

*The*

*Issue 378 February 2019*

# CROQUET

*Gazette*



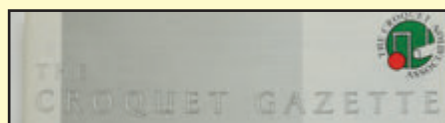
England call-up  
***The Biltonator***



# From our files

researched by Frances Colman

## 10 years ago - 2009



### Chairman's encouragement –

Did you make a New Year resolution? I hope you did and it was to participate as fully as possible in the events put on by the CA, your federation and clubs up and down the country . . . Now is the time to consult the Fixtures Book, recently delivered, and make those decisions to go out and enter competitions to meet up with old friends around the country - Patricia Duke-Cox.

~

### John Solomon on 'not pegging out' -

At the Pendle and Craven C class tournament last May I won my first game +2t and my next two both +1t. This put me in a semi-final, which I lost -1t. However, I managed to come third by winning the last game +1t. . . can anyone beat it, with +1t or -1t in every game?

Mark Miller (letter December, 2008).

~

How frustrating it must have been for Mark Miller to have played so many games and never to have pegged out. This must happen many times to middle and high-bisqued players.

There is surely a simple answer which I have long advocated. All games, except Championship events, should be played to 14 points.

We only have 6 hoops so why do we have to make them twice? Under advanced laws, with lifts at hoops 3 and 4, a triple peel presents considerable difficulty.

But the advantage is that no time limits are necessary as most games will finish in about 2 hours.

Many not-so-young players will not enter tournaments where they are required to play 3 games a day, each of 3.5 hours, probably over 10 hours of play a day.

With only 14 points you can, if you wish, 4 games a day and still get home for supper.

I would urge all managers not only to consider this, but to do it.

- John Solomon (letter February 2009)

~

### Bursary scheme gets green light-

A bursary scheme for juniors was approved in principle and should be operational this year . . .

- Ian Vincent. Hon.Sec. (Council report)

## 50 years ago - 1969



### Player and Club Awards –

The Apps Award for the most improved woman player of the year was given to Mrs.D.M.C.Prichard whose play, as shown at Devonshire Park, has made great strides.

The Award for the most improved man player was given to D.Himmens, whose handicap has come down from 12 to 4 ½ in this past season!

The Apps Award to a deserving club is given to Edinburgh, ahead of the other three Scottish clubs. They are hosting an open tournament on August 25th-30th and we have suggested that the Apps money is put towards the prize.

~

### Ladies' Field Cup to be re-introduced –

Owing to Roehampton Club holding no more C.A. Tournaments there are changes to the Calendar fixtures of more than usual interest.

One important event is that the Ladies' Field Cup is being played again this year.

The Council feels that there are enough good women players to make this feasible and the Chairman of the C.A. received a petition from some of these asking him to cancel the Ladies' Invitation and play the Ladies' Field. There will be eight players... and the venue will be Compton.

In the Men's and Women's Championship it has been decided that the women will play the best of three. All this is proof of the improvement of the standard of women's play – and very gratifying!

~

### CA Subscriptions rise –

There can be no associate who is not aware that the cost of living is constantly rising, and the C.A. is not immune from this phenomenon.

The present rate of subscriptions, levy and tribute were fixed in 1961, but time has overtaken us. The C.A. is now running at a loss and the gap will widen.

It is, therefore, with regret that the Council will propose at the A.G.M. in May that the rates of subscriptions shall be raised... tournament players should have their subscriptions raised from £2 10s. 0d. to £4 as from 1970. – S.M.C. Prichard (from his Chairman's report).

## 100 years ago - 1919



### Reinstatement of Associates -

Associates are informed that the Council of the C.A. have decided to take into consideration any applications for reinstatement from former Associates whose names stood on the books in 1914 and following years, on payment of the arrears of subscription and the subscription due for the year 1919.

~

### Bar to Military Cross awarded to Capt. G.L.Reckitt

The "London Gazette" of January 11th contained the following announcement:-  
"T/Capt. Geoffrey L. Reckitt, M.C. Royal Sussex Regiment.

For conspicuous gallantry during an attack. When units were in some confusion owing to the mist, on reaching the enemy's third line he walked along the front and re-organised his company.

"He afterwards carried out reconnaissance under heavy shell fire. Some days later he again carried out daring reconnaissances, and gained information of great value regarding the enemy. Throughout the operations his fearlessness and devotion to duty were most marked,"

~

**The Bournemouth Club** held, on four consecutive weeks, competitions in aid of the Royal Victoria and West Hants Hospital, and the result was very gratifying, over one hundred pounds being collected from entry fees, and the Club hopes with this to endow a cot at the cost of £105.

~

### Roehampton Club Emergency Voluntary Aid Committee -

The Committee wish to take this opportunity of again expressing their grateful thanks to all contributors who have so generously supported the work during the past four years.

– It is proposed to endow a bed in the Star and Garter Home in the name of the Roehampton Club.

This will cost £1,000. The balance of the E.V.A.C. fund will be put towards this object and it is hoped that all subscribers will kindly continue their subscriptions and donations until the full amount is obtained.



# Editorial

First and foremost in this Gazette issue, we remember (*below*) another of the 'croquet fallen' of the Great War, who missed out on our Remembrance front cover in November. The death of Lieut. T.W.C. Hastings-Irwin in October 1918 was not reported until some months later.

~

Our front cover this time features GC English National Singles Champion Richard Bilton, 'The Biltonator' to his peers, who has received an international call-up for the first time for England's inaugural test match with Spain. Many congratulations Richard.

~

Elsewhere in this issue, the important changes to the CA governance are covered in detail, and I encourage ALL members to please cast your vote online or by using the ballot paper included in these pages (reminding all Standard Members that you have a vote).

This Gazette carries some important announcements from the Handicap Committee, changes to the Tournament Regulations, a listing of all the GC Series qualifying events and news of a brand new competition - The GC Federations Shield; all this and more in this issue.

The lengths to which our historians go to accurately report croquet's early days never ceases to amaze. John Harris has done it again, this time on croquet in Scotland.

I have had to complete this Gazette whilst mid-tournament in South Africa which hasn't been ideal; but whilst late nights have taken their toll of my game results here, hopefully you will find this Gazette result is an interesting read.

This is the time of year for planning your tournaments diary and so good luck with that, and with your season as it unfolds.

## Chris Roberts

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The  
**CROQUET**  
Gazette



Issue 378 February 2019

**Front cover:** Richard 'The Biltonator' Bilton in action winning the English National Singles Championship (the Ascot Cup) at Sussex County CC (*photograph by Chris Roberts*).

**This page:**

Remembering Lieut. T.W.C. Hastings-Irwin.

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# Chairman's Column

As foreshadowed in the last edition, a Special General Meeting of CA members has been called for 30 March 2019.

The motion to be put to that meeting seeks members' approval for the changes to our Constitution that are needed to allow a new, smaller and directly elected Council to take over in October.

The details of this meeting and the motion proposed by Council are set out by the Honorary Secretary in this Gazette.

I do urge you to engage with this process because it is about you and the way that the CA works for you.

~

The change is an important part of our plan to improve the representation on the governing body of almost 5,000 of our members.

It also allows us to streamline our governance model in the interests of greater transparency and responsiveness.

The changes to the Constitution include a new and clearer distinction between the roles of the Council and the Executive Board (formerly the Management Committee).

Not only will this improve our decision making process but it will also remove some of the uncertainty currently felt by many members about how and where to raise issues and get answers.

We do want that to change and this proposal will make it clearer.

~

If the membership approves the change, the process of seeking nominations and

holding elections where necessary will take place during the summer.

The present Council recommends that they are replaced by 12 voting members of a new Council.

I encourage you to support their proposal on 30 March.

You can do this at the meeting or earlier with a postal or electronic vote if you prefer.

However, if you do have any questions or concerns do please email me at bowcott@hotmail.com.

**John Bowcott**



The October/November 2018 Gazette front cover paid tribute to our fallen of the Great War, with a reproduction of the Croquet Association's Roll of Honour, 100 years on.

Frances Colman's continued 'From our Files' research found this new addition in the Croquet Association Gazette of February 1919.

~ Another croquet player for us to remember ~

## Notice of a Special General Meeting

A Special General Meeting of the Croquet Association will take place at the Hurlingham Club on Saturday 30 March 2019 commencing at 11.15 a.m.

### AGENDA

1. Motion, proposed on behalf of the Council by John Bowcott (Chairman), seconded by John Dawson (Vice-Chairman):  
*"That the Constitution of the Croquet Association be amended as shown in <https://www.croquet.org.uk/?d=2252>"*

#### Notes to the Agenda

1. A clean version of the constitution with the proposed amendments applied can be found at <https://www.croquet.org.uk/?d=2253>. Printed copies can be requested by Home Members from the CA Office.
2. Background information about the proposed changes can be found in the article on page 5 (opposite) of this issue of the Croquet Gazette.
3. A page containing replies to any frequently asked questions about them may be published on the website.  
 Individual members of all classes, including Standard members (those who have been registered as members of the Association by their club), can vote electronically on the website or by post beforehand, or in person at the meeting.  
 Postal votes must arrive at the CA Office no later than 20 March, which is also the closing date for electronic voting.  
 Please see the news item on the website for details of how to vote electronically.  
 A postal ballot paper (*which may be photocopied*) is printed below or can be downloaded from <https://www.croquet.org.uk/?d=2254>
4. To pass, the motion will require a 6 to 4 majority of Individual Members voting, with a quorum of 25 at the meeting.

**Dr. I. G. Vincent, Hon. Secretary**

### THE CROQUET ASSOCIATION

#### BALLOT PAPER FOR MOTION PROPOSED AT 2019 SGM

The Council proposes the motion on the agenda of the Special General Meeting to be held on 30th March, 2019. If you wish to vote by post, please indicate your agreement or otherwise to the motion by placing an "X" in the appropriate box, then sign and return this ballot paper to The Croquet Association, Old Bath Road, CHELTENHAM GL53 7DF, to arrive no later than 20th March.

Motion, proposed on behalf of the Council by John Bowcott (Chairman), seconded by John Dawson (Vice-Chairman):  
*"That the Constitution of the Croquet Association be amended as shown in <https://www.croquet.org.uk/?d=2252>"*

**In favour:**

**Against:**

Name of Individual Member  
 (please print): .....

Signature: .....

## Background information amendments to the

### Overall Intent

The purpose of the amendments is to improve the governance of the Association, by reducing the size of the Council and clarifying its role.

As a consequence, the way in which its members are elected would change. The proposed changes to the constitution have the full support of the existing Council, following extensive debate and consultation over a three-year period and detailed work by several groups.

### Role of Council

The role of the Council would be overall responsibility for the affairs of the Association, with a focus on high level policy, strategic initiatives, scrutiny and transparency.

Day to day business, including authority to execute financial transactions, implementation of policy and recommendation of new or changes to policy, would be delegated to an Executive Board, which would replace the current Management Committee.

Any changes to the way it and its working committees operate will be a matter for the new bodies and would not require further changes to the constitution.

### Composition and Election of Council

The Council presently has 33 members: 15 elected by the Individual Members of the Association, 9 by the Federations, the President, 6 Vice-Presidents, Hon. Secretary and Hon. Treasurer.

This would be reduced to 12 voting members, together with 3 officers and up to 3 other non-voting members, co-opted to ensure a diversity of background and experience.

The 12 voting members would be elected by Individual Members to represent federations, grouped as shown below, and the clubs and Individual Members in them. The federations would be given responsibility for ensuring that sufficient candidates are nominated.

### The Constituencies

To avoid overburdening the constitution with too much detail, the rules for elections will be determined by an Electoral Commission appointed by

## Information about the proposed changes to the constitution

the President, Hon. Secretary and Hon. Treasurer.

To ensure proportional representation of the whole of the CA's membership there will be 7 constituencies, namely:

<b>Federation(s)</b>	<b>Seats</b>
North West	1
Croquet North & Yorkshire	1
East & West Midlands	1
East Anglia	2
South East and London	3
Southern	1
South West	3

### Amendments proposed

The proposed amendments make the minimum changes needed to the constitution to implement the proposed reforms, rather than being a wider revision.

The principal changes are to clause 12, which has been renamed "Governance" and covers the role and composition of the new Council and Executive Board, and clauses 18 and 24, which cover the election of and vacancies on Council. The amendments are consequential and affect clauses 3(b), 8(b,c), 21, 23 and 25-30. A new clause, 32, specifies transitional provisions.

### Timing

The amendments are being proposed at a Special General Meeting in March so that elections can take place over the summer, thus enabling the new Council to assume office from the date of the AGM in October. However, the transitional provisions give the Council power to delay their introduction should this not prove to be feasible.

### Further Information

A presentation from the working party that developed the detailed proposals can be found at

<https://www.croquet.org.uk/?d=2222> and a draft of the election rules expected to be adopted is at

<https://www.croquet.org.uk/?d=2224>

Please contact any of the members of the working party, Jonathan Isaacs, John Bowcott, John Dawson, Brian Havill, John Reddish and Ian Vincent, if you have questions about the proposals.

If common threads emerge, a summary of them will be posted on the website.

**Dr. Ian Vincent, Hon. Secretary**

## The January Council Meeting of the CA

**N**early two dozen members of the CA's Council met at Hurlingham on Saturday, 26 January, chaired by John Bowcott, who is a member of the club which is celebrating its 150th anniversary this year.

The two major items on the agenda were the accounts and associated budget decisions, and governance, which has featured prominently at most Council and Management Committee meetings over the last two years.

### Governance changes

There was good news on the governance issue, in that a clear decision was reached by Council ... something that has so far eluded the rather larger assembly which meets on the north bank of the Thames!

Changes to reduce the size of Council and to focus its role on policy, delegating its implementation to an Executive Board, had been agreed in principle last October.

This meeting agreed the recommendations of a working group set up to flesh out the detail of how those could be achieved.

### Special General Meeting

However, the final decision rests with the membership in a "peoples vote", as the Council can only be reformed by amending the constitution, which requires a general meeting.

To avoid a further year's delay, a Special General Meeting will be held at Hurlingham on Saturday 30 March and will require a quorum of 25 attendees.

### Your voting support please

However, electronic or postal voting will be available beforehand and therefore all individual members of the CA, including the new Standard ones, will be able to vote on the proposed changes.

Please support your Council's attempt to improve its effectiveness: the changes will only be adopted if at least 60% of those voting do so in favour of them.

The formal notice of the meeting is on page 4 (opposite) and a commentary on the changes in the column to the left of this report.

### Treasurer's report

Peter Death reported on the financial outcome for 2018, which was less good,

with a deficit of £50K.

The bulk of this had been expected: the cost of employing the National Development Officer, which is being met by a transfer from the Development Fund, and expenditure associated with the membership changes.

Other negative factors were a decline in shop sales, losses on CA tournaments and increased staffing costs; on the plus side, levies from club tournaments had increased.

Although not income to the CA, some £44K of tournament entry fees were received through the online tournament entry system on behalf of clubs.

This is a valuable service to both players and clubs, but is not without cost, due to the card payment fees incurred.

### Paper Gazettes for Standard members extended to end of 2019, but after that ... ?

An even larger deficit is budgeted for 2019, which led to greater than usual scrutiny of some of the items.

A major one is the cost of posting paper copies of the Croquet Gazette to the new Standard members.

It had originally been decided to do so just for their first year of membership, but it was now agreed to extend this for the remainder of 2019.

A significant reduction in production and distribution costs has already been achieved, but we will investigate other ways to further reduce the burden, including the possibility of raising advertising revenue in the light of the increased circulation.

### National Development Officer

Dave Gunn was thanked for his work as National Development Officer, but as it was clear that we couldn't afford to make this a permanent post, the discussion was about ensuring the continuation of the projects he initiated.

The final motion was one proposed by the Chairman, about the need for increased transparency and communication, to which Tim King replied with a suggestion that committees should be more active in publishing information about their activities on the website.

**Ian Vincent, Hon. Secretary**



## CA Tournament Regulations - the changes for 2019

**T**he CA's Committees are working on a wide range of updates to the Tournament Regulations (for the 2019 playing season).

The navigation to the full regulations on the CA website is [Home/Tournaments/Regulations](#) or by typing in this full link [www.croquet.org.uk/?p=tournament/regulations](http://www.croquet.org.uk/?p=tournament/regulations)

At the time of writing these have not yet been approved, but keen readers can access the latest draft by using the link above to the live regulations, and then following the link to the Regulations for Tournaments Historic Index, where you'll find the working draft for the forthcoming season.

**Players, Event Organisers, and Tournament Secretaries and Event Officials (Director, Manager, Handicapper and Referee) are all advised to familiarise themselves with the full set of changes.**

These are summarised at the start of the regulations themselves.

### Some of the more significant changes for the 2019 season are:

**C3.** Up to two Under 21 players will receive priority entry to all tournaments. This regulation has also been written in a way to facilitate clubs who wish to give other groups priority entry (for example, to a defined number of club members, or overseas players).

**P4(e).** The ability for players to practice at the start of play has been removed.

**H1.** The requirement to play off the correct handicap has been extended to all tournaments. Note also that players may not play off an incorrect handicap in order to gain entry into a handicap-restricted event. Further, the default maximum handicap limit for AC events has been removed (*see the Handicap Ctee page, right*).

**P5(a)(3).** Handicap Cards are now permitted in any suitable format (including electronic) provided that a player can substantiate their handicap to the Tournament Handicapper.

**O(d).** The powers and duties of the Tournament Director have been set out in greater detail.

**T1(c).** Guidance has been added about the circumstances in which time should be paused. In short, if a referee stops a game (e.g. to reset a hoop) or a player is called away on official duties, the clock may be stopped. But it should not be stopped for routine events such as refereeing a hampered stroke or to wait for a double-banker. AC Law 55 and GC Rule 15.3 remain applicable to deal with unusual circumstances.

**I(c).** The ability to clubs to vary certain tournament regulations is now explicit, but limited to specific parts of the regulations. Such changes should be included within the Calendar Entry.

**L4(d).** Alternate Stroke Doubles. If a stroke is to be replayed following an interference the player who played the first stroke in error plays the replayed stroke. The variation remains available for all doubles games.

**L8.** The Video Refereeing trial has been extended indefinitely.

**M1 and P4(a).** The condition that "Players must be prepared to play until dusk" has been defined more precisely as Civil Dusk. This is the time of day which is generally recognised as when artificial light is required for outdoor activity, and loosely approximates to the time after which the use of car headlights is mandatory.

**P4(e).** Players will be permitted to warm up before the start of play.

Appendix 1 – The use of corner pegs and half-way markers is expected for all Championship events, and recommended for all Calendar Fixtures.

~

As always, comments, suggestions, or questions, about the Tournament Regulations are welcome.

The Regulations are 'owned' by the AC Tournament Committee, but are developed in conjunction with many other CA committees, including the GC Tournament Committee, International Committee, AC Laws, GC Rules, Handicap, Coaching, Equipment and the CA Office.

You can contact Samir Patel (contact details in the CA directory) or the relevant committee chairs (contact details on page 30).

**Samir Patel**

**T**he December Gazette carried details of the Charity One-Ball Competition, stating that the chosen charity for 2019 is the Alzheimer's Society.

**The final will be at Surbiton on 12 May.**

The latest information on participating clubs is that three have held their heats already; we have thirty-four more describing themselves as 'definite' and ten more who are 'maybes'.

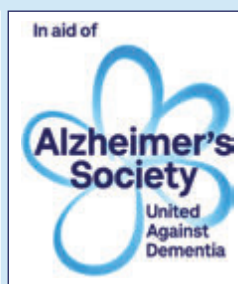
This means we are well on track to beat last year's record of 37 heats, and therefore their 497 participants and the £5,300 raised for charity.

However, as always our fickle Spring weather may play its part, causing some heats to be cancelled.

~

**A number of heat organisers have said they would welcome players from outside their club membership.**

**Croquet's  
Charity  
One Ball  
2019**



**These are:** Northampton (17 Mar), Reigate (24 Mar), Bowdon (27 Mar), Canterbury (sometime in March), Kington Langley (6 Apr), Surbiton (7 Apr), Tunbridge Wells (7 or 14 Apr), East Dorset (14 Apr), Hurlingham (14 Apr), Ealing (27 Apr), Cheltenham (28 Apr), Nottingham (6 May).

~

So, if your own club cannot run a heat and you wish to play elsewhere, please contact competition organiser Kevin Carter (e-mail address below) who will supply contact

information for your chosen heat.

Alternatively, it is not too late to organise a heat in your own club – any time before 5 May.

Raising just £50 will qualify for a free place in the final for your heat winner; again Kevin Carter is the contact for further information and assistance.

**Kevin Carter, [kevin@profundus.com](mailto:kevin@profundus.com)**

In a letter from the President, Quiller Barrett, he told of a new way for people to donate to the chosen charity even though they may not be able to play in a heat.

However, a gremlin inserted an extra digit in the address given, which should have been:

**[www.justgiving.com/fundraising/cob2019](http://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/cob2019)**

# The Handicap Committee - changes & confirmations for 2019

**T**he CA handicap committee have had a busy winter with a number of work projects coming to fruition in advance of the main playing season.

Some have been new initiatives to tackle long running difficulties that have caused players concern and others have been to tidy up unclear or dated wordings.

Here are some completed and ongoing projects.

## The requirement to play off the correct handicap AT ALL TIMES

Despite the very clear wording of tournament regulation H1a (Playing off the correct handicap: In all events a competitor must play each game at his correct handicap ...), there has been a common practice of AC players playing-off an incorrect handicap at times.

For example, a player whose handicap is above the upper limit of a tournament, is given an entry on the understanding that they play off that limit (e.g. a 24 being required to play off 20).

This must not happen and players must play-off their correct handicap at all times.

(see Samir Patel's Tournament Regulations changes panel, left)

## ACTC raise the upper limit of their handicap tournaments

As a result of bringing the above to the attention of the AC Tournaments Committee (ACTC), they have decided to lift the upper handicap restriction on all CA auspices handicap tournaments from 20 to 24.

Club tournaments that appear in the CA fixtures calendar are not bound by this and clubs may continue to set their own restrictions as they see fit.

(see Samir Patel's Tournament Regulations changes panel, left)

## Dealing with regional and 'club to club' handicapping variations

This has been a concern for many years and ways to improve the situation are currently being considered by the Handicap Committee. Central to this is the good work undertaken by the South-West Croquet Federation Handicapping workshop last year.

## AC handicap improvement and the need to continue to align GC handicaps

Concern had reached the Handicap Committee about the situation where a player improves their AC handicap greatly whilst playing only very few GC games, such that their handicap in the latter remains unchanged.

The guidance wording has been amended to now read that, in such circumstances, the player's GC handicap should be manually adjusted using the AC to GC handicap conversion chart.

<https://www.croquet.org.uk/?p=games/golf/handicapping/initial>

## Club, Federation and CA Handicappers

The powers, limitations and duties of Club, Federation and CA Handicappers can be found on the CA website (see the navigation and links below).

With regard to the manual adjustments that their powers entail the wording was previously unclear as to which handicap grade (current or after a manual adjustment) was being referred to. Additional words have been introduced to clarify that it is the player's current handicap in all cases.

<https://www.croquet.org.uk/?p=games/golf/handicapping/managing>

<https://www.croquet.org.uk/?p=games/association/handicapping/managing>

Frances Colman, Chairman of the Handicap Committee

## The Most Improved Players of 2018

The Croquet Association is pleased to announce the following awards for the most improved players of 2018.

### The Spiers Trophy

for the most improved GC player  
**Stuart M Smith**

### The Apps Memorial Bowl

for the most improved male AC player  
**Daniel Gott**

### The Steel Memorial Bowl

for the most improved female AC player  
has not been awarded for 2018

The CA continues to encourage clubs and federations to monitor improving players, and nominate them for these awards.

See the MIP web page: [croquet.org.uk/?p=tournament/caCalendar&action=ViewPage&CalendarInformationID=10](https://www.croquet.org.uk/?p=tournament/caCalendar&action=ViewPage&CalendarInformationID=10)

Frances Colman, Chairman of the Handicap Committee

## Recent Appointments of CA Handicappers

The following appointments were approved in November.

**Frances Colman**

**AC**

Stephen Custance-Baker, Sam Murray, Chris Roberts

**GC**

Stephen Custance-Baker

Stuart M Smith



Daniel Gott



## Prescribing Croquet

Dear Editor,

Many of your readers will have read or heard of the recent DHSS impetus for wider use of social prescribing.

The publicity around this latest initiative cites the benefits experienced by the mentally or physically unwell and the socially isolated in trials of prescribed sessions to improve their gardening, football or cooking skills.

At the same time such therapy reduces NHS costs and increases the availability of its professionals to care for those needing medical intervention.

Surely I am among many croquet players who believe that joining in our game is also an ideal aid to well-being accessible to the many who enjoy athletic activity but are no longer able to participate in more strenuous pursuits.

Prescribed croquet would clearly have an impact on club members' time, goodwill and potentially on their access to the lawns - so costs, timing of sessions and member impact will all need careful consideration.

Since ill health and loneliness are likely more prevalent during the seasons when croquet retreats indoors, a big increase in the number of carpets and places to lay them may also be an early logistical hurdle.

But should the CA secure national participation in this scheme, benefits to the sick, the socially isolated and to NHS efficiency, will doubtless be mirrored by an enhanced croquet profile and uptake.

In pursuit of this double-headed benefit, some exploratory discussion with the DHSS is surely worthwhile.

**Peter Lowe, Secretary, Tyneside CC**

## Mystery Medal

Dear Editor,

David Webb has sent our club Secretary, Tim Brewer, these photos of a CA medal from 1940 which has come into his possession.

He was wondering if we could shed any light on it, but we are none the wiser.

Can any of your readers help please?

**John Bevington, Wrest Park CC**



BEDFORD  
JUNE 14TH 1940

## Topiary Croquet

Dear Editor,

I am an amateur writer and ex-AC croquet player of 20+ years. Sadly I can no longer play due to mobility problems.

Be that as it may, I still enjoy social events and watching some first class play when tournaments are on.

However, I gather that these days it is hard to get people to uproot themselves to enter tournaments. Shame. It used to be that unless you got your name down for say The South of England by February you would not get a place. How things have changed!

Anyway I wondered if this little story for The Gazette might nudge some people to enter. *Here's hoping!*

She could tell by the tracks that the topiary figures had been playing Association Croquet.

The red and yellow balls, against blue and black, had been locked in battle. The passage marks of the balls on the sparkling dewy grass told their own tale. The red ball, woven of Siberian dogwood, was now near the boundary and the partner ball, made of yellow privet, was near the centre.

The opponent had been awaiting his turn at the other end of the lawn, with a blue ball created with ceanothus and the partner ball of mondo black beard at the ready.

Probably he had been hoping to make another break.

Jane felt disappointed: maybe the topiaries had had a party to which she had not been invited.

She could tell from the footfalls that had squashed the dew away that other figures

had been around, and the privet horse and rider had trotted over the soggy lawn, leaving dents and scuff marks.

It was dawn, there would be no further activity until maybe tonight.

She walked past the privet horse, he gazed down at her and whispered, "Don't be sad, the match was abandoned 'cos of lack of entries.

Teams had trouble uprooting themselves from familiar territory and said that, anyway, it was a long way for the nearest topiary teams to come.

The tournament will be rescheduled.

The new trophy, The Hawthorn Plate, was commissioned by a Life Member.

I helped fashion it myself.

By the way the Golf Croquet players have unearthed the long lost pink ball.

It's by the bisques.

Shh! someone's coming!"

**Jill Carpenter,  
Compton CC (Eastbourne)**

## Croquet: It's a piece of cake

Dear Editor,

I thought you might be interested to see our Christmas cake! My husband, Anthony, decorated the cake with a croquet theme which I called 'Snowquet'!

**Sally R.R. Prewer, Ryde CC**





## Alternative croquet definitions

Dear Editor,

With a nod to *'I'm sorry, I haven't a clue'*, I offer these alternative croquet definitions:

mallet	- a posh hairdo
hoop	- Northern greeting ( <i>comes after hey</i> )
ball	- posh friend of a cow
double banked	- two spectators at Southport FC
a split roll	- what you buy from Greggs
a full roll	- what you buy from Waitrose
a half roll	- what you buy in January
a passing roll	- what you buy on the M6
a stop shot	- a dyslexic visit to the M6 Services
a break	- how you stop your moped
a roquet	- where you get into your boat
a croquet	- where a black bird catches the ferry
cornering	- a MP chatting to a blond at Westminster
a lift	- what the MP offers next
backwards take-off	- the MP chancing his luck
half court	- a failed catch by an English cricketer
short tice	- dicky bows
long tice	- what hang in the wardrobea
triple	- last orders please

**From 'a northern correspondent'**

*(who offers a bottle of wine for the best response received)*

## That maths homework ~ the answer from teacher Joel ~

Dear Editor,

In the December issue (*Gazette 377*) I posed a problem that tournament managers would be all too familiar with:

*In a tournament with any number of players, provided no one wins all their games, prove that there must exist three players A, B and C where A beat B, B beat C and C beat A (a cycle).*

The fact that this is true may come as a surprise to many. Congratulations to everyone who had a go at proving it.

Several readers were able to prove the claim for given numbers of players in the tournament, but two readers - Cliff Daniel and Jon - submitted valid proofs for an  $n$  player tournament.

Both gents proved it by induction, which is the obvious technique, but I will not reproduce their proofs here since they require knowledge of the induction axiom.

Jon also provided a considerably simpler solution, which I paraphrase here:

Suppose A beat B and no C exists to make the cycle.

That must mean that if B beat another player, then A must have also beaten that player, and thus A finished with more wins than B.

Putting all players in order and pairing them up sequentially, we find that if no C exists to make the cycle then all players finished with a different number of wins.

But the only way this can happen is if the winner won every game. QED.

**Joel Taylor**

## Prize for best 'placement' of your old Gazette

Dear Editor,

I thought I would let your readers know about a simple publicity scheme which has apparently had significant recruitment success in the USA.

It is easy to implement and almost cost-neutral.

Club members take their Croquet Gazette, stick a note with the club contact details on the front cover (making sure not to cover the magazine title) and then place it anywhere there is a waiting room...Doctor, Dentist, Tyre Fitter, etc.

Perhaps the Gazette Editor could offer a small prize for a photo showing the most unusual Gazette placement?

**Klim Seabright, Cheltenham CC**

*P.S. Don't forget to ask permission*

~

Let's see how productive our readers can be with this idea Klim. I look forward to receiving photos of Gazettes left in good places countrywide, and will gladly award an appropriate prize later in the year - **Ed**

## Learning to Play

Dear Editor,

Whilst taking croquet out to the community last season, we set up a game with the Ealing Over 60's Network at their meeting place on 'bumpy ground'. As a result, their members were tempted to come and play a GC game with us on our 'verdant carpet' in Lammis Park. Much fun was had by all and one of our visitors was prompted to write the following verse, which I would like to share with your readers.

**Ruth Sisley, Ealing CC**

**Learning to Play**

*(After Henry Reed Naming of Parts (from Lessons of the War) 1946*

Today we have learning croquet. Last time,  
We were on bumpy ground. And next time,  
Next time who knows. But today,  
Today we tread verdant carpet. Dewdrops  
Sparkle like jewels sprinkled all over the court  
And today we have learning to play.

This is called stalking the ball. And this  
Is the mallet. I'm swinging it close to the grass.  
In time it will be second nature; and skill,  
Which in my case I have not got, may begin. Dewdrops  
Vanish in lines, as balls are sent rolling. Aerial views through  
Avian eyes, which in our case we have not got, expose Nazca Lines.

This is how you score seven. Cosseted  
On this low-lying lawn, the world is outside  
This square. Dog-walkers walk, throw balls and talk  
While we privileged few play in the dew. On  
This bright afternoon, new friends are a boon  
As the October sun warms everyone.

**Androulla Kyriacou, 22 Oct. 2018**

# Letters to the Editor

## My dislike of meeting the same opposition over and again

Dear Editor,

In 2016 I had a letter published in the Gazette bemoaning the fact that my club, Belsay Hall, kept being drawn in national inter-club competitions against other clubs in the Croquet North Federation who we meet on a regular basis anyway in the Federation's league.

As I said then, I appreciate that not every club seems to have worked out that if you enter a national competition you might have to bestir yourselves and travel further than usual, but surely my letter implied that the spirit of Marco Polo was alive and kicking here at least.

In 2017 in the Inter-Club, fortunately we were still the only CN club in the draw so had a trip to neutral York to play Bowdon.

But then Durham decided to enter in 2018, so sure enough we met them in our first match.

Lo and behold, this year we play them again.

In the GC Murphy Shield in 2017 we successfully avoided Durham, but got Tyneside before meeting Pendle and Craven.

In 2018 it was the winners of Durham v Pendle and Craven, and this year, despite their run to the final, Durham have not entered, so it's Tyneside again.

I appreciate that the CA are concerned about the number of walkovers in these competitions, and have probably inferred that travel might be a major cause, but if the price of the entry fee just means playing the same very familiar people year after year, entries will probably decline anyway.

**Derek Johnson, Belsay Hall CC**

This lovely scene shows the croquet courts at Belsay Hall Croquet Club.

Whilst Derek might fancy travelling further afield with Belsay, Southern based clubs would doubtless also look forward to playing at this lovely spot if a long 'away' draw took them to Northumberland.

*Photograph by Derek Johnson*



John Bowcott replies:

Dear Derek,

I do remember your 2016 letter to the Editor. I also remember my reply, which was published alongside it.

In 2016 you made the points that you repeat now, but in respect of the Murphy Shield, and this led to the review of its structure in 2018. Belsay Hall was one of the respondents.

Among other points it recognised the national nature of the competition, but also noted the existence within the club of 'two camps' as far as travel is concerned. This was a common view in respect of the early rounds of the Murphy Shield.

The Inter-Club Championship could and maybe should be different. You make very good points very clearly.

Other suggestions for improving the Inter-Club have been brought to my attention, and during the early part of the coming season we will seek the views of clubs on the most suitable structure for it.

The GC Tournament Committee will take these into account when it discusses the arrangements for 2020.

**John Bowcott, Director, GC Inter-Club Championship**

## Obituary

### Stephen Read 1932 – 2018



He enjoyed inspiring new players; he just loved and lived for croquet.

He played with a great tenacity and determination, his strong will to win often being disguised by his wry smile and wicked sense of humour.

It was the same determination that kept him playing in the last few years, despite failing health.

Stephen's contribution to the game was recognised by being awarded a CA Diploma in 2015.

We wish a fond farewell to a good friend and stalwart member of the croquet community; on a personal level we will miss his companionship, challenges and enjoyment that he gave as an opponent on the lawns.

**Des Honey**

**S**tephen Read joined Fowey CC in 2003 and Cornwall CC a year later.

With his wife Margaret, he developed a great enthusiasm for the game, playing competitive and social croquet regularly at both clubs.

Stephen was immediately involved with the upkeep of the clubs, making himself indispensable by working tirelessly, maintaining all the equipment, as well as applying his extensive horticultural skills to the lawns.

He somehow managed to find time to play both croquet codes and achieved a good level in each, representing the clubs in federation leagues matches as well as entering several CA Tournaments.

# England GC call-up for *The Biltonator*



The Openshaw Shield GC Selectors are pleased to announce the six-player squad who will represent England in the forthcoming and inaugural Test Match against Spain to be held in Seville, 15 – 17 March 2019.

J-P Moberly continues as captain of the team that features a first international appearance for Richard Bilton (*left*).

Congratulations to:

J-P Moberly (Captain)  
 Stephen Mulliner  
 Tobi Savage  
 Jonathan Powe  
 Richard Bilton  
 Dr Harry Fisher

In future years, the test match venue will alternate between Spain and England.

**Lionel Tibble, Chairman of the Openshaw Shield GC Selectors**

## The GC Elite Squad

The GC International Performance Development Group (IPDG) Elite Squad will be **expanded in 2019 to include:**

Richard Bilton  
 James Death (*below*)  
 Tim King  
 Pierre Beaudry  
 Nick Archer

Welcome and thank you for participating.

This move will give more depth to the Elite Squad with the benefit of experience from long-standing top players such as Pierre Beaudry and Tim King.

Whilst Death's first preference is AC, he has taken an active role in the Elite Squad annual weekend along with fellow Solomon star Jamie Burch, both proving that AC skills are easily convertible into GC.

Bilton's meteoric rise over the last two years has earned him a place in the inaugural England v Spain GC Test Match in March and he also takes a well-deserved promotion into the Elites.

I'm sure we'll be hearing more about Bilton in 2019.

Archer's fine performance in the 2018 European Championship gave us a glimpse that there is more yet to come from this young man.

**Lionel Tibble,**  
 International Performance Director (GC)



## The GC Dev. Squad

The GC International Performance Development Group (IPDG) Development Squad, welcomes six new members for 2019 and 2020.

Congratulations also to **this year's intake** all of whose 2018 results impressed the selectors.

The competition for places was very intense.

Euan Burridge  
 James Galpin  
 Dr Raouf Allim  
 Lorna Dewar  
 Chris Heath  
 Noel Gill

2018 saw the first intake of the members of the International Performance Development Group (IPDG) GC Development Squad complete their two years under the inspired and able direction of Assistant Director Rachel Gee.

Rachel has since relocated to Australia with husband Will; the England team captain, John-Paul Moberly, has kindly accepted the invitation to take over.

A weekend in late March or early April has proved to be the best opportunity to gather the squad together before everyone is off competing in tournaments.

The mentored match weekend with the Elite Squad usually slots into the first August weekend each year nicely; however, because there is a clash with the WCF Simon Carter GC World Championship, this year the match weekend has been rescheduled for the 7 and 8 September, and will again be at Wrest Park CC.

**Continued overleaf, at foot of page 12...**

## The AC England Squad

The 2019 AC England Squad under Coach Samir Patel is:

Mark Avery	Daniel Gott
Robin Brown	James Hopgood
Jamie Burch	David Maugham
Christian Carter	Nick Mounfield
Miranda Chapman	Stephen Mulliner
Jeff Dawson	Samir Patel
James Death	Jonathan Powe
Harry Fisher	Mark Suter
Robert Fulford	Pete Trimmer
Alain Giraud	Robert Wilkinson

## The AC Dev. Squad

I have the great pleasure in congratulating the following players who have been selected to join the AC Development Squad.

I look forward to working with them to prepare and develop all aspects of their croquet for both individual and team events.

The AC Development Squad Coach is David Maugham.

Louise Bradforth	Sarah Melvin
Chris Coull	Cesar Miranda-Reyes
Andrew Dutton	John-Paul Moberly
Clive Goode	Chris O'Byrne
Daniel Gott	Jonathan Powe
Dave Gunn	Tobi Savage
Brian Havill	Nick Steiner
Andrew Killick	Mark Van Loon
Adrian Kirby	Craig Winfield
David Marsh	

**Alison Maugham,**  
 International Performance Director (AC)





# 2018 CA Diplomas for Services to Cro

This is part two of the 2018 CA Diploma Award winners who were recognised at the CA AGM in October.

Congratulations to you all - *Ed*.

## **Mike Russ Cheltenham CC**

Mike Russ is the sort of member that every club wants, and indeed needs, if its infrastructure is to be sustained, for since he joined the Club, Mike has been the member we turn to when something needs fixing.

Highly practical and extremely competent, he can and does turn his hand to almost anything.

Our veteran doors have been kept secure with the fitting of new locks and handles, broken mallets are returned to the rack repaired ready for another season and, for years, Mike has coaxed the Club clock to keep turning, renovating the inner workings and last year overseeing the fitting of a new face.

He experimented with many different materials to produce corner pegs that were not attractive to the young fox cubs, has made skewers, hoop clamps and measuring bars for the hoop setters as well as height-of-cut gauges for the mowing team.

But Mike is not only a doer, he has the priceless gift of engaging with even the most hapless beginner, ensuring that their contact with croquet is always a positive experience.

The saying is that a volunteer is worth ten pressed-men and Cheltenham CC is indeed fortunate to have, in Mike, such a volunteer.

## **Klim Seabright Cheltenham CC**

Klim Seabright was formerly the Secretary of the CA and on leaving that post he became Secretary at Cheltenham CC, resigning that rôle in 2017.

He has been very effective at getting good publicity, for the Club and for the game, in the local media, and this has led to

new members joining.

He was very involved in negotiations to ensure that catering for lunches at Cheltenham's many tournaments was provided, overseeing the introduction of an outside caterer.

Klim is very involved in coaching, especially with beginners, and his tricks and tips have been very helpful to other coaches.

He is a graded coach and CA handicapper for both GC and AC.

In 2013 he was asked by the WCF to go to India to introduce croquet to young beginners there.

He has also been involved with various initiatives with the local health and care community, bringing croquet to sheltered housing and healthy living schemes.

He has also managed to teach croquet to a Duke of Edinburgh Award candidate and got croquet into a schools activities week in Summer 2018.

As with so many who keep croquet alive, his additional work has often been unseen.

## **Peter Stansfield Northampton CC**

Peter Stansfield has been a member of Northampton CC since the year after its founding in 1987.

He joined the Club after he retired from banking and so became an ideal person to act as Club Treasurer, a rôle he filled from 1988 to 2007.

Peter has been a stalwart, not only as treasurer but also in organizing and running several of our annual events, the most noticeable of which is the Annual Fun Day, where new games involving croquet appear each year.

Forfeits for running a hoop might include playing the next shot backwards, playing on one leg etc.

Now in his eighty-eighth year, and with his with AC and GC handicaps at 4 and 2 respectively, Peter still makes himself available to play regularly for the Club in

both league and cup matches.

A fairly slow player who takes extreme care with his shots using a technique which involves casting several times, he remains one of the most difficult of players to beat, for he never gives up.

## **Mike and Sylvia Steer Bowdon CC**

Mike and Sylvia Steer joined Bowdon CC in 1996 and 1997 respectively, and have both made a valuable contribution to the club.

They have both been captains of several club teams, and both on winning teams in the Longman Cup, and Sylvia in the Secretary's Shield team.

Using their knowledge and skill, they have helped with coaching on taster days and beginners' courses for many years.

Sylvia's keen interest in gardening and cooking has meant that she was often seen tidying the borders and helping with catering; she is also responsible for the ordering and distribution of club white clothing.

One of Mike's greatest contributions was in his role as editor of 'The Bowdon Clang', a quarterly club magazine which was a huge commitment; a rôle he undertook from 2002 until 2010.

His latest projects have involved making videos of national tournaments held at Bowdon, which he has posted on YouTube.

Mike and Sylvia have welcomed many visiting players to stay at their home over the years, and have also supported tournaments both in the UK and abroad, most recently on the Isle of Wight.

## **Charles Waterfield Middlesbrough CC**

Charles Waterfield has been a key member of Middlesbrough CC since its foundation 30 years ago.

He has guided the Club through two changes of venue; as Secretary he always keeps an eye on the good order and

... continued from page 11.

Five Development Squad members represented England when taking part in last October's Over 50s GC World Championships in Cairo.

Pete Dowd qualified through to the knock-out stages and is to be congratulated along with Dave Widdison who won the plate, and there are honorable mentions for Stephen Custance-Baker, Steven Leonard

and Roger Goldring.

Another existing Development Squad member, Jayne Stevens, will be taking part in the Women's GC World Championships at Hawkes Bay in New Zealand in early February, along with Lorna Dewar who is in this year's squad intake – good luck, Jayne and Lorna.

**Lionel Tibble,**  
International Performance Director (GC)



Pete Dowd

## croquet ~ Part 2

running of the Club.

Charles does those unglamorous jobs like marking the white lines and liaising with the authorities and ground-staff of Albert Park where we play.

He is a strong player, yet unselfishly he is always ready to fit in with doubles or singles games so that everyone enjoys Club days.

He gives time to coaching new players and sets initial handicaps, manages internal and external Club tournaments and also manages the CA team in their annual match versus the Scottish CA.

Charles is and he is a strong supporter of Croquet North and has been its Federation Representative to the CA for nearly two decades; also he sits on the CA Publishing Committee.

All these jobs take time, which he gives unselfishly and unstintingly.

Such commitment and loyal service deserves this recognition.

### Martin Wroughton Ashby CC

Martin is a warm, friendly member of our Club. He welcomes new members and visitors putting them at their ease and including them in games.

As a GC coach, he simplifies the game for beginners until they have developed basic skills before introducing more formal coaching.

Martin instigated our Winter League which proved very popular and he acts as one of the hosts for visiting corporate groups that book evening sessions at our Club.

He manages some of Ashby's internal competitions, is a member of our GC 'A' team in the East Midlands Federation league and often plays to represent Ashby in competitions.

When not playing, he is Ashby CC's groundsman and has been a respected committee member for several years working on development, advertising and promotion.



Raouf Allim

# The Croquet Gazette



## Do you enjoy your Paper Gazette?

If so, there is good news if you are a Standard member, as Council has decided that you should continue to be entitled to receive a personal paper copy until the end of 2019.

Originally, it was going to be an introductory offer for just a year.

No decision has yet been taken as to what will happen thereafter, but it is clear that the cost cannot be sustained with the current financial model.

We are therefore looking to see if we can increase advertising revenue with a larger circulation and/or inviting you to subscribe to receive a paper copy.

## Would you like to go paperless?

If you don't wish to continue receiving a paper copy of this magazine (perhaps you get two to your household), then PLEASE let us know.

This can easily be done by logging on to the website and editing your details to set the "paperless" flag.

You could also ask your club secretary or the CA office to do this for you if you can't do it yourself.

All members have access to the Gazette in electronic form on the website.

If you are a Premium or Supporter member, then you will get a discount on next year's membership if you elect to go paperless.

**Dr Ian Vincent, Hon. Secretary**

## Can you help us with Gazette advertizing? Or maybe some croquet sponsorship?

**T**he Gazette has traditionally relied on croquet-related advertising (eg. mallet makers) but in the last few years it has attracted others interested in the likely lifestyle of some readers (eg. cruises and retirement living).

We would like to hear of any ideas readers may have of potential Gazette advertisers, or indeed any useful contacts.

Perhaps you are in a position of influence with a potential advertiser or sponsor, can help us with an introduction, or maybe you have the ability yourself to place an advertisement in the Gazette, which now has a circulation nearing 5,000.

Please contact the **Gazette Editor Chris Roberts** (editor@croquet.org.uk) and/or the **CA Manager Mark Suter** (caoffice@croquet.org.uk) with your ideas.

## The Croquet Gazette - Advertising Rate Card

	1 issue	3 issues	6 issues
Full page, back cover	£385	£330	£253
Full page 257mm x 185mm	£385	£303	£220
Half page 128mm x 190mm	£193	£154	£110
Quarter page 90mm x 128mm	£ 99	£ 86	£ 76
Eighth page 90mm x 65mm	£ 66	£ 61	£ 50

*All Prices are per issue and exclude VAT, which will be charged at the standard rate of 20%*

### Classified Advertising Rates:

In addition, classified advertising can be placed at the following rates.

CA members: First 15 words £6.44, each further 5 words £1.30

Non-members/Trade/Commercial: First 15 words £10.50, each further 5 words £3.00

Series discounts: 3 insertions 10%, 6 insertions 20%

*All classified advertising prices include VAT at the standard rate.*

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# The Alison Maugham Column

## Croquet Matters to me!

I attended my federation AGM in January and in the most part it was a fairly normal meeting with the usual suspects raising their hand (I think I might be one of them), the ruffling of paper as discussions moved from timings to laws, from AC to GC, with some prize-winners and trophy givers mixed in.

We are of course fortunate that this was hosted at Surbiton CC, so 'naturally' I found myself with a glass of something yummy and a delicious plate of the resident cooks' Sunday special.

But then something unexpected happened, something that could only happen after a voice-over at the beginning of the movie had said "In a world where Croquet Matters...!"

As National Development Officer

Dave Gunn began to deliver what I can only describe as an inspiring and motivating presentation, it happened... *Croquet players listened.*

We didn't just listen, we stopped gossiping and whilst listening even started writing notes.

I think some of us even started to read the provided documentation. And it didn't stop there; in our own smaller groups at the discussion time, we began to think, to have ideas, to share ideas and even put them into practice, immediately.

If you and your club are not already

aware of Croquet Matters please do take a look. I honestly think that this could be the beginning of something fabulous for our sport.

I'm sure many of us at some point have said; 'Oh wouldn't it be great if we could find more members, more players for our league teams, younger people, older people, more coaching, help with catering, sponsorship or perhaps just the chance to share our beloved croquet with more people'.

Croquet Matters to all of us, and that's why this programme might be the key to us all pulling together and helping our sport develop and thrive for the future. Call Dave or your Federation Development Officer to ask them to come and give your club their help.

Have fun. We did!

**Alison Maugham**

< The South-East Federation 'Croquet Matters' workshop at Surbiton CC.



## Going for Growth by NDO Dave Gunn

**M**y time as National Development Officer will soon be coming to an end and much of my remaining effort will be focused on 'securing the legacy'. I am working closely with Federation Development Officers and other Federation and CA Committee members to try to ensure that we capitalise on the growing levels of engagement being seen around the country with the initiatives that I have launched.

### 'Croquet Matters' club development tool

The 'flagship' programme is Croquet Matters, a club development framework that looks to build on what is already on offer from the CA and the Federations by incorporating Sport England's 'Club Matters' tool into what is often a guided engagement that will increasingly be led by your local FDO.

The tool is an online 'one-stop shop' that offers guidance, templates, online tutorials, short videos, etc., that aim to help clubs to generate real and achievable actions en route to reaching whatever development goals they may have.

To date, nearly fifty clubs have seen what Croquet Matters might offer them, with around fifteen clubs having already run dedicated workshops and the rest having attended group taster workshops hosted by many of the Federations.

For those clubs having begun a formal engagement, the feedback has been broadly very positive, with the programme being seen as a catalyst for action.

The mantra is 'even if you only do three things in the next year that you would not have done otherwise... and they deliver some success... then the programme has been validated and can be used again and again'.

All clubs face different challenges and have different sets of development objectives. Whatever your club's circumstances, I am confident that Croquet Matters will have something to offer you.

I would therefore urge you to have a look at the Croquet Matters page on the CA website where you will find further details.

Go to Home / Clubs & Federations / Croquet Matters, or type in this direct link:

**[www.croquet.org.uk/?p=clubs/croquetmatters](http://www.croquet.org.uk/?p=clubs/croquetmatters)**

If you then want to take things further, please let either me or, ideally, your local FDO know of your interest and we will be delighted to guide you through the programme.

### 25 clubs take on free managed website template

One other initiative I want to highlight again is the managed website template offering.

We now have over twenty-five clubs using the club website offering, and if your club is interested in joining them, we'd like to hear from you as there is no upper limit to the number of clubs we can support.

If you visit the Marketing page of the Croquet Matters section of the CA website then you will find a link to our online help desk where you can ask any questions you may have or formally request that a template be set up for you.

We also now have a Federation version of this offering that is being implemented currently by Yorkshire, Croquet North, West Midlands and Southern. Any other interested Federation could take things forward via the same online help desk.

There are STILL opportunities to get new initiatives underway at your club before the start of next season, and the CA and the Federations are fully committed to supporting the initiatives outlined above going forward.

**Dave Gunn,**

**National Development Officer**

davegunn59@gmail.com, 07710 981561

< A 'Croquet Matters' workshop in progress at Littlehampton CC.



## The WCF Simon Carter Golf Croquet World Championship

The CA GC Selectors are pleased to announce that the following players have been selected to represent England

in The WCF Simon Carter Golf Croquet World Championships 2019.

**Ranking places were awarded to:**

Robert Fulford, John-Paul Moberly, Stephen Mulliner, Rachel Gee, Jonathan Powe, Richard Bilton, Harry Dodge, Tobi Savage.



**Membership places were awarded to:**

Lionel Tibble, Dr Harry Fisher, Dr Tim King, Mark Daley, Nick Archer,

Guy Scurfield, Nick Cheyne, Peter Dowd.

In addition:

**A Wild Card place has been awarded to:**

Euan Burridge.

Congratulations to all 17 players.

**Lionel Tibble, Chairman CA Selectors**

## The WCF Under 21 GC World Championship

The CA GC Selectors are pleased to announce that the following have been awarded places to represent England in the above Championships;

**A ranking place has been awarded to:** Euan Burridge

**Membership places have been awarded to:**

James Galpin, Albie Willet, Eden Rogers  
Congratulations all four players.

**Lionel Tibble, Chairman CA Selectors**

## The Challenge from the Rest of the World

In accordance with the timetable for both the Under 21 GCWC and the GCWC, the following announcements were announced by the WCF.

### WCF Simon Carter Golf Croquet World Championship 2019

201 entries have been received from 21 countries. 37 Membership Places have been requested and 11 applications for Wild Card Places have been received. There will be four Qualifying Places.

**The Management Committee has awarded Wild Card Places to:**

Euan Burridge (England),  
Jamie Gumbrell (Australia).

**Given the Event Capacity of 80, this leaves 37 Ranking Places which are awarded to:**

1. Reg Bamford (South Africa), 2. Amr Alebiary (Egypt), 3. Felix Webby (NZ), 4. Mohamed Nasr, 5. Mohamed Nasr, 6. Hamy Erian (all Egypt), 7. Robert Fulford (Eng.), 8. Mohamed Kareem, 9. Ben Rothman (USA), 10. John-Paul Moberly (Eng.), 11. Duncan Dixon (NZ), 12. Stephen Mulliner (Eng.), 13. Greg Fletcher (Aus), 14. Ahmed Yasser, 15. Ahmed El Mahdi, 16. Mostafa Nezar, 17. Sayed Sabra (all Egypt), 18. Ian Burridge

(Wales), 19. Fathy Farouk (Egy.), 20. Rachel Gee, 21. Jonathan Powe, 22. Richard Bilton (all Eng.), 23. Khaled Kamel (Egy.) 24. Harry Dodge (Eng.), 26. Danny Huneycutt, 27. Sherif Abdelwahab (both USA), 28. George Coulter (NZ), 29. Jose Riva (Spain), 30. Tobi Savage (Eng.) 31. Ahmed El Amari, 32. Mohamed Walid, 33. Amr Baher, 34. Walid Wahban, 35. Maram Nabil, 36. Karim Ghamry (all Egypt), 37. Joshua Freeth (NZ).

Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Egypt, England, Finland, Germany, Ireland, Latvia, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Scotland, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Uruguay, Wales and the United States either have already nominated or are entitled to nominate Membership Places by the Closing Date on Sunday, 27 January 2019 when the names will be published.

If any Membership Place or Places are not taken up by then, they will be replaced using the Replacement Ranking List current at midnight on the Closing Date.

**Stephen Mulliner,  
Secretary-General,  
World Croquet Federation**

- UK based players are shown in red -

## NEW

### The GC Federations Shield

The GC Tournaments Committee is pleased to announce the launch of a new Inter-Club competition this season –

**'The Golf Croquet Federations Shield'**

This will be a GC version of the AC Secretary's Shield and similarly will feature handicap play in a season-long knock-out competition.

Teams will play the familiar Inter-Club format in which each match comprises seven rubbers played in two sessions; each rubber will be best-of-three 13-point handicap games.

Each of the nine Federations may select one club to enter this event, to be determined by the results of the previous season's Federation handicap competitions, or in any way a Federation decides.

In future years, the holder club may enter, in addition to their Federation's selection.

Support from the Federations has been excellent from the inception of this competition and all nine have responded positively by identifying their nominated clubs.

Formal on-line entries were in progress as the Gazette went to press and an un-regionalised open draw will take place soon after the advertised closing date of 1 March.

The final must be played on or before Sunday 6 October and the full competition details are available on the CA website Fixtures Calendar and printed fixtures book.

The following clubs will participate in the inaugural 2019 GC Federations Shield:

- Croquet North – Croquet Durham
- East Anglia – Hunstanton
- East Midlands – Ashby
- North-West – Westmorland
- South-East – Ealing
- South-West – Abbey
- Southern – High Wycombe
- West Midlands – Broadwas
- Yorkshire – Ripon Spa

**Frances Colman,  
Director of the GC Federations Shield**

# The GC Series Tournaments for 2019

## Championship Series (unrestricted)

13-14 April	Surbiton
27-28 April	Sidmouth
11-12 May	East Anglian (Colchester)
01-02 June	Cheltenham
15-16 June	Ramsgate
29-30 Jun	National Forest (Ashby)
13-14 July	Nottingham
28-29 July	Lancashire (Pendle & Crav.)
15-16 Sep.	FINAL (Hamptworth)

## A-Level Series (unrestricted)

13-14 April	Cheltenham
04-05 May	Northampton
25-26 May	Hunstanton
08-09 June	Wrest Park
12-13 June	Woking
15-16 June	Pendle
06-07 July	Ryde
13-14 July	Dorset (East Dorset)
20-21 July	Wiltshire (Hamptworth)
07-08 Sep	Sussex (Sussex County)

## B-Level Series (handicaps 3+)

30 Apr	Camerton & Peasedown
04 May	Sussex County
06 May	Watford - <i>NEW (returning)</i>
09 May	Ryde
15 May	Wrest Park
18 May	Pendle
23 May	Roehampton
25-26 May	East Dorset
06 June	Northampton
10-11 June	Woking
12 June	Ealing
15 June	Leighton-Linslade
23 June	Colchester
29 June	Hunstanton
29-30 June	Hamptworth
06 July	Bury
10 July	Nottingham
11 July	Bath
03 August	Guildford & Godalming
09-10 Aug.	Phyllis Court
13 August	Nailsea
17 August	Ashby
24 August	Budleigh Salterton
24-25 Aug.	Hurlingham
07-08 Oct.	FINAL (Guildford & God.)

## C-Level Series (handicaps 7+)

28 April	Surbiton
05 May	Sussex County
10 May	Ryde
15 May	Phyllis Court
22 May	Wrest Park
08 June	Ashby
11 June	Camerton & Peasedown
13 June	Roehampton
19 June	Guildford & Godalming
29 June	Colchester
30 June	Hunstanton
09 July	Hurlingham
10 July	Cheltenham - <i>NEW</i>
11 July	Nottingham
14 July	Middlesbrough
24 July	Bury
01 August	Broadwas - <i>NEW</i>
08 August	Northampton
10 August	Hamptworth
25 August	Budleigh Salterton
30 August	Woking - <i>NEW</i>
21-22 Sep.	FINAL (Cheltenham)

Last year saw the launch of the **National C-Level Series** (for players with handicaps of 7+) and, after a slow start, the competition entries really picked up, to the extent that some later tournaments were even oversubscribed.

This excellent support in the inaugural year gave director Chris Roberts enough confidence to expand the Series by allowing new entries from seasoned venues Cheltenham and Woking, together with a first CA Calendar event for Broadwas.

21 tournaments in all parts of the country make up the C-Level Series, so there is bound to be one near you.

Perhaps you will join a circuit of players traveling to a number of tournaments, looking for a victory that will qualify them for the National Final!

The C-Level Series is the place for players new to the tournament scene – Standard

CA members particularly – to cut their competitive teeth.

At the top, **Championship Series**, there's a change, with the Lancashire Open (at Pendle and Craven) getting a promotion out of the A-level Series, giving the Championship Series a returned presence in the north.

The Wiltshire Open at (Hamptworth) has gone the other way and this season will contribute to the **A-Level Series**, which like the Championship Series is unrestricted.

Unlike the other competitions, the A-Level Series does not have a national final; it is a straight 'points race'.

Completing the family of competitions is the super-popular **B-Level Series** (for players with handicaps of 3+) which stays at 24 tournaments for 2019.

Competition for places at most venues will doubtless be as hot as ever, and it is

good to welcome back Watford to this competition, after a year out renovating their courts.

## The GC Series Production Line

The GC Series of competitions is a proven conveyor belt for top player production, highlighted by Richard Bilton's progress in the last four years from B-Level to A-Level to Championship Series to the English National Singles (Ascot Cup) crown and now call-up to the England team (see page 11).

~

Who will be the first player to play in all four Series competitions?  
You?  
Why not?

**Chris Roberts, Director of the GC A-Level, B-Level & C-Level Series**

## WCF Under 21 Golf Croquet World Championship 2019

34 entries have received from eight countries and 14 Membership Places have been requested. Given the Event Capacity of 24, this leaves 10 Ranking Places which are awarded to:

Felix Webby, Edmund Fordyce (both NZ), Yasser Sayed, Mohamed Rashad (both

Egypt), Jason Hodgett (NZ), Jamie Gumbrell (Australia), Angus Coulter (NZ), Yehia Mohamed (Egypt), **Euan Burrige (England)**, Karim Yasser Amaar (Egypt).

Australia, Egypt, England, Germany, Latvia, New Zealand, Spain and the United States either have already nominated or are entitled to nominate Membership Places by the Closing Date on Sunday, 27 January 2019

when the names will be published. If any Membership Place or Places are not taken up by then, they will be replaced using the Replacement Ranking List current at midnight on the Closing Date.

**Stephen Mulliner,  
Secretary-General,  
World Croquet Federation**



# Recommended AC Tournaments

## 'Short Croquet' various venues in 2019

**H**ave you ever fancied having a go at AC but felt that those big croquet strokes were not for you?

Well we have the answer – Short Croquet.

This is played to slightly modified AC rules but on a half size court, so if those croquet strokes don't quite work how you intended, there is always a chance of roqueting another ball that is not really very far away and having another try.

This version of the game is thriving in the south-west and northern parts of the country with many small clubs competing in Federation leagues.

Last year the CA introduced a National Short Croquet Inter-Club competition as an experiment, which resulted in a hotly contested final between Nottingham and Penrith & North Lakes CC with the latter triumphant

This year we would like to encourage all novice or high handicap players to have a go at the national competition, so get together in teams of four and persuade your club to enter you in this competition.

Hopefully there will be sufficient entries for regional heats leading to a grand final held in the beautiful city of York on 15 September, with an esteemed member of the CA presenting the trophy.

Entries have to be submitted to the CA office by 1 March so don't delay!

Further details can be found in the on-line fixtures calendar and printed book under Short Croquet Inter-Club Competition, or contact the tournament director, Beatrice McGlen (details via the CA website members' area).

**Beatrice McGlen,**

**Chairman of the Association Croquet  
Tournaments Committee (ACTC)**

Photo below: Peter Moore is a big enthusiast for Short Croquet at Budleigh Salterton. (photo by Chris Roberts)



## South of England Week Compton (Eastbourne)

**T**he South of England Week (AC) tournament has been running at Compton CC in Eastbourne since 1984, when the old South of England Tournament was moved from Devonshire Park and split into a Championship and a Week event.

This year marks the 112th event – having started towards the end of the nineteenth century.

For most of its life The Week has seen a mixture of advanced singles and handicap events, plus handicap doubles spread over six days, but its popularity has been waning as the cost of travel and accommodation has increased.

This year we hope to attract renewed interest by holding a two-day class event (A to D) over the weekend of 14 and 15 September, comprising advanced singles and handicap play, according to entry.

This will be followed by a three-day handicap event (Monday to Wednesday) run as an 'Egyptian' with a knock-out for the top four, and the remaining players continuing to play in the 'Egyptian' as a consolation event.

There will be at least two games per day, with three where possible if wanted.

The South of England One-Ball runs concurrently with both parts of The Week, and has both advanced and handicap trophies on offer.

Facilities in the Compton clubhouse have been improved over the last three years; this winter's works have been concentrated in the gents cloakroom and the bar areas.

We will be offering our usual range of lunches and teas during this event.

There are 'seats at all prices' for accommodation in Eastbourne, ranging from The Grand to Airbnb – we do hope that we will see you here.

**Hilary Smith, Compton CC**



## Ask the Ref

Dear Ref,

I had the following conundrum in a recent friendly game of AC to which I cannot find the answer.

Yellow goes for the hoop but runs back into a rabbit run so that it is a few millimetres short.

Blue attempts a roquet from behind, hits yellow gently so that the balls are touching but yellow is now just through.

However when blue is lifted to take croquet from the other side, yellow rolls back into the rabbit run so that it is back where it started, i.e. not quite through.

Has yellow run the hoop?

**Stephen Parish, Surbiton CC**

Dear Stephen,

Yes, Yellow has scored the hoop point as it has come to rest in a position where it had done so at the end of the stroke in which Blue roqueted it. If it moves back out of the hoop when Blue is picked up to arrange the croquet stroke, it should be replaced in the position it had reached, repairing or packing the ground if necessary to make it stay there.

**Ian Vincent,  
Chairman, CA AC Laws Committee**



Photo above: Championship Referee Ian Vincent hoop setting at the 2014 MacRobertson Shield. (photo by Croquet NZ)

Photo left: The trophies for the South of England Week are superb, and include the Devonshire Park Salver, which has been engraved with the signatures of past winners. (photo by Hilary Smith)

## The European Croquet Masters

### Do you want to become European Croquet Master?

**D**ates for the 2019 roster of European Croquet Masters tournaments are becoming clearer as the Gazette went to press.

All tournaments are events in their own right but also contribute to the European Croquet Masters competitions.

One thing is abundantly clear, and that is that if you want to win the title of European Croquet Master, you need to travel to a few tournaments outside your home country.

In fact, the pattern shows that your best chance is to play in one of the European Championships.

If your country selects you, or you get a wild card, even if you win no games at all in that tournament you will get six points to your credit. Bearing in mind that the typical points tally of a European Master is between 20 and 30, a European Championships would be a good tournament in which to bank some points.

Last year, the GC Master scored 30 points that included seven won by playing in the Europeans, to which he added points for a quarter-finals appearance in Portugal and winning the Norwegian Open.

The next highest overall scores that included a European Championship in the haul were 25, 20, 18 and 16.5.

However, one player did manage to rack up 22 points from playing in just two tournaments outside his home country, neither of which were European Championships.

In AC, there have been fewer Masters qualifying events each year so far, so the target score for potential Masters Champions has typically meant that the winner needed to get to the final of one tournament and also the quarter-finals of another, or similarly take the potentially higher reward of the European Championships with the extra six points minimum available there.

### AC European Croquet Masters qualifying tournaments:

- 01 - 02 June: German Open (nr. Hamburg)
- 13 - 15 July: Swiss Open (near Geneva)
- 23 - 25 Aug: European Championships in Sweden (probable dates)
- 20 - 22 Sep: South of England Champ'ship at Compton (Eastbourne)
- 07 - 10 Aug: Championship of Ireland

### GC European Croquet Masters qualifying tournaments:

- 23 - 26 May: European Championship (Budleigh Salterton)
  - 28 - 30 June: Norwegian Open
  - 05 - 07 July: Swedish Open
  - 20 - 21 July: Swiss Open (near Geneva)
  - 02 - 04 Aug: Austrian Open
  - 06 - 08 Sep: Baltic Open in Latvia
  - 07 - 08 Sep: Sussex Open at Southwick
  - 13 - 15 Sep: Portuguese Open (Algarve)
- Dates TBC: Opens in Ireland, Spain, and possibly Belgium now that the Genval club has relaid its lawns.

If your country participates in the European Masters, you don't need to do anything except enter some of these tournaments and your points will be credited to you automatically.

In many cases, national governing bodies pay 10 euros for their highest placed player in each event, with the money raised covering the cost of trophies, etc.

Where countries have decided not to participate formally, players can simply pay an extra 10 euros on their entrance fee, and any competition points won will be credited to their tallies. More information on all this is available at: <http://eurocroquet.eu/index.php/european-masters>.

What are you waiting for?

Get out your diaries, enter some of these tournaments and challenge to be a 2019 European Croquet Master!

**John Swabey**

### European GC Championship (Register for selection)

Budleigh Salterton

**T**he 2019 European GC Championships will be hosted by Budleigh Salterton CC from 23 - 26 May. Players wishing to register their availability for selection can do so via the CA website on-line system. The closing date is 24 February and the selection date is 3 March.

**Lionel Tibble,**  
Chairman of the GC Selectors

### STOP PRESS Solomon Trophy (AC) USA v Great Britain (Register for selection)

**T**he Solomon Trophy match, USA v Great Britain, will take place between 30 September and 4 October at The Pinehurst Resort, North Carolina, USA.

Please declare your availability for selection via the CA website by 20 May.

**Samir Patel**

### Womens Group Encouraging competitive croquet

**W**e have recently created a Google Group to encourage more competitive croquet amongst our women players.

The group is to be used as a communication tool to share knowledge and provide guidance towards entering competitive and hopefully advanced croquet tournaments.

Please note this group is not exclusively for women to join, all croquet players are welcome.

If you would like to join the group please visit <https://groups.google.com/forum/#forum/womens-croquet> or contact me direct for an invitation.

**Alison Maugham**  
[alison@alisonswebsites.co.uk](mailto:alison@alisonswebsites.co.uk)



Photo left: The 2018 AC European Master, Jose Riva of Spain, is pictured here lining-up peel. (Photo by Chris Roberts)



# CA Grant aids Nailsea lawn improvement

**E**agle-eyed readers will recognise this as my third (and hopefully last) contribution on this subject to the Gazette.

The first episode described an attempt, supported by a Grant from the CA, to level our four lawns with sand and a lute (a long stiff blade dragged behind a tractor, not a medieval musical instrument).

Although this seemed to bring about some improvement we were not convinced, so a laser theodolite was hired to carry out an accurate survey and it became clear that the only way to genuinely level lawns would be laser-guided grading.

After a tendering process, our main man,



John Wallace, had little difficulty in selecting Talbot Farm Landscapes to carry out the work. The clincher was that they have done similar work for Budleigh Salterton CC whose lawns are immaculate and familiar to us.

## Maximum CA Grant awarded

**The total cost of the contract was a little short of £25,000, and once again we applied to the CA for a grant and were delighted when the application for a maximum grant of £5,000 was approved.**

It was important that the work started as early as possible so as to give the grass seed the best chance of germinating and developing before winter set in, so we curtailed our playing season and planned a start early in September 2017.

## Rain - far too much of it!

Bad weather was to become the dominant factor throughout the rest of this story and seeding did not commence until 30 October, following a respite from the rain.

However, back it came and about one third of our lawns were under water from November until February, so any hopes of having well developed grass were dashed.

We did some hand seeding in February 2018 in the worst areas and then had the

whole area re-seeded by Talbot in April, but then it was then a matter of watering and waiting, until a decision was made to open the courts for play in mid-June.

## New courts undoubtedly level

The surface was undoubtedly level, but the grass was quite thin and patchy.

From 1 May to 7 August (a period of 99 days) we had a continuous spell of hot, dry weather. In total some 80mm of rain fell but 54mm of this fell in a seven day period at the end of May and the other 92 days received only 26 mm of rain which is less than 2mm per week.

We therefore resumed irrigation in mid-

May to protect the newly seeded areas.

Irrigation was equivalent to about 6mm per week of rain – about half normal summer rainfall but a lot more than the natural rainfall.

During this dry period water loss through evapotranspiration was calculated to be about 20mm per week, however, in conjunction with the four-weekly Revolution Spraying (which we would recommend to everyone) the irrigation was sufficient to keep the new grass alive.

The Revolution Spraying also ensured that we did not suffer Local Dry Patch, despite the adverse summer weather conditions.

We estimate that our water charges for irrigation throughout the project were about £1,000.

When the heatwave abated in mid-August we were able to resume Sarel rolling, hand-seeding in the thin patches and fertilising.

Further over-seeding seeding operations took place in September and October.

## Sextupling Suter succeeds on super smooth surface

Once play started, progress was encouragingly steady. between June and September we ran four tournaments, during which there were several peeling turns, including a sextuple by Mark Suter (*right*) –

solid evidence that our project has, despite the setbacks, succeeded.

The lawn development can be seen by comparing pictures taken on 28 February 28 and 21 September.

## Duncan Hector's advice on grass type saved our season

It should be noted that the decision to follow Duncan Hector's advice and sow dwarf ryegrass (Barenbrug Bar Extreme/ Ultrafine) was crucial to the success because of its ability to germinate in less than ideal conditions, rapidly establish itself and survive near-drought conditions.

Had we employed more traditional Fescue

or Fescue/Bent seed mixes, we almost certainly would have had no playable lawns during 2018.

We would like the sward to be denser and the surface a little smoother, but that will come with time and continuing TLC.

As a more porous soil structure gradually returns through the action of grass root development and mycorrhizal fungi the previous tendency to flood has receded.

## Winter play - a Nailsea first

For the first time we are keeping our lawns open throughout the winter.

Talbot Farm Landscapes did everything in their power to complete the levelling process, despite the adverse weather – we appreciate their efforts and would suggest that any club considering this kind of project to bear them in mind.

We also very much appreciate the support from the CA.

**John Wallace**





# CA Marketing Committee

## This is a long one and a call for help!

#sorrynotsorry....

The CA Marketing Committee have been busy with several projects this winter!

Possibly the most innovative is **the video streaming project**, which sees the Croquet Association investing in equipment to record and broadcast live croquet on the internet.

This ties in nicely with the summer ahead, as the UK plays host to the WCF Simon Carter GC World Championship and the U21 GC World Championship.

We will be testing this over the season, so do reach out if you have experience in broadcasting, or have an event or tournament you want to stream!

The video equipment can also be used to record footage to make trailer/highlight videos, and for coaching/equipment testing.

### Are you involved in making croquet happen?

Do you need to ask for advice, discuss best practice, share your success story, advertise your tournament vacancies?

If so, read on . . .

I am working with Dave Gunn (NDO) and others to establish **better communications for / between club, Federation and CA officers** and anyone who is involved in making our beloved sport happen.

We are considering the following:

- Slack workspace-

<http://ukcroquet.slack.com>

(think WhatsApp for companies) for announcements, general chitchat, quick responses, project-focussed discussion.

- Discussion forum (such as Discourse) for longer open discussions.

We have already started using Slack for some of our projects.

**Please contact me directly for a sign-up link** if you want to be an early adopter!

I will update on the forum work in due course.

~

**Social media** - I am looking to ramp up our presence on Facebook and other platforms.

If you are already posting about croquet and/or your club regularly and would like it to be cross-posted on the CA, I would be only too glad to hear from you!

~

**The CA website** - do you like it / use it regularly? Would you recommend your grandson / neighbour / coworker to check

it if they wanted to get in to croquet, buy a croquet set or book a croquet-themed day out?

The answer might be no... and so we are looking to improve our 'gateway into croquet' via consultation and redesign.

**If you have any thoughts or suggestions** or want to get involved, let me know as we are at the start of this process.

~

On the recruitment front, we are spearheading two events:

**National Croquet Day (May)**

and

**BBC Country File Live (August).**

NCD has a separate article below.

BBC CountryFile has festival events this summer at **Castle Howard (Yorkshire)** as well as **Blenheim Palace (Oxfordshire)**, and we have a presence at both to introduce people to croquet – we would LOVE for readers (that's you!) to get involved and join the CA team at these events.

There's more, but I'll leave it here for now; suffice to say it's been a busy winter!

Please, please, get in touch if you feel you have a marketing idea or any feedback.

**Eugene Chang,**  
**Marketing Committee Chair**  
[etychang@gmail.com](mailto:etychang@gmail.com)  
Twitter @etychang

## National Croquet Day - 12 May 2019

### Think you know croquet? Think again!

It's the start of 2019, it's cold and wet – what better time to plan for National Croquet Day (NCD) 2019!

This year's theme is **"Think you know croquet? Think again!"**

It gives the opportunity for clubs to challenge existing and potential members to experience a new aspect of croquet - be it joining a club, entering a club competition, representing the club in a fixture, entering one of the many tournaments in the Fixtures Book, or watching some top-class croquet, in-person or online. This summer sees The WCF Simon Carter Golf Croquet World Championship being held at Southwick and supporting venues along with the U21 GC World Championships at Nottingham just before – a perfect opportunity to get out and spectate! NCD is organised by the CA Marketing

Committee. The project lead is Brian Wilson - 'If I cannot help you – I know someone who can!'

### Publicity material

We are finalising the publicity material for NCD 2019 which will be made available on the CA website. The CA Office will also have hard copies available to send to clubs.

If your club cannot run a NCD event on 12 May, simply choose a close-by date and let us know; it will be possible to adapt the soft-copy of the publicity material.

Clubs use NCD in differing ways – some to attract new members, others to raise their local profile.

Whatever your club is doing, the CA is here to help and support you.

### Some ideas for NCD

Stage open days and/or taster sessions, Involve local sports and other community groups, or youth groups,

Choose to support a local or national charity (they sometimes can introduce a

celebrity to attract the local press).

### Some tips

Use social media to get your message to a wider audience,

Include home-made refreshments!

Involve as many members of your clubs as possible, especially newer or less active members - they may have some interesting ideas.

### Join the NCD conversation nationwide:

Join the #proj-ncd2019 channel at <https://ukcroquet.slack.com> - contact Eugene for a sign-up link.

Here's to NCD 2019 - and thanks in advance to everyone involved.

**Brian Wilson, NCD lead,**  
07970 922867  
[brian@europaassociates.co.uk](mailto:brian@europaassociates.co.uk)  
**Eugene Chang**  
**Marketing Committee chair,**  
[etychang@gmail.com](mailto:etychang@gmail.com)

# When did croquet come to S

The diary entry quoted in Nigel King's letter (*Croquet Gazette* 376) offers interesting evidence of croquet being played for pure pleasure in Cultoquhey, Perthshire, in **July 1863**.

He wonders whether this is the first time croquet was played in Scotland.

It certainly predates the publication of the first widely circulated book on the game by Mayne Reid the following month, but there is good evidence that, by then, croquet was already firmly established north of the border.

## Earliest evidence is an amateur watercolour

This amateur watercolour (*opposite page, top image*) shows a game in progress at another Perthshire country house, Delvine, using the ten-hoop two-peg layout characteristic of the time; the lady sports a parasol and the gentleman a kilt.

The owners were the Muir Mackensies who held the baronetcy; the occasion was a visit from the de Wintons of Brecon, whose family album this is from.

The tiny date in the corner reads as **August 13th 1860**, although paint underneath the final 0 makes it hard to be definitive.

For the de Wintons, however, there was no

ambiguity: Delvine, Perthshire, NB 1860 was added very clearly underneath in a period hand.

A later de Winton, Maud, was runner-up in the Women's Championship and gold medallist in the 1890s.

## Croquet alive and well in Scotland by 1860

Whatever the date of the picture, croquet seems to have been alive and well in Scotland by 1860.

As Ian Bond showed in *The Croquet Gazette* issue 366, Isaac Spratt was advertising croquet sets in London as early as the mid-1850s.

By then the growing railway network had already established good connections between Edinburgh, Glasgow, London and much of England, and a Spratt or early Jaques set could easily have made its way north over the border.

What is certain is that in **1859**, a year earlier than the watercolour, an article in a Renfrewshire newspaper under the heading 'Inventions, improvements etc.' included a long and enthusiastic description of the game and its equipment:

*'The fine weather having set in, out-door games are in vogue; among them the game*

*"Croquet", admirably adapted for lawns or other small enclosures, recently introduced by Jaques & Son of Hatton Garden...*

*Two persons or more may play at this game, the number of balls and mallets not being limited; and it is as suitable for the fair sex as for the rougher creation.'*

## Croquet – "a New Out-Door Game"

Before the summer of **1859** was out, James Hogg's Fancy Bazaar, situated off Princes Street in Edinburgh, had started advertising "The Game of Croquet – a New Out-Door Game".

Meanwhile, in **September 1859**, a country house fête at Hunterstone, Ayrshire, featured Archery, Croquet and Lawn Billiards.

A detailed account which appeared four days later in the *Ardrossan and Saltcoats Herald* mentions 80 guests, including gentry, tenants, a well-known cricket club, and, remarkably, **members of a Croquet Club**.

If we are to take the description at face value, this must be one of the **earliest references to a croquet club anywhere in the world**.



Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines


# Cruise with Fred. Olsen

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# Scotland? ~ by John Harris

Croquet must have been a successful line, for Hogg's continued to advertise this "noble" game regularly, and by 1860 there was competition from nearby retailers.

Soutter's Bazaar declared that  
*"The Game of Croquet, wherever introduced, is invariably pronounced to be one of the best out-door Games (for Ladies and Gentlemen) ever invented."*

Lanarkshire too, quickly succumbed to its attractions: before the end of the year 'Croquet: The New Out-Door Game' was on sale in the heart of Glasgow.

## Soutter's pronounce Royal Patronage

The game had clearly taken firm root by 1861.

Soutter's were able to announce proudly 'Patronised by the Royal Family' and chose in their adverts to highlight only three lines – tartan; croquet; and squails, a table-top game made by Jaques.

It seems natural to conclude it was Jaques croquet sets they were promoting at this stage, before later patenting their own Indicating Mallet to record the progress of the game.

By 1861 croquet sets were also on sale in Dundee, and another outlet in Glasgow allowed the game to strengthen its hold around Scotland's second city.

## Photographic proof from 1861

The photograph (*above*) shows five ladies playing at Ibroxhill House, then in countryside south of Govan, in **1861**.

The equipment is characteristic of the

time: wide twelve-inch hoops (one is just visible in the left corner) and tiny mallets.

This was then the kind of large house in which croquet found its most natural home;



as the MP for Forfarshire commented:

*"A game has lately been introduced to country houses, which I can hardly omit, for this reason, that it is perhaps the only out-door game in which ladies can take a part. I mean croquet: but, were it not for this novel feature, I should not have alluded to it, as it can only be played on lawns and kept grass,*



*and is never likely to become a favourite with the general public."*

## Croquet was being played in 1859

**So croquet was being played in Scotland as early as 1859**, and was freely available by the beginning of the 1860s in

many parts of the Scottish Lowlands – still today very much its heartlands north of the border.

And this was just the start: little did

Charles Carnegie MP know it, but croquet was about to enter its first Golden Age.

**John Harris  
York  
Croquet Club**

With thanks to David Appleton for alerting me to early photographs of Scottish croquet, including Ibroxhill House; and to Ian Bond and Roger Bray for their assistance and suggestions.

## Illustrations:

**Above:** A croquet game at Delvine, Perthshire, 1860 (*watercolour, author's collection*)

**Below:** Croquet in the back garden of Ibroxhill House, 1861 (*photograph, reproduced courtesy of Glasgow City Council, Glasgow Museums*)

## Sources:

Contemporary newspapers, artwork and photographs.

If you would like detailed references please contact the author:

[jharrisnet@gmail.com](mailto:jharrisnet@gmail.com)  
01904 620211



## Downham CC - the first 30 years

**D**ownham CC was formed in 1988, following a week's 'Come and try it' session during the Downham Market festival where scores of youngsters and the occasional adult had tried their hand at the gentle art.

With this inspiration Jonathan Toye continued to load his trusty wheelbarrow with hoops, balls and mallets (loaned by the East Anglian Croquet Federation (EACF)) and cart them out to a section of a football pitch that had been

negotiated with the local Sports Federation.

Regular Sunday sessions were held through that damp summer of 1988, watched by intrigued cricketers strolling by and children and parents struggling across the field to the swimming pool.

### Keener players started to attend

After a month or so, the keener players were coming to the door asking for the wheelbarrow to set out the lawn themselves.

With this apparently enthusiastic response, a meeting was arranged to make everything official.

With the election of a Chairman, Treasurer and Secretary, along with a constitution and membership fees, Downham Croquet Club came into fledgling existence.

Ensuing Sundays showed the effect of having to pay to belong.

Playing numbers dropped dramatically to two or three and by the end of the season there were only four paid up members. Where had all the kids gone?

The main item of discussion for that first year's AGM was why?

Was it the introduction of membership fees or the condition of the playing surface?

It turned out to be neither of these – we

happened to be playing in front of the old pavilion, a favourite haunt for illicit teenage practices.

### A change of venue

The gathered few, after due debate, decided on a plan of action - A change of venue was necessary.



A mile away lies the beautiful hamlet of Stow Bardolph, a farming estate owned by the Hare family, and set in the middle,

in spacious grounds, was Stow Hall.

At the outbreak of the Second World War, the Hall had been requisitioned by the Ministry of Defence and then the NHS had had it for a spell as a maternity hospital and later a convalescent home.

From the early 1980s it lay empty, a great galleon becalmed in a swaying sea of trees and amidst these trees are some splendid areas of lawn.

### Downham CC really took off

Jonathan approached Sir Tom and Lady Rose who said they would be delighted to have us play there and it was from that day, that Downham Croquet Club really took off.

Equipment was still borrowed from the EACF until a member held a coffee

morning which raised sufficient funds to buy some.

Coaching sessions were run by Sarah Hampson of the Hunstanton Club and by those who knew a bit more than those just starting.

### A second courts is added

Soon a second court was added.

The equipment was originally stored in what was the game larder of the Hall

*Continued on page 30...*

## Basingstoke CC - move t

**W**e sometimes hear stories of croquet clubs taking over bowls greens when a bowls club has ceased to exist.

Here in Basingstoke we have moved in with an active bowls club and are sharing their green and facilities.

Our previous single court was full size but it lacked any sort of facilities, suffered from high trees all around it and no source of water, other than five-gallon containers humped from the car park.

You can see it on the videos on our website - [www.basingstokecroquet.co.uk](http://www.basingstokecroquet.co.uk).

It was owned and maintained by the local Council, who we had been badgering for a second court for several years.

### Linking up with Thorneycroft Bowls Club

Then last year, Council staff made the suggestion of linking up with the Thorneycroft Bowls Club at their site, originally established as a works facility by the famous lorry / bus manufacturers.

The Bowls Club, which is also a Council owned and maintained facility, had been suffering a downturn in members, so the suggestion was well received on both sides.

Obviously there were some misgivings: What about hoop holes in the green? What about white lines? Would we hack out divots?

We took advice from other clubs who have been down the same road and were encouraged to find that they reported no significant problems.

We carried on using the same croquet



Members of Thorneycroft Bowls Club and Basingstoke Croquet Club (including the late Martin Brandt, Croquet Club Chairman, fourth from left, and Ian Harrison, vice-Chairman, far left)

e to share with a bowls club

equipment with the exception of the centre peg where we bought the new plastic variety from the CA Shop; these have a spike instead of a wooden taper, so the hole in the turf is imperceptible.

**The bowls and croquet clubs have been running together since April this year with no problems.**

One or two visiting bowlers have queried our boundary lines but they really haven't caused a problem.

In June we held an opening event to which our MP, the Right Honourable Maria Miller, and Mayor and Mayoress, Councillor and Mrs Sean Keating, were invited along and they had a go at both croquet and bowls.

**We've arrived in heaven**

We think we've arrived in heaven: A lovely lawn, a clubhouse with all facilities and an automatic watering system for the bowls green, which is 42m square, so our court fits in easily.

In fact there is even space for the bowlers to practice when a croquet game is in progress.

The co-existence is having a beneficial impact on member recruitment and enjoyment of the game and things have now got to the stage where we are seriously considering forming a single Club with Bowls and Croquet sections, but that's still work in progress.

And what about a second court?

Well, there is another Bowls Club adjacent to Thornycroft... so that's more work in progress!

**Ian Harrison,**

**Vice-Chairman, Basingstoke CC**



# The Commonwealth Games!

**A**s many will know, croquet once featured in the Olympic Games – just the once actually, in 1900 (and a variant, 'Roquet' was played in 1904).

So, high time then for a return, and how wonderful that would be . . .

The Olympics may be some way off, but one member of the CA Marketing Committee is spearheading an Action Group seeking to get croquet a presence at the 2022 Commonwealth Games in Birmingham.

**Gazette Editor Chris Roberts interviewed Klim Seabright about this ambition. . . .**

**Editor: This sounds an exciting proposition Klim, how did it get started?**

Klim Seabright: Exciting indeed Chris! I knew that the Commonwealth Games would be coming to Birmingham in 2022 and recalled how helpful Edgbaston CC had been when my club, Cheltenham, hosted the Association World Championships. Edgbaston were keen!

**Ed: What did you do next?**

KS: I stood up at a CA Council meeting and asked permission.

They were a bit stunned but said yes and placed it under the oversight of the International Committee.

I formed an Action Group and was very fortunate in recruiting Beatrice McGlen (International Committee), Esther Jones (Edgbaston), Chris Williams (Wales), John Dawson (Council).

**Ed: That was a good start then. Did you hit any snags?**

KS: It quickly became clear that that we were too late for 2022 and that any application for full status would need to come via the World Croquet Federation (WCF).

**Ed: That was the end of that then?**

KS: No chance! A change of tack was needed and we decided to pursue the idea that croquet might be able to be included as a "demonstration" sport.

We found out that there was no such category as "Demonstration" but that they were planning an "Urban Games" concept.

**Ed: Well that would be good! How did you go about progressing that?**

KS: We had a stroke of luck at this stage. Esther had a contact with Birmingham Rowing Club and their President was pursuing the same ambition as Croquet.

He had arranged a meeting with the Project Director of the Organising Committee and was willing to add Croquet to his shopping list.

**Ed: They are good folks those rowers! (note: The Editor lives in Henley).**

**What happened next?**

KS: The message came back that the Project Director was prepared to receive a proposal from us.

We spent the next month writing the proposal and we have had feedback that it was "impressive"

**Ed: I like the way this is going Klim . . .**

KS: Before you get too excited, we were also informed that our proposal would be one of a possible nine, and that we would have to wait until spring 2019 for a decision.

Indications are that around three proposals will be accepted.

**Ed: Well having competition is not surprising given the prize.**

**How do you rate our chances?**

KS: Look Chris, I tend to come from the school of "glass half full" so fingers crossed, eh?

**Ed: What motivates you to try to have croquet included in the first place Klim?**

KS: Two things . . . Firstly, as a player I know how intriguing our sport is and I can see croquet sitting easily alongside sports such as Archery and Bowls (which are included in the Games).

And Secondly, I am a member of the CA Marketing Committee and will grab any opportunity to raise the profile of our sport.

Previously, I have been seen organising an "international" croquet match between Ireland and England race fans in the winners' enclosure at Cheltenham Racecourse and I once showed croquet off at a house "somewhere in England" to a group of Chinese and British politicians.

**Ed: Thank you Klim, and I do hope that your efforts are rewarded.**

**Stop Press from Klim**

**22 January:**

I have received a letter from the Director of the Commonwealth Games (Birmingham). He explains that they do not have a Demonstration Sport category. However, he is planning an "Urban Games" concept "where we propose we could include Croquet".



## Recent Coaching Appointments

Not much happens over the winter months with regard to people obtaining coaching qualifications and there is just one this month:

### Club Coach

**Anne Larpent - Dowlish Wake**

Here is some information and inspiration for those of you interested in starting off coaching but are not sure what is expected of you.

Anne Larpent attended a Coaches' Training Course (CTC) in April 2018 and, after being accepted for her Club Coach badge, was then required to arrange and present six coaching sessions.

These sessions were monitored by an appropriate person, and the details of the content and any comments were then passed onto the examining coach for consideration.

Each of Anne's sessions was clearly titled with a brief explanation and the presenter's notes/reminders were shown along with any aims and objectives.

Activities within the sessions were described more fully and Anne also made notes of the equipment needed for each session and the expected time allowance.

The documentation from Anne is really spectacular and anyone could easily use her work to run coaching sessions.

Many congratulations to Anne and I look forward to seeing her climbing the coaching ladder – quickly I am sure.

Unfortunately once all Anne's documentation was ready the system failed – again!

Please remember to include me in any emails as I need to authorise the CA to issue any badges regardless of whether an examining coach has already given the say-so.

There are other records which I need to keep, such as the Gazette List, and my telepathic abilities are waning with age!

The system also acts as a failsafe to stop people slipping through the net and I can only apologise again to Anne for the ridiculous delay in her badge being posted out.

**Sarah Hayes,  
Chairman of the Coaching Committee**

## Conditioned games anyone?

Coaching in the cold weather presents difficulties – the main one being how to keep everyone warm enough to survive the session.

I like to use 'conditional AC games' so everyone keeps moving and new challenges ensure lots of discussion.

Basically you introduce a new "Rule" to make life tricky for the players – everything else is unchanged so a normal AC game is played with one "extra" condition which must be strictly adhered to.

The penalty for not sticking to the condition may simply be that turn ends and oppo is able to choose to leave the balls where they are or replace them; often I prefer a much more severe penalty, where the turn not only ends but oppo may put offending ball(s) ANYWHERE they want.

So – here are some examples – you will be surprised what you might learn from having some fun with a chum:-

### No 'take-offs'

Usual game to be played but take-offs are banned completely.

Some debate on what is/isn't a take-off is usual – I allow large distance thick take-offs but no others.

Any take-off becomes a fault so balls replaced or left where they are.

Your shot choice should change and you need control – the importance of the pivot will become obvious.

### Having to take the shortest shot

Usual rules other than you HAVE to take the shortest shot.

Of course you still have the choice of which ball you want to play, but once your decision is made then the short shot is the only one for you.

Obviously this is from the start so due

consideration on where to place the first ball and not leave a free shot is important.

The short shot may only be 6-8 yards away and players often turn these down, preferring to pair-up.

When you know you HAVE to take the shot you will surprise yourself with how many you actually hit and the chance for a break should be good.

Even when someone has a longish join, players will often simply pair-up which is madness!

Once you get into this 'conditional game' you will have fun manipulating things so as to keep oppo away from pairing-up and having to shoot at you all the time.

### All balls at the peg OR all balls outside the outer four hoops

Two very contrasting conditions – one very restrictive where two balls have to remain at all times within one yard of the peg – the other much more free with loads of space where the balls are not allowed to be left within the four outer hoops (imagine a string tied around them).

Play the 'balls at the peg game' first then move on to the other.

Learn about rolls and rushes.

(Often for the "peg" game I inflict the severe penalty mentioned earlier).

~

So, find a chum and go out to play some games; and do persevere as the conditions will drive you mad to start with.

Keep warm and enjoy!

**Sarah Hayes,  
Chairman of the Coaching Committee**

## Coach of the Year & Lifetime Coaching Achievement Award

The usual advert for these awards has been posted under News within the CA Website for some time.

As the Gazette went to press, the Coaching Committee were due to be discussing these awards at their meeting scheduled for 16 February.

**Sarah Hayes,  
Chairman of the Coaching Committee**





## Good Croquet is in the Mind - by Dave Kibble (part 2)

*Continuing on from the last issue, Dave Kibble concludes his exploration of the mental side of croquet.*

### Mental Skill no.4: Stay in the present

Have you ever been "in the zone"?

Playing a sport, or doing an activity such as playing a musical instrument, or even gardening, where you've been completely absorbed by it and nothing else is in your mind.

Remember how great it felt.

In modern parlance, this is mindfulness.

A game is won one shot at a time.

How many times have you seen someone (or yourself) stick in the hoop that would win an important game?

When ready to play, you must think only about the current shot, not about what a good chance you have to win the game, or what a poor shot you have just played.

Nor what your opponent is doing, or what you are having for dinner!

It's very difficult to do, so how might you achieve this?

Spot yourself 'drifting off'

### **STOP!**

Step back, breathe and approach the shot again

Some opponents try and disrupt your ability to do this with a casual remark like: "there you are, I've handed it to you on a plate" – ignore them, step back, take a breath and proceed only when you have focus.

They might even call out whilst you are in play; or give a running commentary.

Make sure they are not in your mind: compose yourself; take your time to be ready.

Decide the best line of play and execute your decision with your full attention; once you've decided what to do, hang the consequences and let your body take over.

If it doesn't work out how you hoped, don't rue it: it was the right thing to do.

Don't approach a shot with a 'well I'll give it a try' attitude, instead, know it is the right thing and do your best to achieve it.

"Do or do not. There is no try."

- Yoda (Star Wars)

### Mental Skill no.5: Visualise your successful shot

See in your mind's eye the successful outcome of each shot before you prepare to play it.

See (and hear) the result before playing the stroke (hoop run, roquet, rush).

This really helps too with croquet strokes, big and small.

Be completely clear where the balls will be at the end of your stroke before you even begin to think about hitting the ball.

You can take this further knowing that most of your brain cannot tell the difference between what you imagine and what really happened.

When you are in a queue, sitting on the bus, waiting for a friend to turn up, sitting in the garden relaxing, any time you are free: play perfect croquet in your head!

Play it immaculately and clearly see the balls, smell the grass, feel the warmth of the sun (or the splash of the rain).

The more real you make it the more likely it is to happen when you are on court.

This really is (almost) as effective as a good practice session, and much better than a bad one.

### Mental Skill no.6: Have a routine and a rhythm

Develop and know your routine for preparing for and playing a stroke, and use it every time:

Ensure you are confident

Visualise to be clear what you intend - see it and feel it

Stalk: Take up your position and hold the mallet right

Approach the shot and take stance in a smooth movement – no shuffling about or changing grip

Remember your visualisation of the outcome

Take your swing: know the rhythm: the backswing, the pause, the forward movement, the application of strength, the follow through

Watch the ball you are hitting, right through the stroke

Experts call this 'having a process'.

There is randomness in everything, even if you play a perfect stroke, the outcome depends on the lawn and tiny variations.

Congratulate yourself on following your process, not on the outcome.

### Use psychology to win

If you want something different you must do something different, so use these tips and make a change, and keep varying your behaviour until you get the result that you want.

Be confident

- Practice success – e.g. shooting short shots – warm up session

- Positive Mental Attitude: remember your great turns, forget your errors

- Top players look calm and play confidently.

Be calm

- Focus briefly on something else – the sky, trees

- Breathe deeply

- The balls are grey!

Think the right thoughts

- You can only control your own performance

- Don't beg for your opponent to mess up

- Quieten that inner voice

- Have a prop to remind you to do all this

Stay in the present

- Play when you are ready

- Be ready when you play

- Focus on what you are doing

Visualise your successful shot

- See it happen in your mind first

- Make sure you know where each ball should land

- Play in your head

- Have a routine and a rhythm

- This is the key to consistency

- Develop a mental pattern of how you play your stroke – know it and use it

- If your routine is interrupted – always restart it, and from the beginning

### Use YOUR psychology to win!

For a great talk that every croquet player should watch, google Reg Bamford Croquet Mental Game.

**Dave Kibble**

Dave Kibble putting his words in to practice at the Hampshire coaching pod at Winchester (both photos by I.Harrison)





## Swindon break own charity record



**S**windon Croquet Club members broke their own charity fund-raising record in 2018 when they raised £507 for the Wiltshire Air Ambulance, the fourth year running that they have supported the vital service, reports John Airey.

Terry Hunt was the driving force behind the first charity croquet tournament, which he organised five years ago at Swindon, and the club have kept it going in Terry's memory as the Terry Hunt Charity Shield.

The Tournament is contested between a team from Swindon CC and one called 'Extra Time and Friends', who are a section for the retired fans from Swindon Town Football in the Community who have had ties with the club going back ten years to when the club first introduced the football fans to the sport of croquet.

Many of the Extra Timers and partners have joined the croquet club and they make up a big slice of the membership now. However, this year the Terry Hunt Charity Shield was won by the club team after a closely fought match.

Photograph: Flanking paramedic 'Rocky', are Swindon CC committee members John Airey (Club Sec.), Diana Trott, Linda Hunt and Wendy White.

## Dulwich President's Invitation

**O**ne of our new guests was heard saying, "I hear that this event is mostly about chat, food & drink, with some croquet thrown in?" I think we managed that...

When all sensible croquet players should have been wrapped up warm, Dulwich CC hosted their 'President's Selection' for the fifth time in mid-January!

**The event was again generously sponsored by Little Forest**

<https://littleforest.co.uk/>

This year's field saw four new guests arrive at Dulwich including Simon Williams (all the way from Dublin); the other guests were Alison Maugham, John Spiers, Harry Fisher, J-P Moberly and Lionel Tibble.

The hosts fielded Guy Scurfield, Mark Daley, Simon Carter, Andrew Dymond, and Pierre Beaudry.

Fisher would tell anyone who was listening that he was playing dreadfully, but he actually pulled out four wins from his five block games, losing only to Tibble, who had a clean sweep with five victories. The day progressed so well that we had time for a short-fire set of quarter-finals – best of three 7-point games – as darkness descended. This resulted in a semi-finals line-up of Tibble v Moberly and Fisher v Carter.

Moberly prevailed in three games over Tibble, while Fisher took out Carter in two close games.

In final of the Plate (or Butter Dish, as that's the prize), Williams beat Spiers 1-7, 7-3, 7-3. He took home a £50 prize.

In the final of the main event Moberly got home narrowly 7-6, 7-6, against Fisher, retaining the trophy he won last year, and pocketing £250. Fisher took home £150. Feel free to ask Moberly what happened to the trophy!

**Guy Scurfield, President, Dulwich CC**



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### Moss, worms, fungi and mowing

**Moss** - It is a good idea to check thoroughly for moss. It has a habit of creeping up on you, and it can be very difficult to spot unless the light is right. It is important to deal with moss as soon as possible before the main growing season gets underway.

It produces spores in spring, and if you let these ripen they will spread more moss, which will come to life in the autumn. Moss doesn't have a vascular system, so cannot carry herbicides through the leaf to the roots. The solution is to treat it with soluble or granular iron, which will desiccate any moss that it contacts. If correctly treated the moss will turn black and the leaf will die. However, some of the roots may regenerate, so if you see regrowth, treat it again. Keep it dead at all times.

This way the roots get no nutrition, and they will eventually die.

~

If **worms** are spoiling your playing surface and you would like to be worm-free, there is an easy solution. Contact me for advice.

~

**Fungi** - Mycorrhizal fungi are very useful allies.

They attach themselves to the grassroots and grow long invisible hyphae into the surrounding soil.

As a result of photosynthesis, the grass provides a constant supply of carbohydrates to the fungi.

In exchange, the fungi provide minerals and moisture to the grassroots.

It is a partnership made in heaven, because the fungal hyphae are much longer and finer than the roots, and have a much higher absorptive capacity. To help this process, I include Mycorrhizal fungi in my Spring and Autumn fertilisers.

~

**Mowing** - I mow at 8-10mm through the winter, and will be reducing this to 6-8mm in late March – weather permitting – and reduce further for the playing season.

**Duncan Hector**, (contact details: see my advert , left)

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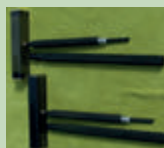
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For details or discussion, contact Dave Trimmer  
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[www.davetrimmermallets.com](http://www.davetrimmermallets.com)





**Downham CC**  
- the first 30 years -

... continued from page 24

... and in it, suspended from one of the many hooks around the wall, hung an enormous frying pan.

A member took it home, spent an industrious morning sanding, scrubbing and polishing and returned a shining griddle to the larder.

Thus was the Stow Pan, our first trophy competition, born and all in all, that first year at Stow was a delightful season.

Lots of people took up the game in a friendly, relaxed atmosphere and beautiful setting with glasses of Pimms and picnics in the shade of great trees.

With all that and the wonderful long summer, Downham CC was firmly established.

We give our thanks to Judy Anderson, the original, longstanding and enthusiastic Secretary of the East Anglian Croquet Federation, who loaned the equipment which gave us our original momentum,.

Sarah Hampson for her assistance with coaching, and all members throughout the years who have helped keep the Club running.

Long may we continue!

**Jonathan Toye**

**The Croquet Association Website**

[www.croquet.org.uk](http://www.croquet.org.uk)

is a fabulous resource for croquet information covering: membership, news, laws & rules, coaching, who is who, and tournament details (complete with an on-line entry system).

**Croquet jargon**

The CA website also has a full glossary of croquet terms, jargon and acronyms that are sometimes used in Gazette reporting.

To find the glossary go to: **Advice & Technical/ Other Articles / Croquet Jargon**

or use this link:

<https://www.croquet.org.uk/?p=tech/other/jargon>

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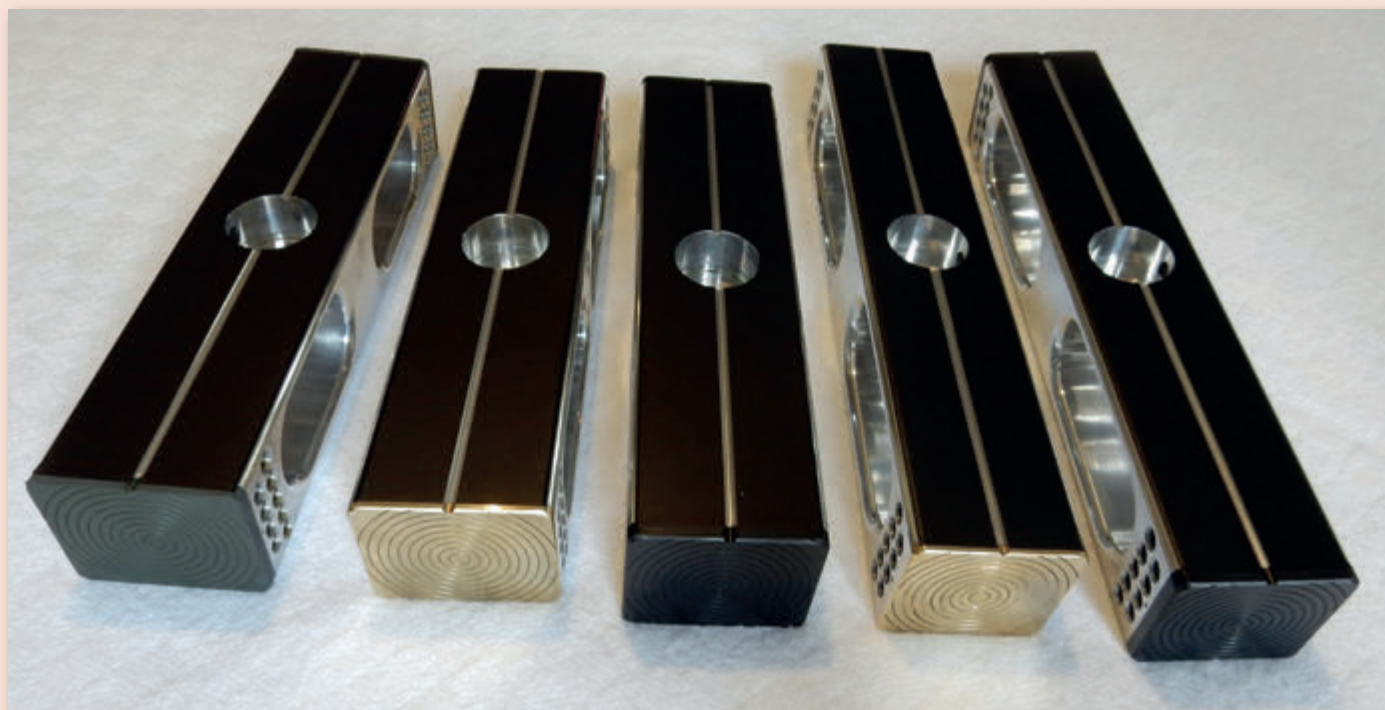
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