo.

Johnny Mitchell of the USCA put out the following press-release about the event in June:

'USA LOOKS TO UPSET GREAT BRITAIN FOR THE SECOND TIME

The USA Croquet Team Looks For its Second Straight Win Against The Formidable Great Britain Team for the Solomon Trophy

The USA team will be trying to defeat Great Britain again to retain the Solomon Trophy. The trophy, named for English croquet legend John Solomon, was first played in 1988 as a test match between the two countries. Great Britain had dominated the series by winning seventeen times until that streak ended when the USA pulled off their first victory in 2009. This will be their first meeting since that USA victory. A test match is a contest between two, six player teams that is composed of both singles and doubles play. In total, 21 best-of-three matches are played over a four-day period. Great Britain has dominated match play for decades on the world stage; however the USA has made great strides over the past few years and is becoming a serious threat. A USCA committee chooses the six-man team that will represent the USA.'

And so the stage was set...

After three days' play and with the overnight score standing at 8-4 to the USA, on the final day there were a possible six second-round singles rubbers to play, two pegged-down singles and one doubles to finish. USA won two of the second-round singles and a resumed first-round singles to make the score an unassailable 11-6 retaining the Solomon trophy which they had won for the first time in 2009. The remaining four rubbers remain unfinished.



ROUND 1 DOUBLES

GB		USA	SCORES
Burrige & Maugham	beat	Patmore & Soo	+15, +5tp (M)
Le Moignan & Mulliner	beat	Grimsley & Rothman	-26tp (R), +3tp (M), +1
Lines & Patel	lost to	Bast & Huneycutt	-5, +17, +8

ROUND 2 DOUBLES

GB		USA	SCORES
Burrige & Maugham	level	Bast & Huneycutt	-18tp (B), +17
Le Moignan & Mulliner	lost to	Patmore & Soo	-26tp (P), +21tp (M), -22
Lines & Patel	lost to	Grimsley & Rothman	-1, -17

ROUND 3 SINGLES

GB		USA	SCORES
Mulliner	lost to	Huneycutt	-2, -4
Maugham	level	Rothman	+17, -14
Patel	beat	Grimsley	+5TP, +10
Le Moignan	lost to	Patmore	-3, -15
Lines	beat	Soo	+19, -17, +3
Burrige	lost to	Bast	-2, -4

ROUND 4 DOUBLES

GB		USA	SCORES
Burrige & Maugham	lost to	Grimsley & Rothman	-16, -14
Le Moignan & Mulliner	lost to	Bast & Huneycutt	-3, -6
Lines & Patel	lost to	Patmore & Soo	-15, -3

ROUND 5 SINGLES

GB		USA	SCORES
Mulliner	lost to	Rothman	-13, -14
Maugham	beat	Huneycutt	+14TP, +3
Patel	level	Patmore	+7, -4
Le Moignan	level	Grimsley	-3, -11
Lines	lost to	Bast	-25, -3
Burrige	beat	Soo	+17, +15





THE VICTORIOUS ENGLAND TEAM, LEFT TO RIGHT: IAN LINES, DAVID MAUGHAM (CAPT.), DAVE KIBBLE, SAMIR PATEL, MARCUS EVANS

HOME INTERNATIONALS

18–19 JUNE AT HEATON PARK

Report by Ian Lines

England completed a run of eleven consecutive victories at the 32nd Home Internationals between England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales, which this year were played at Heaton Park. Each player played a best-of-three against each equivalent player in the other teams.

- 1st England (3 match wins)
- 2nd Ireland (2 match wins)
- 3rd Scotland (1 match win)
- 4th Wales (no match wins)

Many thanks were owed to Bury Croquet Club for kindly hosting the event at Heaton Park (especially to Pat and her team of helpers for all the excellent catering), to Barbara and Geoff Young for organising everything over the weekend and to Paul Rigge for setting the hoops and providing the bacon butties.

Teams (alphabetical order):

England Marcus Evans, Dave Kibble, David Maugham (C), Ian Lines, Samir Patel

Ireland Ed Cunningham, Patsy Fitzgerald, Andrew Johnston, Kieran Murphy, Simon Williams

Scotland James Hopgood, David Magee, Campbell Morrison, Martin Murray, Martin Stephenson

Wales Ian Burrige (C), John Evans, Garry McElwain, David Walters, Chris Williams

ENGLAND vs IRELAND		SCORES	
David Maugham (-2)	beat	Andrew Johnston (-2)	+26tp, +22tp
Ian Lines (-2)	beat	Simon Williams (-1.5)	+26tp, +4
Samir Patel (-2.5)	lost to	Patsy Fitzgerald (-1.5)	-17tp, -17tp
Marcus Evans (-1.5)	lost to	Ed Cunningham (-1.5)	-12tp, -20
David Kibble (-0.5)	beat	Kieran Murphy (-0.5)	+16, -26tp, +24tp
England won 3–2			

SCOTLAND vs WALES		SCORES	
James Hopgood (-1.5)	beat	Ian Burrige (-1.5)	+26tp, +26
Martin Murray (-1)	beat	David Walters (-1.5)	+25, +24tp
Campbell Morrison (-0.5)	lost to	Chris Williams (-1.5)	+14, -26tp, -5
David Magee (-1)	lost to	John Evans (-1.5)	-21, -16
Martin Stephenson (+0.5)	beat	Garry McElwain (-0.5)	+13, +26
Scotland won 3–2			

ENGLAND vs WALES		SCORES	
David Maugham	beat	Ian Burrige	+16tp, +19tp
Ian Lines	beat	David Walters	+15, +6tp
Samir Patel	beat	Chris Williams	-26, +23tp, +17
Marcus Evans	beat	John Evans	+23tp, +17
David Kibble	lost to	Garry McElwain	-17, -12
England won 4–1			

IRELAND vs SCOTLAND		SCORES	
Andrew Johnston	lost to	James Hopgood	-26tp, +11tp, -17
Simon Williams	beat	Martin Murray	+17tp, +11tpo
Patsy Fitzgerald	lost to	Campbell Morrison	+19tp, -26, -17tp
Ed Cunningham	beat	David Magee	+25, -24, +17tp
Kieran Murphy	beat	Martin Stephenson	+26, +19
Ireland won 3–2			

ENGLAND vs SCOTLAND		SCORES	
David Maugham	beat	James Hopgood	+17tp, +26tp
Ian Lines	lost to	Martin Murray	-16tp, -17tp
Samir Patel	beat	Campbell Morrison	+25tp, +17tp
Marcus Evans	beat	David Magee	-1, +14, +26tp
David Kibble	beat	Martin Stephenson	+26tp, +17
England won 4–1			

IRELAND vs WALES		SCORES	
Andrew Johnston	beat	Ian Burrige	+10, +17tp
Simon Williams	beat	David Walters	+26tp, +16tp
Patsy Fitzgerald	lost to	Chris Williams	-16, -25tp
Ed Cunningham	beat	John Evans	+26tp, +26stp
Kieran Murphy	beat	Garry McElwain	+26tp, +26tp
Ireland won 4–1			

Championship News

2011 INTER COUNTIES CHAMPIONSHIP

28–31 MAY AT SOUTHWICK & COMPTON

Report by Sue Mackay

Somerset won the 97th Inter Counties Championship, retaining the trophy with a 100% record of ten match wins, one better than last year. Their team of Kristian Chambers, Ed Duckworth, Marcus Evans, Jim Field, David Goacher (c) and Roger Tribe proved too good even for Nottinghamshire, who had started the tournament with four straight 3-0 wins and whose only loss was 1-2 to Somerset. The top Nottingham pair of James Death and Patrick Hort remained unbeaten throughout the tournament, despite a scare against bottom-of-the-table Sussex in their last match. Somerset team captain David Goacher dedicated their win to Roger Jenkins, a previous stalwart of their team, who had suffered a relapse of a spinal abscess and been re-admitted to hospital. The trophy was presented by Colin Irwin, standing in for John Solomon, who was unable to attend because his wife was unwell.

In a first for the Counties, both the First Division and Second Division champions finished the tournament with 10 wins out of 10. The Second Division was won by Essex, who proved that their brief exit from Division One was a mere blip. Their team of Robert and Susan Fulford, Michael Heap (c), Jonathan Hills, Nick Steiner, Jack Wicks and Guy Willard played superbly, and provided some of the most fascinating games for the spectator. Robert Fulford played throughout at third pairing with his wife Susan, who is a 22 handicap with almost no croquet experience. Interesting peeling turns from Robert were commonplace, and the pair won most of their games. In one finish, having accidentally jawssed the peelee in rover, Robert jumped rover himself, set up a posthumous rush peel with a cannon and ended up with a perfect rush to the peg. Simple!

Essex thus won promotion back to the First Division, along with the Channel Islands and Gloucestershire, who finished on 8 and 7 match wins respectively (though both won 21 games). It was good to see Matt Burrow making a return for the Channel Islands, who now have a very strong team. Sussex, on the other hand, were without Rutger Beijderwellen and Ian Vincent, and Dorset were without Pete and Dave Trimmer. Both teams struggled in the First Division and were duly relegated, with Sussex failing to win a match and Dorset's only win coming against Sussex. The third relegation spot, however, was still in doubt as the final day started, with several teams in contention, even those on 5 wins who had thought themselves safe. Surrey were vulnerable, as they had a bye in the final round and were only on four wins, with their last match against Nottinghamshire. They had Stephen Mulliner playing for them on Tuesday, however, and the score fairly rapidly became 1-1.

The deciding match between Richard Huxley and Gary Bennett (Notts) and Don Beck and George Noble (Surrey) ended in a golden hoop situation with both teams on 4-back and 1-back when time was called, but eventually Notts won +1T. Surrey's one game win was enough to keep them up, however, and in the end the relegation battle came down to the final match between Lancashire and Middlesex – whichever team lost would be relegated. Bob Burnett, playing in his last Counties, pegged out to put Lancashire 1-0 up, and shortly afterwards the Middlesex pairing of Gabrielle Higgins and Eugene Chang managed to level the score. All now rested on the final game, which both sides seemed determined to lose. As time was called Middlesex was on penult and rover and Lancashire was on 4-back and peg, but David Openshaw managed to peg himself out to keep Lancashire in Division One by the proverbial +1T. Warwickshire won the wooden spoon this year, with only one match win. There were a few comments that Sam Tudor might have been reduced to receiving advice, as he was seen to be playing at one stage with his one year old son Cadwallader strapped to his back. Similar light hearted claims were made on the side lines by Nottingham in their match against Surrey, when toddler Edward Patel started rushing around after his Dad, pointing very determinedly to the balls he was supposed to play, though they did ask Samir to replace a ball on the yard line that had been 'nudged' a few feet nearer by the ever helpful Edward!

There was a problem starting a game on Saturday after tea on lawn 7 at Southwick, because one of the afternoon games had not finished. There was a long impasse between Dave Mundy of Gloucestershire and Rod Ashwell of Yorkshire. Both were on 4-back, with the other two balls pegged out, and unfortunately Colin Irwin, the ROT, had left. Manager Chris Williams marched onto the lawn and told the players that something would have to be done to break the impasse, because the next game needed to start. In the meantime the match which was due to go on that lawn was moved to the spare slot on lawn 10. The impasse was quickly broken, but amusingly the match which had been moved got held up by the double bankers and could have started on the 'proper' lawn after all with only a slight delay.

All three David Nicholsons were playing at Southwick on Tuesday, playing for Dorset, Hampshire and Lancashire, the latter playing as usual as Dave Nick. Martin Burger and Joe King were also playing in their famed Burger King pairing for Berks/Oxon. They won 4 out of 7 with scores of +2, +1, +1, +1 including two golden hoops and two one ball endings.

The first day was bitterly cold and windy and was summed up by Samir Patel's posting to the Nottingham List: "Some



WINNING SOMERSET TEAM, LEFT TO RIGHT: KRISTIAN CHAMBERS, MARCUS EVANS, DAVID GOÄCHER, ROGER TRIBE, ED DUCKWORTH, JIM FIELD

chaps won. Some chaps lost. All chaps got cold” Dean Bennison did not exchange his bowler hat for his Stetson (a sure sign of sunshine at the Counties) until the final day, and the wind was so strong on the first day that the Lancashire team decided to abandon their usual game of pitch and putt during their bye. Having hit a bus and a car on their previous outings it was decided they would be putting the public too much at risk. Manager Chris Williams was wearing his CA Archivist hat and was going round trying

to confirm a list of CA Silver Medal winners to go on the CA website’s Roll of Honour. In the process at least a dozen players discovered for the first time that they were eligible to claim the medal! As usual the Counties was played in great spirit with a lot of banter and camaraderie and there were some truly appalling shots as well as some immaculate triples. The catering at both Southwick and Compton was superb as always, and the lawns were in an excellent condition. All in all it was a wonderful festival of croquet.

THE OPEN CHAMPIONSHIPS

REG BAMFORD WINS HIS 8TH OPEN AT SURBITON, 2–10 JULY

Report and photo by Samir Patel

Despite a new venue, a record number of entries, a decidedly international field, an experimental set of super-advanced laws, and a debut manager, Reg Bamford emerged from a familiar-sounding final, defeating Robert Fulford -18TP +26SXP +17 +26SXP. Having been displaced by the WCF Golf Croquet Championship, the Open Championships was held at a new venue this year. Surbiton Croquet Club, with seven lawns and a loaned bowls green took over the reins and found itself having to cope with a larger entry than any seen in recent years. Together with your reporter and debut manager making it up as he went along, anything could have happened...

Starting at noon on Saturday lunchtime proved too complex a task for many doubles pairs, with 25% of the field earning themselves yellow cards for a late arrival. Some quickly made up for it, with one of the last to start being the first to finish: Dave Maugham and Mark Avery beat Martin Murray & James Hopgood +26tp(A) +26tp(A). While most of the top pairings made their way safely through their first matches, former Champions Chris Farthing and Chris Patmore, found themselves on the end of a +26 +16 result in favour of Nigel Polhill and Christian Carter. Their charge was soon to be

blunted, however, by an impressive, and comprehensive, +26sxp(Ba) +26tp(Be) win by top seeds Reg Bamford and Rutger Beijderwellen.

The Burridge Swiss, this year with a mid-order twist to negate the “Swiss Gambit”, threw up some surprising early results and some players quickly found themselves in unfamiliar territory. Others who started with a 1/3 record may have been surprised to be joined by the likes of David Maugham, Stephen Mulliner and Keith Aiton, although all three recovered to qualify. There was even an attempt at niggling, with the Middlesex County side, apparently having taken offence to David Maugham’s claim to have “never lost to a TP from an Brit I’ve never heard of” during the Inter-County Championship. They turned up in Middlesex County shirts to cheer on said unknown Brit (Christian Carter) only to be disappointed with not only a Maugham + 18tp win, but also that he neither recalled such a comment nor even noticed the attempted niggling. In the final reckoning, 30 of the field of 48 qualified for the knockout, so there were few surprising casualties, although Semi-Finalist in the last World Championship Chris Farthing missed out as did Jack Wicks, who quickly reaching 4/5 couldn’t quite get that final result despite -2 and -4 scores in the last three rounds. Gabrielle Higgins had a good set of results, but couldn’t quite find that fifth win.

Championship News

The first round of the knockout draw pitted world ranked (at the allocation date) 10, Stephen Mulliner, against number 3, Paddy Chapman, although while we had to wait a day for that match, there was plenty to keep the crowd entertained. Danny Huneycutt was considered by some to be unfortunate not to be seeded, and may also have been disappointed with his draw. He did, however, dispatch Mark Avery +17tp -26tp +26tp in short-enough order to be able to watch his next opponents in what turned into the match of the first round:

World 109 Dave Kibble versus 2nd seed Robert Fulford. There was some history here – Dave had put Rob out of the Opens in 2005, following another win earlier that year in the final of the Championship of the West of England. This was their first match since then, and when word got around that Dave had embarked on a TPO in the third game, a crowd (or possibly vultures) soon arrived on the scene. However, while Dave did get control of the three-ball game, he missed his 4-back pioneer while on a winning break. This handed Rob an opportunity which, having in his words “got lucky”, he never looked like giving back. Robert Fulford +13tpo -17tp +50tp. Meanwhile on the adjacent lawn, David Goacher had taken game two against number 1 seed Reg Bamford and the colony dutifully migrated to watch him follow this up with a TPO of his own in game 3. Reg, however, didn't need the slice of luck that Rob had and kept control of the three-ball ending to win +24qp -18 +12otp.

In the delayed first-round match, Paddy Chapman (number 3 seed) dispatched Stephen Mulliner in the much anticipated, but I assume (because I can't remember anything about it) uneventful, match, but suffering from windy conditions promptly fell at the hands of Keith Aiton -26tp +23 +17tp.

Keith then continued his run with an unexpected win over David “the Beast” Maugham who found himself in the rare situation of not being able to buy a roquet, and had to resign himself to running the crèche. Members of the victorious US Solomon team had arrived with high expectations, but none won their first knockout match except Chris Patmore who has been drawn against fellow American Jim Bast, and ground out a +4 +24 win. Samir Patel, player manager, was a bit disappointed to have drawn himself against the runner up in the last World Championship and in the same

REG BAMFORD ON HIS
WAY TO HIS 8TH TITLE

quarter as the winner of that World Championship. Despite an error-free -17tp +26tp +26tp win over Ben Rothman (which put the last American out of the event just as the Stars and Stripes was extracted from the mechanism at the top of the flagpole where it had got stuck on July 4th), he then fell to an impressive performance and +17sxp +26sxp +26sxp result in favour of Reg Bamford in the Quarter Final.

So, as we progressed to the Semi-Finals, the many and numerous new and long-distance faces departed the scene. The top 2 seeds, having recovered from round 1 wobbles, never looked in danger and both won 3-1 (Reg Bamford beating James Death, and Robert Fulford beating Keith Aiton) and restoring what feels like the traditional Fulford v Bamford final, even though this was the first such final since 2007. With an overall Opens record of 4-4, this was expected to be a close encounter that was to start with the 100th ranking game between the two players. However, despite a rare mid-sextuple error, Reg continued the impressive form and shooting he had displayed throughout the event, and in the words of the two online commentators: “*Well played Reg. Two sextuples out of 3, and won every opening.*” (Andrew Gregory) and “*A very impressive performance.*” (Rob's former doubles partner, Chris Clarke).

In the doubles semi-finals, Rutger Beijderwellen and Reg Bamford had a +9 -26tp(E) +25 over Marcus Evans and Jamie Burch, while David Maugham and Mark Avery had a +17 +25tp(M) win over Robert Fulford and James Death. The final was, however, an error-strewn affair with Rutger and Reg triumphant over Dave and an illness-affected Mark +10 +18. Meanwhile the various plate events were continuing at pace. Jack Wicks had recovered from the disappointment of failing to qualify from the Swiss and looked on track to win both the Draw and Process before Danny Huneycutt staked a US claim to silverware by defeating Jack in the Draw final to set up a playoff against Jack which he also won +10tpo +26tp. Martin Murray and James Hopgood, claiming to be Scotland's #1 and #2 (but being coy about the order), responded to their rapid exit from the main event with a succession of TP(M) wins before succumbing to a rare three-tps-by-the-same-person-in-a-doubles-match win by last year's plate runners' up Ben Rothman and Brian Cumming +4tp(R) -8otp(R) +26tp(R).

Final congratulations to what may have been a new record seven players completing a sextuple in a single event – Danny Huneycutt, James Death, Mark Avery, Reg Bamford, Robert Fulford, Rutger Beijderwellen and Samir Patel – and also to Nick Parish who removed his status as the highest ranked player not to have completed a TP in the current ranking period. And finally, to Hamish McIntosh, who surprised everyone, and his opponents most of all, by quietly getting on with the task beating people before eventually succumbing to James Death (who went on to win the Z) in the second round of the knockout, and racking up his first tournament TP in the process.



SINGLES

Reg Bamford [1] vs David Goacher	Reg Bamford +24qp -18 +12tp (1)	Reg Bamford -19tp +17 +21sxp	Reg Bamford +17sxp +26sxp +26sxp (3)	Reg Bamford +26sxp +17tp -19tp +17tp (3)	Reg Bamford -18tp +26sxp +17 +26sxp (3)
Jeff Soo vs James Hopgood	James Hopgood +12tp +26tp				
	Ben Rothman [8=]	Samir Patel -17tp +26tp +26tp			
	Samir Patel [8=]				
Jamie Burch [4=] vs Robin Brown	Robin Brown +6 +26	Andrew Johnston +14tp -18tp +8tp (3)	James Death +5tpo +9tpo +17tp (3)		
Andrew Johnston vs Kevin Beard	Andrew Johnston -21 +17tp +17tp (3)				
Martin French vs Hamish McIntosh	Hamish McIntosh +23 -4 +8	James Death +25 +19tp			
Miranda Morgan vs James Death [4=]	James Death +26tp +17				
Paddy Chapman [3] vs Stephen Mulliner	Paddy Chapman -26tp +14tp +18tp	Keith Aiton -26tp +23 +17tp	Keith Aiton +26tp +19tp -24tp +17 (3)		
Brian Cumming vs Keith Aiton	Keith Aiton +26tp +25				
Tim Wilkins vs Dennis Bulloch	Dennis Bulloch +21tp +26tp	David Maugham +6 +9tpo			
Nick Parish vs David Maugham [6=]	David Maugham +10tp +26tp				
Rutger Beijderwellen [6=] vs Jeff Dawson	Rutger Beijderwellen +10 +26tp (3)	Rutger Beijderwellen +13tp +26qp	Robert Fulford +16qp +17qp +12oqp (3)		
Chris Patmore vs Jim Bast	Chris Patmore +4 +24				
Danny Huneycutt vs Mark Avery	Danny Huneycutt +17tp -26tp +26tp	Robert Fulford +22tp +13tpo			
Dave Kibble vs Robert Fulford [2]	Robert Fulford +13tpo -17tp +5tp				

DOUBLES

	Rutger Beijderwellen & Reg Bamford [1]	Rutger Beijderwellen & Reg Bamford +26tp (Ba) +15	Rutger Beijderwellen & Reg Bamford +26sxp(Ba) +26sxp(Be)	Rutger Beijderwellen & Reg Bamford +9 -26tp(E) +25	Rutger Beijderwellen & Reg Bamford +10 +18
	David Goacher & Dave Kibble				
	Chris Patmore & Chris Farthing	Nigel Polhill & Christian Carter +26 +16			
	Nigel Polhill & Christian Carter				
	Martyn Prins & Duncan Hector	Marcus Evans & Jamie Burch +13 +13TP(E)	Marcus Evans & Jamie Burch +17 -3 +18tp(B)		
	Marcus Evans & Jamie Burch				
Samir Patel & Jeff Dawson vs Jarrod Coutts & Hamish McIntosh	Samir Patel & Jeff Dawson =15tp(P) +15	Paddy Chapman & Miranda Morgan +26tp(C) +13tpo(C)			
Brian Cumming & Ben Rothman vs Paddy Chapman & Miranda Morgan [4]	Paddy Chapman & Miranda Morgan +26tp(C) +17tp(C)				
	Mark Avery & David Maugham [3]	Mark Avery & David Maugham +26tp(A) +26tp(A)	Mark Avery & David Maugham -16tp(B) +3 +17tp(A)		
	Martin Murray & James Hopgood				
	Kevin Beard & Jeff Soo	Kevin Beard & Jeff Soo +9 -13tp(M) +12			
	Stephen Mulliner & Keith Aiton				
Louise Bradforth & Graham Gale vs Ian Vincent & George Noble	Louise Bradforth & Graham Gale +17 +4	Louise Bradforth & Graham Gale +9 +5(t)	Robert Fulford & James Death +6tpo(D) +26tp(F)	Mark Avery & David Maugham +17 +25tp(M)	
Martin Stephenson & Campbell Morrison vs Nick Parish & Gabrielle Higgins	Martin Stephenson & Campbell Morrison -10 +10 +2				
	Jim Bast & Danny Huneycutt	Robert Fulford & James Death +17tp(D) +22tp(D)			
	Robert Fulford & James Death [2]				

Tournament Round-up

PENDLE & CRAVEN B LEVEL 21–22 MAY

Report by Fergus McInnes

This year's Pendle & Craven B-Level weekend was planned as a Swiss, with all the games in the first four rounds defined in advance, but the plan was disarranged when one of the 15 entrants had to withdraw. The tournament therefore proceeded with only 14 players – the missing player's opponent, David Barrett, having his first game against Peter McDermott, who had had a bye in the original schedule and turned up for 11am. There was a further slight hitch because the manager failed to spot the most elegant solution to the rescheduling problem, namely to treat the 11am game as part of the first round. This meant that Peter and David were left without opponents in the second round when they had finished their game, and had to wait until another game finished. From that point on, however, everything ran more smoothly, and the only disruption came from the weather, which was windy with squally showers especially on Sunday morning.

Through all this Peter Wilson sailed serenely winning game after game, and he ended up with the trophy and an unbeaten record (6/6). Close behind him was Phill Scarr, with 6/7, followed by Matt Holmes on 5/7. Most of the others also got six or seven games, and everyone won at least one. Also worth mentioning are the catering, up to the usual high standard, and the lawns, which have been improving steadily over the past few years and were playing very nicely. As someone commented, John Beech – in whose memory the lawns are named – would have been delighted to see them.

COLCHESTER SPRING HANDICAP 3–5 JUNE

Report by David Haslam

The Colchester Spring Weekend Handicap event was oversubscribed and an unusually strong field of 16 players enjoyed the lush green of the splendidly maintained Colchester lawns, these benefiting from the new irrigation system. The players included five with handicaps of 2.5 or less with the highest on 16. Some well-balanced contests emerged and at the end of the first day it was Jonathan Toye and Nick Steiner sharing the lead, each with 2 wins from 2. Other competitors not far behind were Neil Chalmers, Terrey Sparks and Colin Hemming.

And so day two started, with more sunshine and more quality play from Nick and Jonathan. Mike Bowser came strong and enjoyed third place and with the prospect of games against the two leaders in the offing but his challenge was impaired when Colin Hemming put a spoke in the works. As more of the challengers fell by the wayside it was Nick Steiner who led at the start of the final day and still unbeaten after 5 games. Jonathan Toye showed his mettle but had succumbed to Nick leaving him second and Mike Bowser third. The final day started with Nick ending Mike's challenge and then winning his final match against Terry Mahoney. Seven out of seven!! Jonathan Toye lost his final match to Mike Bowser and so the overall result was 1st Nick Steiner, 2nd Jonathan Toye, and 3rd Mike Bowser.

BOWDON ADVANCED 4–5 JUNE *Report by Ian Lines*

The Bowdon Advanced weekend was won by Paddy Chapman (NZ) who beat David Maugham in the final (+12tpo, +26tp, -26tp, +26tp). Paddy earns a CA Silver Medal for the first time he's got to the final of a 16 player knockout! The consolation Egyptian Event was won by James Hopgood, who beat Andrew Winn in a final deciding game. The Peterson Trophy was presented to Paddy by Martin Granger Brown, and thanks were recorded to Alan Mayne for the fantastic lawns, Barry Keen for setting the hoops so well, and to John Saxby and his team of helpers who provided the magnificent catering. The Bowdon lawns on Saturday morning were probably the best they've been for an advanced event in recent years, running at about 12.5 Plummers in the sunshine, and with hoops set somewhere between a 1/64" and a tight 1/32" there was a reasonable level of interactivity in most games. Even David Maugham came off the lawn smiling after his first

game saying they were probably the most ideal conditions he'd played in since the Worlds in Florida. There weren't any major surprises in the main event, though in the second round Andrew had a finishing turn against David, as did Debbie against Paddy, and Miranda had a good win against James. Unfortunately, overnight rain made the lawns and hoops relatively easy on Sunday for the Final.



PADDY CHAPMAN BEING
CONGRATULATED BY MARTIN GRANGER
BROWN OF THE BOWDON CLUB



LEFT TO RIGHT; NICK ARCHER (WATFORD), KEN WHEELER (HUNSTANTON PRESIDENT AND TOURNAMENT MANAGER), NICK MOUNFIELD, IAN MANTLE AND DUNCAN HECTOR (ALL FROM LETCHWORTH). PHOTO BY TERRY SPARKS

TYNESIDE MID-WEEK HANDICAP 7-9 JUNE

Report by Derek Trotman

Having had a maximum entry for several years, it was disappointing that the 2011 entry for the Tyneside mid-week Handicap Tournament was limited to eight players. The Tournament was therefore run as an American with the seven rounds spread over three days. The very dry conditions experienced in the north-east this year resulted in fast lawns which, on a random type speed test, suggested a speed of 12 to 13 seconds. Although this initially caused problems for some of the players, the ladies appeared to cope with the conditions far better than the men. However, some short, sharp rain showers quietened the courts for the last two days of play. Patricia Duke Cox was in great form throughout the Tournament and managed to remain unbeaten, which earned her not only the Trophy but also a handicap reduction from 8 to 6. Derek Old might have caused her some problems if he hadn't brought his heavy mallet to the party and spent the first day retrieving his ball and placing it on the yard line. He was unbeaten over days two and three and, using his favourite mallet, finished runner-up.

rounds had been played. The three leading teams then qualified for a 'Gold Medal Round' and played two doubles games each – using different pairs to round one if desired. The GMR teams carried forward a point for each of their games won in the first block, and were awarded two points for a win in the GMR. The winners would be the team with the most points. This all looked somewhat complicated at first glance, but it soon became clear after Ken Wheeler's briefing, and all players soon understood and took to the format well – remarking on its obvious success at the end of the day. The teams comprised the following – first named were the Captains: **Bedfordshire** John Cundell, David Ball, Malcolm Kirby, John Thorp; **Essex** Dick Strover, Judith Hands, Peter Kenward, Paul Strover; **Hertfordshire** Nick Mounfield, Nick Archer, Duncan Hector, Ian Mantle; **Norfolk** Timothy Race, Tony Lee, Jeff Race, David Thirtle-Watts; **Suffolk** Mike Percival, Alan Plested, John Robinette, Ken Wheeler; **EACF** Terrey Sparks, Simon Carter, Pat Dawson, Patricia Duke-Cox.

The Hunstanton lawns were in immaculate condition and the weather was sunny, if a little chilly, but the promised rain kept away. The first three rounds took from 10am until lunch and it soon became apparent that the team on excellent form was Hertfordshire, closely matched by the EACF and Suffolk teams. In the afternoon session these three teams consolidated their positions and finished the block by winning four games for Hertfordshire, with EACF and Suffolk taking three. The other three teams certainly didn't give away points easily – a large percentage of the games went to the 13th hoop and could have gone either way. Essex were fourth, pipping Bedfordshire on game wins, and Norfolk were sixth. All members gave their utmost for their county. So, after a short break the GMR started with all three teams playing their two doubles pairings. Hertfordshire now moved up a gear and the pairings of Duncan Hector & Nick Mounfield and Ian Mantle & Nick Archer won convincing games against the EACF and Suffolk, whilst Suffolk beat the EACF – so the overall result was a win for Hertfordshire, with Suffolk second and the EACF third. Terrey Sparks (EACF Secretary), the force behind the idea of this tournament, expressed his thanks to all who made the day such a success: the team captains and players, the members of Hunstanton CC who worked hard all day, the catering ladies, and Hunstanton President Ken Wheeler for conceiving the format, managing the day and finally presenting the fine shield and commemorative plaques to the successful Hertfordshire team led by Letchworth's Nick Mounfield – supported by Duncan Hector and Ian Mantle from Letchworth, and Watford's Nick Archer. All-in-all a very successful inaugural tournament – possibly the first such GC event organised by any Federation. The whole day was played with a fine and fair competitive spirit by all teams with very little work for the referee. Congratulations to all concerned. No doubt we will all be back for revenge next season so watch out Hertfordshire!

EACF GOLF CROQUET INTER-COUNTIES TOURNAMENT, HUNSTANTON 11 JUNE

Report by John Cundell

This tournament was the inaugural Golf Croquet team competition between the six counties comprising the East Anglian Croquet Federation. The teams from Bedfordshire, Essex, Hertfordshire, Norfolk, Suffolk – plus a team of players nominated as EACF Select, as unfortunately Cambridge was not able to field a team – were competing for the 'Ken Wheeler Shield' donated by the President of Hunstanton CC who also acted as the Tournament Manager. There were four players per team and the total aggregate handicap for each team was not less than 8 at the time of team entry. Ken Wheeler organised the competition to take place over a single day and included singles and doubles games for all players. All games were level play. The competition format was that each team played a match against each other over the first five rounds with a match comprising two singles games and one doubles. In the first round the team captains could elect to allocate players in any role (singles or doubles) irrespective of handicap. In the second round the singles/doubles roles were reversed, and in round three roles reverted to those of the first round. This continued until all five

Tournament Round-up

HAMPTWORTH ADVANCED 11–12 JUNE

Report by Kevin Carter

Nick Butler, in his first AC tournament for a year, won and collected a magnificent silver wine-cooler. Graham Gale was the runner-up. The inaugural running of this event marked yet another milestone in Hamptworth's rise to join the top echelon of clubs. The lawns were in good shape for the forthcoming Solomon Trophy. Run as a Swiss, the overnight leader was Nigel Polhill, on 4/4, with Graham Gale, Strat Liddiard and Nick Butler all on just one loss. However, on a rain-torn second day, which left three of the club's four lawns unplayable Nigel lost both his games and Nick won all three of his. As the rain lashed down ever harder, those for whom there was no space left to play also felt like winners – as they stayed in the bar playing Scrabble (Jonathan Lamb emerging as the impressive winner)! Mike Town won the peeling prize: a jar of the manager's strawberry jam.

BRISTOL B LEVEL WEEKEND 18–19 JUNE

Report by Hamish Hall

Rain, heavy at times, with gusting wind in the afternoon and evening, abated overnight, with Sunday generally sunny and quite hot at times. Slow-paced courts gradually dried out, but with firm hoops set at 1/16th, competitors found conditions quite testing. Entry was restricted to 12. Three seeded blocks of 4 proved popular with players, although the inevitable outcome of 3 players each with 2 wins was less satisfactory to the manager who had decreed that such an eventuality would be resolved with a 1-ball game, or shoot-out at the peg, depending on time. Excitement on Sunday morning was short-lived as Marian Hilton excelled with three strikes, setting a challenging target for Chris Donovan and Richard Williamson, who had to console himself with qualifying as the best runner-up. So Rosemary Gugan, holding the cup, with three wins played Marian, whilst a much improved Andrew Wise, also with three wins faced Richard – all Bristol players – in semi finals. Both games ended +1 on time, with Rosemary and Andrew scraping through. The remainder entered an Egyptian / Swiss, which allowed as many games as players wished. I am sure that Nigel Amos, with four wins will enjoyed the claret! The untimed final proved a dour match with neither player able to take command. Andrew seemed more intent not to lose, rather than win, giving Rosemary many chances to take the initiative, only to make uncharacteristic errors – grist to the mill for the armchair spectators! After four hours Barbara Evans was able to present the trophy to Andrew, who prevailed by +6.

CA ENGLAND VS CA IRELAND THE VERA MCWEENEY TROPHY, FYLDE CC 15–17 JULY

Report by Paul Rigge

The Vera McWeeney Trophy has been retained by this year's CA squad at Fylde CC. This was the 29th time that England has played Ireland, both having previously held the title fourteen times; England now having the bragging rights 15-14.

With the overnight score of 13-10 in our favour, it should have been an easy morning's work to secure the final point required for victory in the last round of doubles outstanding before the visitors left for the airport for their lunchtime flight. However they seemed to dominate most of the play and it appeared at times that only Irish players had turned up since they were occupying all three courts, indeed there was much speculation that if the three doubles went the wrong way, to level the score, the 'dead' singles game from Saturday would have to be played after lunch (Burnett vs Morrison). This proved unnecessary; with the final three scores all being secured in timed games. Final result 15-11 after some very nervy play with single-yard roquets being missed and wrong balls being played.

The weather was cold, windy, wet and miserable, just the opposite in fact of Fylde CC's hospitality, that was nothing short of superb; They acted as taxis from and to the airport. The club was bedecked with appropriate bunting and national flags. Local press came down for interviews and pictures that made both the front page and all of page 3 on Saturday (do not ask who modelled for the p3 shot! – no don't!). They billeted all the visitors with club members including feeding and watering them for the weekend. New solid friendships were made this weekend. The Irish were a delight and both teams played in excellent spirit.

The trophy is named after Vera Mahony later to become Vera McWeeney. She joined Maids hockey club in the 1920's and rapidly made herself known in Irish hockey circles being selected to play for Leinster in 1927 for the first time. She went on to become an Irish International, gaining her first cap in 1932, the same year as her first tennis title at Carrickmines! Her playing days in Maids were accompanied by some of the greatest successes the Club has known in its history. She was twice Leinster President from 1948-49 and again 1955-1956. She is the only person ever to hold that position twice.

She made a unique contribution to Irish sport, firstly as a multi-discipline athlete – as well as representing Ireland in hockey, she also represented them in tennis, croquet



JANE MORRISON, ALAN PIDCOCK (SOUTHPORT), BRIAN LEWIS (SOUTHPORT), ROBERT BARKLIE, BEN REEVES SMITH, BOB BURNETT (EX SOUTHPORT, NOW BRISTOL), JACK CLINGAN, MICHAEL O'SHAUGHNESSY, LEE HARTLEY (FYLDE), PETER WILSON (FYLDE), DAVID ROE (PENDLE & EARBY), NATHANIEL HEALY.

and squash; but after her playing days she was particularly instrumental in bringing publicity to women's involvement in sport through her reporting career. After her husband Arthur died in 1958 (he was a sports journalist) she started to report on a freelance basis for the Irish Independent, later moving to the Irish Times and she reported on women's hockey, women's tennis, badminton and squash. Her name is actually commemorated in the Vera McWeeney Shield, which was presented by the Irish Times in 1981, just after her death to the Leinster Indoor Under 21 Interprovincial Tournament as a tribute to her contribution to hockey in Ireland and by the Vera McWeeney Memorial Trophy, a splendid silver cigar

box mounted on a plinth for International Croquet between Ireland and the UK. a journalist she was always said very fair to up and coming players and if she ever had a criticism to make of their play, her comments were always finished in a very positive and constructive note.

She was very professional in her approach she made sure to watch everything that she reported on. Former international tennis player colleagues described her coverage of Wimbledon during the 1970's as brilliant. She also reported on all major tennis events in Fitzwilliam Lawn Tennis Club, then a bastion of male membership only. She is recalled fondly in Irish feminist circles for her no-nonsense approach to matters in the environs of Fitzwilliam. A report was reported after her death of an incident in Fitzwilliam when about to take a short cut through the men's changing room to get to a match, she was stopped. She told the steward that she had to get through and if that bothered anybody the steward was to tell them that she had seen better elsewhere.

Vera died in January 1980, typically with the coming week's sports fixtures marked in her diary.

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- Copy should reach the Editor before the 15th 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 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 Manager of the Croquet Association and not to the Editor.
 - The Croquet Gazette is printed by Billingham Press, Central Avenue, Billingham, Stockton on Tees.





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