

The

Issue 383 December 2019

# CROQUET

Gazette



**The  
Most Improved  
Players  
of 2019**



# From our files researched by Frances Colman

## 10 years ago - 2009



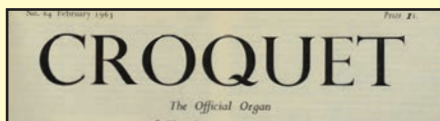
**First nontuple peel** – Ever felt that just as your game starts to come together and you might be catching up with the better players, they just push the peaks still further out of your reach? Well Robert Fulford has taken this to the extreme by completing the first competitive nontuple peel (yes – that is indeed NINE PEELS on the peelee while running twelve hoops with the striker's ball) in an internal competition game at Colchester against Jack Wicks. . . the break concluded with a straight quadruple peel . . . (from *'The View from the Bar'* by Nick Parish)

**New President** – I would like to welcome Quiller Barrett as the new President of the Croquet Association. He is the 11th President in our 112-year history, but the first to be elected to the role. At the same time I'd like to reiterate my thanks to Bernard Neal, who has served us kindly over the last five years.

**Wales** – The Welsh Croquet Association have indicated that they will, if necessary, withdraw from playing in the MacRobertson Shield so that they can enter a team in the World Team Championship. (From *Patricia Duke-Cox's Chairman's Column*)

**Casting v "Hitting the bloody ball"** – (letter) I agree with everything that John Solomon says in his letter. Where I demur is that I suspect casting is the optimal shooting technique. . . When managing the World Championship at Hurlingham I wandered on to the cricket pitch and discovered new Zealander Bob Jackson, famous for the accuracy of his shooting, practicing casting. . . The best shot that it has ever been by misfortune to encounter is David Maugham, and he is a regular caster. . . I particularly agree with John's view that casting is tedious to watch and detracts from the game. There is precedent for legislation to prevent techniques regarded as contrary to the 'spirit' of the game. In golf the 'between the legs putting style' was banned after Sam Snead won a tournament using the style. For Croquet perhaps we need a law forbidding the mallet head to be advanced beyond the striker's ball more than once. – Eric Solomon

## 50 years ago - 1969



**C.A. Notes** – Associates are reminded that subscriptions are due on January 1st 1970 and it would be a great help if they could be sent to the Office then.

Overseas, Juniors (up to age of 24), Non-Tournament & Golf Croquet members £1.10.0. All others £4.0.0.

**The Ladies' Field Cup** – revived after four years, was much enjoyed by all competitors. It was played on the Compton Lawns and Mr. Perry was Manager and Referee.

Miss Warwick, representing the old brigade and Mrs. Sundius-Smith a newcomer, tied, (and) Miss Warwick finally won the third game of the play-off.

### An 'Ember'

A lady from Kovorosisk  
Went off to bed with a bisque  
When they said, "Is that moral"  
She said "You've no quarrel,  
It's just a security risk."

M.B.R

**Hurlingham** – Pride of place must be given to Dr. Roger Bray who took over the management at short notice. . . (his) imperturbable manner and professional application to his task will no doubt make the Hurlingham croquet committee hope for a long-standing association in the years to come. In addition to his duties in the tent he entered for three events and the score sheets provide abundant evidence that the cares of office in no way affected his prowess on the lawns. Indeed no sooner had he left the fray than he seemed to be pegging out. (*The Hurlingham Cup final: Dr. R. W. Bray beat B.G. Perry +17*).

**Devonshire Park** – There is an ancient permanence about Devonshire Park and this was a vintage year. The unhealed scars of a long dry season on the lawn were a small price to pay for this unwonted extension of summer. . .

As we retire to our hibernations we look back with gratitude to the architects of this fortnight. There will always be 'frogs in the marsh mud' who 'drone their old lament' but only a noisy few.

## 100 years ago - 1919



### Accusation of slow play refuted –

Dear Sir,

I shall be pleased to give £5 to any charity named by the anonymous writer of the "Gazette" account of the Championship meeting if and when he is able to prove that I take five minutes to think between "two perfectly obvious strokes", or indeed between any two strokes of a turn.

Surely the official account should neither be prejudiced, inaccurate, nor show marked unfriendliness to any of the competitors.

Yours, etc., C. F. Barry

### (Reply in 'Editorial Notes') –

We trust that Mr. Barry does not really imagine that any discourtesy was intended in our account of the matches in the Championships.

To make the account of a tournament interesting, a certain freedom must be allowed to the narrator, and opportunities for criticism as well as praise have to be seized as they occur.

"Five minutes" is an elastic phrase, and must not be interpreted as if measured with a stopwatch; and we all know well that there are no unimportant strokes in a big match, though to the onlooker, who sees most of the game, some may be less important than others.

Mr. Barry must not take our remarks too seriously. When he stands for Parliament he may expect something in the local press, in which a certain bias will be quite apparent.

**Climate change** – The contest for the most important event in the Croquet World (*The Croquet Championships*) opened in rather cold and dull weather, which unfortunately continued throughout the week, giving the spectators an opportunity of grumbling at our changeable climate.

### Registration of Assumed Names –

All assumed names must be registered with the Secretary, C.A., 4 Southampton Row, W.C. The Annual Registration fee is 5s.

The following assumed name has been registered:-

Dr. J.S. Edkins . . . "J Essie"  
Charles Crawley, Secretary

# Editorial

The scary headline below is something to concern all members, and not just those Standard Members for whom this is potentially the last paper Gazette they will receive.

It is important for us all because we could be about to lose this most easily accessible connection with many of these Standard Members and this is where CA Premium and Supporter members (coupled with club officials) can help the Association.

Hopefully many of you affected will heed the advice below and enhance your membership to 'Supporter' status yourselves and thereby stay on the paper Gazette distribution list. But others may need some encouragement to do so, and some of you may also need the help of your club database administrator (usually the Secretary) to help you through the process – please ask!

We are a stronger Association by having everyone fully engaged, and whilst the mailing of a link to the online version of the Gazette will be fine for some, we don't want to lose our connection with many others.

Perhaps your Club's own paper Gazette will be more frequently thumbed than before but there is nothing like having your own copy.

This Gazette wraps up 2019 with the

announcement of the Most Improved Player Awards and congratulations to the deserved recipients who grace the cover this time.

There is also a look forward to early 2020 and the GC World Teams Championship in New Zealand in January (*will you, like me, be watching the live streaming in the middle of the night?*).

This issue also carries a comprehensive guide to all the croquet courses offered by our three Academies, along with those run by the ambitious High Wycombe Club.

CA qualified coaches at all four venues await your arrival with enthusiasm, ready to give of their experience and technical know-how – but be warned, most courses fill up very fast indeed, so book early or prepare for disappointment.

In closing there is just room to congratulate Ian Burridge of Wales on his election to the high office of President of the World Croquet Federation.



## Chris Roberts

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Issue 383 December 2019

**Front cover:** The winners of the Most Improved Players Awards 2019 - Steve Leonard, Sophie McGlen and Callum Johnson.

**This Page:** The Editor receiving a CA Diploma from President Quiller Barrett. (Photographs by Chris Roberts and Frances Colman)

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## Will this be your last paper Gazette?



**- Important Changes -**  
**Free paper Gazettes for Standard Members to end**



- This is a deliberate re-run of this important article published in the last issue -

As announced on page 4 of the July edition, from 1st January 2020 automatic entitlement to a free copy of the Croquet Gazette in paper form for Standard Members comes to an end.

Standard Members will then only get a paper Gazette until the end of the year in which they join, or if they join after 1 August, until the end of the following year.

As a Standard Member, if you no longer get the paper Gazette, you will remain entitled to access the Gazette on our website, and will be notified by email when a new edition is published (unless

you opt out of receiving the notification).

**This will initially affect Standard Members who joined before 1st August this year.**

**If you are affected and would like to continue to receive the Gazette in its paper form, you can do so by becoming either a Supporter Member for £18 p.a. or a Premium Member for £38 p.a. (both are the discounted rates for Direct Debit payers).**

The latter category is really for those who wish to play in tournaments that are in the CA fixtures calendar, as it gives you both cheaper entry and a higher priority.

Joining either category now will give

you membership until the end of 2020, so there is no advantage in waiting until next year! We hope you have enjoyed getting the Gazette and will want to both continue to do so and support the work of your Association, at the same time taking out the appropriate subscription.

You can do this easily by logging in to the CA website, and then clicking on your name in the top right of the screen. Select the 'Memberships' tab, and then click the 'view' button against the CA membership line. There is then a 'Change Membership/Options' button.

**Jeff Dawson, Chairman of the Membership Changes Implementation Group**

## Chairman of Council

The outcome of the first meeting of the new CA Council was well documented in the November edition of the Gazette.

Since the meeting, Council members have been developing their thoughts on future policy and strategy using Trello board software to communicate and assemble their views.

Having agreed our overall aim "To get more people playing more croquet in more places, by promoting, developing and administering the sport", Council found that a survey of clubs was needed to answer many questions not readily available on our current database.

The survey was put together by Council in collaboration with the Marketing Committee, issued in mid-November and by 1 December, around half of our clubs had responded.

The information contained in the survey will be vital in helping us make the best decisions based on fact and not supposition.

The next decision made was to initially concentrate on two specific areas of the CA – "Marketing" and "Efficiency".

This part of the process is being facilitated by Rich Waterman and we are starting to develop our future policy and strategies covering these two areas with the aim of reaching agreement at the January 2020 meeting of Council.

On a more general note, a number of members of the Association have commented that they feel that the CA is only about competitive and elite play.

This is not true, The Association is in existence to promote, develop and administer the sport at all levels from "grass roots" social play, to top international level.

It is an inclusive sport that is played on equal terms by both genders.

As part of its development, we intend to promote this message of inclusivity to help develop the sport.

Finally may I wish you all a Merry Christmas and "Croquetfull" New Year.

**Jonathan Isaacs**



Sharon Clark captured this striking rainbow during winter play at High Wycombe CC in early December.



## Chairman of the Executive Board

**Croquet a la Carte**

**Starters** - Let me, as your Board Chairman, wish you a very Happy Christmas on behalf of the CA.

~

**Main Course** - All has changed at the top and your Executive Board held its first formal meeting at the end of October.

We may be a small team but during the close season, much of the CA business and policy decisions gets done, so Action Plans have been formulated and already some have been progressed.

Notably, we are moving to a much greater use of electronic communications for our Committees, and our members are encouraged to help us go paperless to be more environmentally friendly..

The various Committees met in November and December to review the past year and prepare their plans for 2020; the Fixtures Book is in the final stages of its collation and it will be available on the website shortly.

If you want to receive a printed copy of the Fixtures Book in the post, then please order one through the CA Shop (closing date for orders is 31 December)

Each Board Member has a responsibility to liaise with the CA's Committees to ensure a cohesive communication of our policies.

Should you want to discuss any croquet matter, please contact the Chair of the appropriate Committee (contact details are on page 30).

The CA is looking for a new Treasurer to replace Peter Death who is retiring before next October.

~

**Dessert** - Croquet would not exist without its stalwarts and my thanks goes to all those who spend many hours supporting their clubs in a variety of roles, from mowing lawns to providing catering. The CA wants to recognise these efforts and relies on clubs nominating individuals to receive a CA Diploma. This can be done by sending a short citation (300 words), signed by a club official, and sent to the CA Office.

Croquet needs these efforts, both to sustain our current clubs and to create new ones in those areas of the country where there are few, as well as supporting the Federations in their sterling work providing regional support for our sport.

The CA is largely a volunteer organisation and its Committees that organise and maintain our sport are always looking for help and new blood. Could that be you? If so, please get in touch for a confidential chat.

**Roger Staples**



### CA Office Christmas hours

The CA Office will be closed from 1pm on the 24 December and open for business as usual on the 2 January.

We wish all our members a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Best wishes,

**Mark Suter, CA Office Manager**

## Ian Burridge elected as new WCF President



Ian Burridge (Wales) has been elected to succeed Amir Ramsis (Egypt) from 1 January 2020 to 31 December 2023.

He received

42 votes from a total of 18 Full and Associate Members while Mike Cohn (Australia) received 18 votes.

~

Amir Ramsis (Egypt) retires as WCF President on 31 December 2019. He was appointed Acting WCF President in

September 2011, after the tragic death of Charles Jones, and was then elected to the post with effect from 1 January 2012 and re-elected with effect from 1 January 2016.

Amir has been a popular and regular officiator at World Championships throughout his time in office.

His presidential style was marked by enthusiasm and a friendly approach and will be warmly remembered.

### Samir Patel is re-elected to the WCF Management Committee

Luis de Gortazar (Spain) and Mike Orgill (USA) retire on 31 December 2019 and decided not to seek re-election.

Samir Patel (England) stood for re-election together with Hal (Harold) Denton (USA),

Begoña Elizaburu (Spain) and Amir Ramsis (Egypt).

Samir and Hal topped the poll with 44 and 41 votes respectively while Amir just pipped Begoña with 37 votes to 36.

Accordingly, Hal Denton, Samir Patel and Amir Ramsis have been elected to serve from 1 January 2020 to 31 December 2023.



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

## Online entry system now caters for TEAMS

The tournament entry system on the CA website, which can be used to enter all but a few tournaments in the CA Fixtures Calendar, has now been enhanced to allow entry of TEAMS into inter-club and inter-counties competitions.

### Club & County entries

You can enter, and pay for, a team event on behalf of your club in a similar way to entering an individual tournament, except that you will be prompted to select the name of the club which you are entering.

The fixtures book entries for the inter-club competitions (**AC Inter-Club Championship**, **Mary Rose**, **Longman Cup** and **Secretary's Shield**; **GC Inter-Club Championship**, **Murphy Shield** and **Federations Shield**) are

already live and accepting entries, which close on 9 March 2020.

### Players please register for your county

There has also been a raft of enhancements to support registering qualifications, availability and selection of players for the Inter-Counties events, in addition to entering the teams.

Potential players are asked to go online and register their availability and, even if they have previously done so, record why they are eligible to play for a county

You can do so by logging into the website, clicking on your name at the top right of the window and then on the "Inter-Counties" button near the top of the details page.

Then click either the "Add a County" button or the green arrow alongside an existing record to update it.

### Other enhancements

There is now an indication (a knife & fork symbol) of those tournaments at which lunch is available and the opportunity to request it and state dietary preferences will only be available for those.

~

Other enhancements, to improve the handling of allocation, withdrawals and promotion from any reserve list are planned and will hopefully be introduced for the 2020 season.

**Ian Vincent, Hon. Secretary**

## Fixtures Book 2020 - Pre-order now from the CA Shop (closing date 31 December)

Early next year, details of the 2020 fixtures will once again be published online.

In addition, it will be possible to review and/or print off a PDF copy of the Fixtures Book.

### ~ REMINDER ~

A hard copy of the **Fixtures Book** and **Handicap Cards** will continue to be printed and **will be sent to CLUBS free of charge.**

However, as an environmental and cost-saving measure, **they will NOT be sent routinely to Individual Members.**

### Those who want a hard-copy can place a pre-order via the CA Shop at a cost of £5

~ Go to [CAShop.org.uk](http://CAShop.org.uk) and click on the button at the top of the menu list marked 'pre-order FB 2020'. Simply add to cart and proceed to checkout ~

Your Fixture Book will be delivered to your door as near to the 1st February as possible.

The closing date for pre orders is the 31st December 2019.

**Mark Suter, Croquet Association Manager**



## Obituary

### Derek Old 1936 -2019



**D**erek Old was born in Plymouth but his family moved North when he was quite young.

He served his engineering apprenticeship at Parsons and assisted in the pipework installations at Ferrybridge and Didcot power stations with visits to Yugoslavia, Iraq and Singapore power stations.

It was after retiring early that he was introduced to croquet in 1992 at Tyneside CC, together with his wife Jacqui. Derek soon realised that he had a keen eye for long roquets and long hoop running which he utilised in both AC and GC games, becoming quite a formidable opponent.

He also joined Belsay Hall CC to enable him to play more often and was a regular team member at both clubs, eventually concentrating on GC play.

After winning plenty of silverware at club level, he then ventured away to national tournaments, and won the GC English National Singles Championship (for the Ascot Cup) in 1998, the first GC Open Doubles with Chris Sheen in 2000 and the inaugural GC Veterans (for the Alan Oldham Memorial trophy) in 2007. He also travelled to play in the GC World Championships in Florida USA, Royal Leamington Spa and Sussex where he proudly finished 8th.

Derek will be sorely missed at both Tyneside and Belsay clubs where he always had a smile for everyone and often freely gave advice and help when needed - he was special.

**Derek Watts, Tyneside CC**

## Obituary

### Jill Carpenter 1937 -2019



**J**ill Carpenter joined Compton Croquet Club in 1991 and took to AC with enthusiasm.

She never achieved a single figure handicap, but was always a challenging opponent, playing an attacking game making best use of her bisques. Over the years she won a number of trophies in internal competitions and played in CA tournaments.

Her modest nature hid a steely determination to succeed at whatever she undertook and for the best part of a decade she was the Club's press and publicity officer.

Two items in particular will commemorate her membership: she commissioned a unique trophy for a beginners' competition - a silver toast rack formed from miniature items of croquet equipment; and her elegant presentation table cloth of green material bedecked with numerous croquet club badges donated by visitors to our tournaments, which takes pride of place at every Compton prize-giving.

## Obituary

### John Sim 1938 -2019



**J**ohn Sim joined Ryde Lawn Tennis & Croquet Club as a tennis player sometime in the late 70s and served in various committee roles for much of that time up until his death in November.

He was born in Aberdeen and soon after leaving school signed up in the regular army in order to join the Parachute Regiment and served in Cyprus opposing the escalating guerrilla war in the late 50s.

Back home, John took a job at Long John Distillery in Glasgow and was in charge of bottling whisky before moving to the Island in 1970. He retired in 2003 after a varied career, the last 15 years being with the Trinity House Lighthouse Service.

I first met John at RLTC in the early 2000s. At that time he was a seasoned tennis player and also quite partial to the other game with the little white ball.

On retirement I think someone suggested he should try golf croquet. He was a natural and it wasn't long before he hung up his racquet and bought a croquet mallet.

Over the years John played regularly in our open tournament and at the highest level for Ryde and county GC teams, and only a few months ago his contribution was crucial to Hampshire's survival in Division One of the Inter-counties.

Although seriously competitive, John always had time to help learners align their mallets and surprise themselves by scoring the hoop. I've lost count of the number of nervous beginners he partnered to success in one of our doubles competitions.

John's outwardly casual approach to the game and idiosyncratic view of some of the less important rules endeared him to so many, and mix-ins at Ryde will be much the poorer for his absence.

It is behind the scenes though where John contributed to the welfare of so many people. He was passionate about the prosperity of our club and did everything practical in his power to ensure its success at every level.

John wore the mantle of Maintenance, and then Grounds Maintenance (Chairman) for most of the last 20 years. No-one will ever know everything which he did - he was too modest to tell - but over the next few months and years many more will come to realise just what this man was doing for their benefit.

John died in the Island's Mountbatten Hospice after a short illness and he will be greatly missed by his wife Pam, and family, and by his many friends on both sides of the Solent.

**Roy Tillcock, Ryde LT&CC**

Her devotion to those less fortunate than herself, and to animals, dominated her life. She learned sign language and taught at schools for the deaf in Southampton and Brighton.

Later, following an Open University degree in educational psychology, she worked in London schools. Throughout her life she worked tirelessly to improve access for the disabled.

The highlight of her season was the annual croquet day she hosted for the local deaf community.

**Roger Wood, Compton CC, Eastbourne**

# The Most Improved Players Awards 2019



**The Most improved Female AC player**  
(The Steel Memorial Bowl)  
- Sophie McGlen -



**The Most improved GC player**  
(The Spiers Trophy)  
- Steve Leonard -



**The Most improved Male AC player**  
(The Apps Memorial Bowl)  
- Callum Johnson -

The Croquet Association is pleased to announce these awards for the most improved players of 2019. The CA continues to encourage clubs and Federations to monitor improving players, and nominate them for these awards.

**Frances Colman, Chairman of the Handicap Committee**

**UNITED STATES  
CROQUET  
ASSOCIATION**



I was thrilled to be asked to attend the US National Croquet Center at West Palm Beach

on 22 November for a gala dinner and induction of my late father into the US Croquet Association Hall of Fame.

This is an institution that has been going since 1979, but it appears this is the first occasion where a non-US citizen has been so honoured (perhaps I should say honored – it's all so different there, and I haven't got to the US wickets or rules yet!).

We went as a party of seven family and friends.

The award was nominated by Bob Kroeger, who is I think one of the only two remaining founding members of the USCA.

He seemed very influenced by John.

The evening had great organisational support, and was hosted by the Chairman of the Croquet Federation of

## US Hall of Fame inducts John Solomon



America (CFA), David McCoy, and amazing fundraising support was offered by several members for new redevelopment plans.

Then three individuals were inducted to the Hall of Fame: Harvey Geiger, Danny Honeycutt and posthumously John Solomon.

The induction event happened to be on what would have been my father's 88th birthday, and I had the honour of accepting on his behalf.

It was simply a matter of delivering

**CROQUET  
FOUNDATION  
OF AMERICA**



Stephen Mulliner's eulogy at his 2014 funeral (*as carried in Gazette 353, see below*)

I only added a brief introduction on his non-croquet loves of music, amateur dramatics and city/business life; his modesty resulting in people who knew him for one reason often having no clue as to his other interests – oh, and that Stephen never mentioned his

1951 jump shot over second hoop to peg out!

With many thanks to the CFA and the USCA.

**Greg Solomon**

Editor's note: Past Gazettes can be viewed or downloaded from the CA website.

Follow this navigation:

Home > News & Press > Croquet Gazette > View issues of the Croquet Gazette.

# A major new publication by the Croquet Association

**K**eith Wylie's book *Expert Croquet Tactics* has been the bible for aspiring champions since it was first published in 1985.

Top level association croquet has changed a lot since then but no-one has dared to publish a book to update Wylie - **until now.**

The CA is delighted to announce the publication of:

## ***"Beyond Expert Croquet Tactics"***

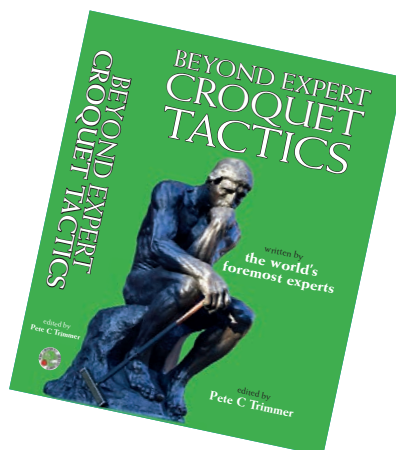
It's a few years since the idea was mooted that a team of top-ranking players might author such a publication.

Putting such a multi-author book together would have been a considerable challenge for any commercial publisher – and it certainly turned out to be just that for the CA, whose members had not produced anything like this before.

The book not only covers tactical developments in the game since Wylie (including refinements of triple peeling, sextuple peels, super-shot openings, pegged-out endgames, peeling the opponent, and super-advanced tactics) but psychological aspects of self-development, match preparation and how to compete most effectively; along with sections on equipment, statistics and a history of top level play.

The book as a whole is designed to help players understand how best to develop their game, and to maximise their potential – including those who will reach the very top of world-class competition.

~



I would like to take the opportunity to thank, first of all, the authors:

**Keith Aiton,  
Reg Bamford,  
Paddy Chapman,  
Chris and Jenny Clarke,  
Martin French,  
Robert Fulford,  
David Maugham,  
Stephen Mulliner,  
David Openshaw,  
William Ormerod,  
Samir Patel,  
Pete Trimmer  
and Chris Williams**

**You will probably recognise many of their names as true croquet experts – no less than five of them have won the World Championship.**

They have each spent a considerable time on their contributions; they also kindly agreed to contracts without any royalties so that the CA can offer this new testament of

croquet expertise at an attractive price.

I know very well that, behind the scenes, many of our members have spent vast amounts of time helping to get *Beyond Expert Croquet Tactics* to the finishing line.

Thanks in particular to Strat Liddiard and Ian Plummer for their enthusiasm and help getting the project out of the starting blocks, to Ian BurrIDGE who worked intensely with the authors over long periods, to Chris Clarke who reviewed the book from a technical perspective, to Pete Trimmer who edited the book, to Kitty Carruthers who provided specialist publishing knowledge and helped to reformat the book for the printers, and to Brian Havill who helped on the last lap.

My predecessors as President, Bernard Neal and John Solomon, would have been delighted to know that the CA has published such a significant book.

Order your copy now – it's aimed at players who know at least the basics of triple peels but many chapters make rewarding reading wherever you are on the croquet ladder if you are really competitive and aspire to be a champion.

**Quiller Barrett, President of the CA**

***"Beyond Expert Croquet Tactics"***  
is a must for all croquet bookshelves  
and is available now via the CA Shop  
at £24.50 ~ [www.CAshop.org.uk](http://www.CAshop.org.uk)  
*Order your copy today!*

**T**here has been a turnover of the team on Marketing and I welcome Stephanie Ferguson, Linda Gavighan and John Reddish to the Committee and am excited to get their ideas and contributions.

Thank you to everyone who has corresponded with me in the last two months. I have been bowled over by the passion and commitment within our community, and the diverse range of feedback and new ideas being put forward.

These include everything from livestream feedback to suggested ways to bring social prescribing to croquet.

Some of you have been in touch about new fun formats for croquet beginners / youngsters, e.g. Racing Croquet by Bernard Pendry, and Croquet Bowls by Jason Carley.

It's good to hear about these new trials and I hope that these initiatives will attract more people to our fantastic sport.

I am working on the video footage I recorded over the summer to produce some promotional videos, and hope to utilise the CA video kit for other projects too, so please – let me know if you have any bright ideas!

## **Marketing Committee Column**

Internally, Marketing is taking a prominent role in the new-look CA. There is a wealth of knowledge and advice in the CA website; we want to harness this whilst updating to reflect the current situation in our sport, and make this much easier to access.

One of our key goals is to update the 'front page' of the CA website to make it much more accessible to non-players and beginners, and we will continue to work on this over the winter.

### **National Croquet Week 2020 ~ 11-17 May**

Feedback received from clubs and Federations over the last year is that a single-day format did not suit a majority of clubs, and that the new dates need to be published and circulated as early as possible to allow clubs to plan around this.

As a result, for 2020, we have decided to trial a week-long format 11-17 May, with the idea that clubs can choose to run their events within this period, perhaps easing engagement groups such as school and companies during the working week.

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



# The WCF GC World Teams Championship

The WCF Golf Croquet World Team Championship Tier 1 takes place in Nelson, New Zealand, from 6-12 January, 2020.

The steady increase in the domination by young players of the upper reaches of GC will be apparent in the forthcoming Championship.

Egypt and New Zealand are the 2012 winners and 2016 defending champions respectively and will start as the top two seeds with almost every player in their teens or twenties.

Egypt head Block A and are likely to be joined by USA, South Africa and Sweden.

New Zealand will head Block B and should play England, who have three players under 30, Australia and Ireland – both of whom have two players under 30.

The teams play each other team in their block in one-day Test Matches.

The top two in each block progress to the semi-finals, finals and third/fourth place play-off.

The bottom two in each block play a Plate event, in which the main objective is to avoid being eighth and hence relegated to Tier 2 for the next Championship in 2024.

Egypt will be led by Amr Alebiary, the current

world no.2, and GC World Championship finalists Hamy Erian (2015) and Mohamed Karem (2019).

They can also draw from Soha Mostafa, the current Women's World Champion, Mostafa Nezar, the 2013 U21 World Champion and Yasser Sayed.

New Zealand will field two former U21 GC World Champions and the current holder in Josh Freeth (2015), Felix Webby (2017) and Edmund Fordyce (2019) backed up by the experienced Duncan Dixon.

England's challenge rests on the mallets of John-Paul Moberly, Richard Bilton and Tobi Savage together with (the even more experienced) Stephen Mulliner.

Nelson has a reputation as a suntrap and the championship is taking place in New Zealand's high summer – this promises to be a hot World Championship in every sense.

**Stephen Mulliner**

Readers are reminded to look out for details of 'Live-streaming' which will hopefully be operating at this Championship.

In the run-up to the start of the event, expect details to be posted on these websites: – Ed.

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

WCF – [www.worldcroquet.org.uk](http://www.worldcroquet.org.uk)



Mohamed Karem (above) and Josh Freeth watched by Ben Rothman (images by Chris Roberts)



## News from the Handicap Committee

In addition to deciding on the Most Improved Player Awards for 2019 (see page 7), the CA Handicap Committee has completed or is progressing several projects for the improved playing experience of all.

We have appointed eight more CA Handicappers (see right) in addition to Jane Babbage who took up the position two months ago and we are keen to see others advance.

### Handicapping workshops

Several clubs and at least one Federation do not have an appointed handicapper and in order to remedy this we will be discussion with the Federations soon about running Handicapping Workshops, building on good work undertaken by the South-West Federation. Support materials will be supplied as we encourage handicapper vacancies to be filled.

### Skills related benchmarks

Chief of this support is the setting of skills-related benchmarks with which Club, Federation and CA Handicappers will be better equipped to establish and maintain uniformity throughout our domain.

This is a 'work in progress' and expect to see publication in the spring.

### Discipline in handicapping

Coupled to this is the reaffirmation that all players must play off their correct handicap at ALL TIMES and appointed handicappers at all levels are required to police this.

### Short Croquet and AC

The decision not to have Short Croquet (SC) results recorded on a regular AC handicap card was revisited and is still valid. At the same time the matter of doubles play in SC was also discussed and has been referred to the AC Laws committee in the first instance.

### New style handicap cards

Widespread dissatisfaction with the current handicap cards has been received, most notably because of the lack of inclusive 'points exchange' and 'trigger points' tables.

The committee have looked at a number of members' own designs and players can look forward to a new-style card for 2020.

We will also ensure that a lighter green card is used for the GC variant.

Please note that handicap cards will be sent in a bundle to Club Secretaries rather than member's homes (see page 5).

Other projects are also the area of interest of the Handicap Committee and/or its members and because space is limited here will be the subject of further Gazette reports in the New Year.

**Frances Colman,  
Chairman, Handicap Committee**

## CA Handicapper Appointments

The CA Handicap Committee is pleased to announce that the following have been appointed as CA Handicappers.

Congratulations to them and thank you for taking on this important role.

### CA Handicapper (AC)

Tom Weston

### CA Handicapper (GC)

Ian Burridge

Andrew Cowing

Mike Huxley

Tim King

John-Paul Moberly

Alan Morton

Dick Strover

**Frances Colman,  
Chairman, Handicap Committee**

## Lack of Championship Referees is a 'Hall of Shame' says Hugh Carlisle

Dear Editor,

When I congratulated Mark Ormerod on his appointment as RoT of the Spencer Ell Cup (AC Third Eight) he told me, to my surprise, that he was the only AC Referee (ACR) in the event.

I became more interested in the numbers after I became involved in preparation for the AC World Championship 2022 because it is a requirement that there is a deputy Tournament Referee and two other Championship Referees (CR) at each venue.

So I started my research by looking at the list of CRs.

This is 24 strong, of which at least half could be described as inactive; there is only a handful of current top players and they should not be expected to referee if playing in the event.

I then looked at the recently selected lists.

It used to be the case, before there were CRs, that all members of a MacRobertson Shield (World Team Championship) team were expected to be ACRs.

It was thus with further surprise that I noted that the new Elite Squad contains only three CRs, Maugham, Mulliner and Patel; two ACRs, Avery and Death; and three non-referees, Burch, Carter and Suter.

In the President's Cup (AC First Eight): Maugham and Mulliner are CRs; Death and Reeve are ACRs; Fisher is an assistant ACR and there are three non-referees, Carter, Riva and Suter.

In the Chairman's Salver (AC Second Eight): Brown, Lines and Dawson are CRs; Trimmer is an ACR, Powe an assistant and Goacher, Gott and Hopgood are non-referees.

In the Spencer Ell Cup (AC Third Eight): Ormerod is an ACR, Rigge an assistant and the remainder Allim, Chang, Hallam,

McDiarmid, Town and Waterman are all unqualified.

It is a matter of comment that those who are assistant ACRs have reached that position by failing (to complete) the test; unless their powers are enlarged by the Tournament Referee they have no greater status than an umpire (see regs. R5c and R7, Tournament Regulations 2019).

But it is a matter of dismay that minus players do not regard qualifying as a referee as mandatory.

And they ought surely to expect to go further?

The CA website it states "after two years' experience as a qualified referee, you can take the examination, with two examiners for the practical, to become a Championship Referee by achieving the higher pass mark."

As this suggests, candidates are not limited to minus players: all ACRs should think about going forward.

Qualification is not a perquisite of the A-Class; on the contrary, it is well known in Law that 'the best advocates do not always make the best judges'.

As I said at the CA AGM, we are grateful to the Laws Committee for their work; but I hope that they will find time and energy to encourage qualification of more referees and in particular Championship Referees.

But the players themselves have the remedy in their own hands.....

(I might add that I have excluded myself from seeking promotion as I do not regard my hearing and sight as good enough. I have to say that an upper age limit of say 75 should be imposed for championship referees).

**Hugh Carlisle,  
Hurlingham CC**

## End of printed Gazettes for Standard Members worry no.1

Dear Editor,

Now that a paper copy of the Gazette is no longer being delivered free to Standard Members ("*Important Changes*" - page 3, November Gazette 282), more of us will be reading the e-edition.

I have asked previously if we can receive an electronic edition that is easier to read.

Currently the two-page spreads of many features get cut in two.

Please can these two-page articles be discontinued, or can we have a re-gigged e-version for reading on-line.

Also, did members notice that the Gazette got a mention on BBC1?

It was featured on the missing words section of "Have I got News for You" on 1st November; (un)fortunately there were no croquet jokes.

**Dr Keith Ross, Villembits, France**

~

Dear Keith,

Compromises will have to be settled on when deciding which audience (paper or on-line) to satisfy most with lay-out designs. Usually it's just the banner headlines across the two page spreads that don't transfer well to the 'on-line view' but having separate (possibly repeated) page headers might look odd in the paper version (*rather like above?*).

Time will not allow for two completely different designs to be created but your point is taken and I will bear in mind your request where it is possible to do so.

The Gazette's appearance on 'Have I Got News for You' was actually its second time on the show, echoing the first a decade ago in the week that the then Deputy Prime Minister, John Prescott, was photographed playing croquet at Dorneywood House. - Ed.

## The original Gilbey Cup was sold in 1978 - does anyone know where it is now?

Dear Editor,

Further to the historical references about the Challenge and Gilbey tournament on page 16 of the November issue (*Gazette* 382), I found the following additional information in notes about the trophies from the late Alan Oldham:

The Gilbey Cup - A fine silver gilt cup and cover with an applied band of vine leaf decoration, the body heavily chased with leafage,

bold mask head handles, flower finial, on plinth.

Date: Birmingham 1825, by Matthew Boulton. Weight: 119 ozs.

It was valued for insurance purposes in 1969 at £1,650 and £2,250 in 1974.

However it appears to have been sold in 1978 for £797.

The list of 1969 trophy valuations puts it at more than double the Coronation Gold Cup, which is currently the most valuable.

**Chris Williams, CA Archivist**

## End of printed Gazettes for Standard Members worry no.2

Dear Editor,

I can fully understand the financial reasons behind the new policy of not providing Standard Members with paper copies of the Gazette after their first year of membership.

However, relying on members to read the Gazette online is not without its risks.

I suspect a substantial number of Standard Members who read (or at least browse) the Gazette when it drops through the letter box, will not make the effort of opening an email, clicking a link, logging-in to a website, downloading a .pdf and (finally) reading the Gazette on their PC or tablet.

As a result, the risk is that they will become totally detached from the wider croquet world and will end up knowing (or caring) nothing about what the CA is doing.

Perhaps you can track how many Standard Members actually download and open the online Gazette going forwards and compare this with the number who used to receive the paper version.

I suspect that it will be a frighteningly low number!

**Chris Southworth,  
Worcester Norton CC**

~

Dear Chris,

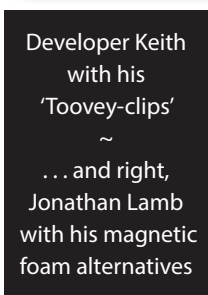
I share your fear regarding the potential disengagement with many members and I do hope that we are both wrong, but as you open with, the financial realities have to be faced.

Your letter is a further reminder to (some)

### **STANDARD MEMBERS**

**This could be the last paper Gazette you receive - please see page 3 for how to maintain your own paper copy - Ed**

## 'Eye Eye' - Two innovators are attracted by the same magnetic idea!



Dear Editor,

In response to Hilary Smith's letter in the last issue (*Gazette* 382) regarding an injury from a hoop-scoring peg, I have developed a magnetic clip.

I was fed up with pegs breaking or flying off when a hoop was run hard. I found some strong rare earth round countersunk magnets on the internet and sourced locally some dowel, screws and heat shrink.

It cost less than £100 to make 4 sets (2 primary and 2 secondary). We have used them all of the 2019 season with great success, and visitors seem to like them as well.

**Keith Toovey, High Wycombe CC**

~

Great minds think alike: I know that Canterbury Croquet Club are also trialling magnetic clips designed by Jonathan Lamb, using high-density EVA foam.

Jonathan's idea is that they should be more visible than metal clips, cheaper, friendlier to eyes and lawnmowers, and require no maintenance such as repainting.

Each set apparently comes with a chrome belt spool for storage and for players without pockets.

There are six GC clips per set, 5cm x 1.5cm, in neutral orange or grey; and four AC clips per set, 5cm x 3cm, in primary, secondary and tertiary colours. The shapes are different so as to help distinguish the two codes.

I understand that Keith doesn't plan to market his magnetic clips, but Jonathan may: if the trials work and there is sufficient interest, the likely price will be £12.50 per set, or £20 for two.

More details are available from Jonathan Lamb at [vozinglesa@gmail.com](mailto:vozinglesa@gmail.com). - Ed.



## Martin's weight loss equals a lot of balls

Dear Editor,

Having lost over almost four stone since April, I was worried that nobody would recognise me at the AC Inter-Counties in May, so I have enclosed a photo of the 'new me' alongside the weight I have lost in croquet balls in order that I will be recognised at Southwick and Compton.

<https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/Martin-leach-diabetes>

**Martin Leach, Bristol CC**

## A happy Treasurer!

Dear Editor

As Treasurer of High Wycombe Croquet Club, I have for some years had the task of dealing with incoming monies for tournaments and courses.

In 2019 almost all entries were directed via the CA website, and I received a single payment from the CA. This was an enormous boon and time saver. Well done, and thank you, to all involved in this major step forward in croquet event management!

**Duncan Reeve, Treasurer, H Wycombe CC**



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# Creative words to the Editor

## The Ball Swap Rule set in the context of Twelfth Night, as played at the Illyria Croquet Club

### Primary Balls:

Blue – Duke Orsino; Red – Countess Olivia; Black – Viola (but both Orsino and Olivia think she is a page called Cesario); Yellow – Sebastian, Viola's identical twin brother (late to arrive as he went to Elysium CC by mistake).

### Secondary Balls:

Green – Sir Toby Belch; Pink – Malvolio (but due to his CVD he thinks he is playing Yellow, cross-gartered); Brown – Sir Andrew Aguecheek; White – Maria.

**W**hen the referee (W.Shakespeare) is called onto the lawn, the situation is explained by Viola. She has been playing the Black ball, but before the game her partner, Duke Orsino (Blue) had sent her to Countess Olivia (Red) with a message asking if Olivia would like to be his partner and play Black.

Viola is very happy partnering Orsino but passed on the message anyway. Olivia is rather short-sighted and didn't realise that she was Viola, because she was dressed as Cesario, a page.

Olivia suggested that she, Viola, should play Yellow instead, partnering Olivia.

The secondary game had also started.

Green and Brown, egged on by White have tricked Pink (Malvolio, who suffers from CVD) into thinking that he is playing Yellow and should dress accordingly, i.e. yellow cross-garters, to impress his partner, Red.

Malvolio was pleased at the idea of partnering Olivia and duly dressed up.

There was a minor collision between the two games when Sir Toby (Green) deliberately rushed Brown into the other game, disturbing the position of Black.

Both Viola and Sir Andrew wanted to avoid an argument so they played on.

Sebastian, Viola's twin brother, who arrived late, is playing the Yellow ball, which greatly pleased Olivia because (being short-sighted) she thinks that he's Cesario, who has changed his mind.

Sebastian doesn't understand what she's talking about but is happy about partnering her.

Maria (playing White) copied Sir Toby and rushed Brown into the other game, but made the mistake of hitting Yellow.

Sebastian, being much less forgiving than Viola, threatened Sir Andrew (Brown) with dire consequences if it should happen again.

Duke Orsino (Blue), having seen how well Red and Yellow play together, belatedly noticed that Black has excellent form and decided that he doesn't mind being her partner after all.

Things were well on the way to being sorted satisfactorily when Malvolio (Pink) realised that the others in his game were making a fool of him.

He insisted that the referee, (W. Shakespeare), should be called because, he said, he had been playing the wrong ball and demanded a Yellow / Pink ball swap.

What should the referee's ruling be under the new GC Rules?

I'm sure that he got it wrong when he said "I don't care, do What You Will".

**Confused of Taunton Deane**

## The Croquet Widow

**M**y husband has a hobby, if that's what you would call  
A simple game of croquet, of mallet hitting ball,  
A gentle, easy pastime; well, gentle it is not!  
Six hoops to nil is not enough, he wants to win the lot.  
He's so enthusiastic  
This game is quite fantastic  
With energy bombastic  
He'll give that ball a mighty swat!!  
And I'll keep washing the whites, my love,  
And I'll keep washing the whites.

And no, it is not simple, rules govern every ball  
You must not play it out of turn, or crush it; that's not all  
No bevel hit or double tap, a really complex game  
You must not hit the ball offside, or kick it just the same.

Rules are so magnificent  
(I must not be indifferent)  
All are so significant  
In beating your opponent, pursuing croquet fame.  
And I'll keep washing the whites, my love,  
And I'll keep washing the whites.

Lawn croquet is played on a court, with a border  
A circuit of hoops played in the right order  
And you just hit the ball – oh sorry! - no, 'strike',  
Or stun it, or roll it, and a jump shot's all right  
A game of precision  
Of constant decision  
With forethought and vision  
Your handicap's down in a tactical fight.  
And I'll keep washing the whites, my love,  
And I'll keep washing the whites.

As a widow of croquet, my options are few  
I can become grumpy, cantankerous or blue  
I can do my own thing, find a hobby that's new  
Or ... learn how to play, and love the game too  
An answer's essential  
Indeed consequential  
For peaceful potential  
'Cos he'll not give up croquet, whatever I do!  
And I'll keep washing the whites, my love,  
And I'll keep washing the whites.

So maybe I'll join him, take up this strange sport  
Do courses and practise, 'til my handicap's nought  
Become a club member, pay my subs when they're due  
'Twill not be much longer 'til I'm showing you  
With total dedication  
You'll share in my elation  
A surprising presentation  
The impossible has happened, I've won a cup too!  
And I'll keep washing the whites, my love,  
And I'll keep washing the whites.

**Catherine Shore**



# 2019 Croquet Association Diplomas

This is only part one of the 2019 CA Diploma award winners.

Available space has meant having to hold over the citations for **Jennifer Fugeman, Trevor Gill, Jean Hargreaves, Geoff Johnson, Sue Norfolk, Janet Salter, David Seed, Rob Weeks, Marion Williams, Anwen Lloyd Williams, Roz Wright and Gerald Wynn**, until the next issue. My apologies to them for the disappointment that this delay may cause. - Ed.

## **John Wallace Nailsea CC**

John Wallace joined Nailsea and District Croquet Club in 1998, but despite having considerable ability he has been a full but non-playing member since 2000 and has contributed greatly to the club since then.

In 2002 he developed equipment to enable accurate and firm setting of the hoops; well set hoops have become a hallmark of the club ever since and for some years he set the hoops almost singlehandedly.

In 2011 he took over management of the lawns and improved them hugely - not only did the quality of the sward improve but so did the drought resistance.

In 2016 he led the project to level all four lawns. Work started in September 2017 but was plagued by bad weather, and the resulting problems were well documented in the CA Gazette.

John's presence at the club was continuous throughout the whole project and it is because of this that we now have fine lawns on which to play. He has had help of course, but it has been his drive, determination and hard work which have brought us so far.

Never one to be satisfied with a job that is less than complete, John still works and organises to produce an ever finer and smoother surface upon which we can all enjoy our croquet.

Our club owes him a huge debt of gratitude and believes that he has fully earned the award of this CA Diploma.

## **Chris Roberts Phyllis Court CC**

Chris Roberts joined Phyllis Court Croquet Club in 2006 and not long afterwards became, and remains, the backbone of the club.

He brought the energy and enthusiasm

for competitive play that he had enjoyed in a previous sporting career in rugby, and that positive force rippled through the well-established Phyllis Court Club, at a time when it was centred on the social side of croquet.

Chris was quickly brought onto the club committee to oversee the courts (having been recognised as agile enough to set hoops!) and he soon used that position to champion for improved playing conditions and competitive opportunities.

He assisted Frances Colman, who shared that competitive vision, in introducing handicaps for all club members, and this then allowed for the introduction of classed competitions and tournaments for all levels of ability, and the establishment of two new Handicap League teams.

Chris qualified as a GC Championship Referee, graded GC and AC coach, and, over time, he and Frances became an experienced tournament management double-act at club, federation and CA level.

Chris had a successful first stint as Phyllis Court Croquet Chairman 2011-13, with the mantra to 'provide something for everyone', and that saw more internal events arrive and CA fixture book tournaments return for the first time in decades, all the while taking care not to disturb the long-established social playing periods at the club.

Chris became the Development Officer of the Southern Croquet Federation before being elected its chairman in 2012 and he also took on the editorship of the Croquet Gazette in 2013. He continues to perform both roles whilst playing to championship level in both croquet codes.

In 2012 Chris was brought on to the GC Tournaments Committee of the CA where he proved the doubters wrong with the introduction of the very successful B-Level Series in 2014 and he subsequently energetically repeated the same theme again in 2017 with the introduction of the C-Level Series, thereby establishing a production line for future GC talent.

A call back to the Phyllis Court chairmanship position came in 2016 and Chris has overseen the most successful on-court period in the history of the club, topped by his captaincy of the club to final of the GC Inter-Club Championship Final in 2018 and 2019.

Chris is immensely proud to have recruited 168 Phyllis Court players to membership of the CA, making the club the largest in the country by that measure.

He maintains the highest level of commitment to croquet and shows no sign of slacking off as the years roll by.

As Chris ends his second period as club chairman, Phyllis Court CC commends him for the award of a CA Diploma for Service to his Club and the wider Sport of croquet.

## **Simon Hathrell Watford (Cassiobury)**

Simon Hathrell joined Watford (Cassiobury) Croquet Club in 2003 and has been on the club committee since 2006.

As club AC manager, he organises all the AC internal competitions and external fixtures, including national competitions such as the Mary Rose, East Anglian Croquet Federation (EACF) league matches and



Proudly showing off their diplomas are John Wallace and Chris Roberts at the CA AGM (photo by...)

friendlies against Oxford and Cambridge University.

He does much to facilitate the National Schools' and Juniors' AC Championships which are hosted by Watford and he still finds time to organise the Hertfordshire team in the Inter-Counties Championship.

He organises and manages three AC open tournaments and two internal one-ball tournaments and as a strong player, he represents the club at both AC and GC.

Away from the court he orders plaques, locates suitable watering equipment and has been known to manufacture a plinth for a trophy.

As webmaster for both Watford and the EACF, Simon has created and progressively developed websites which are the envy of many clubs, and the club site is an asset from which all members derive benefit as



it includes a court booking system. Few appreciate how many hours of work this involves, requiring expertise and close attention to detail.

## **Tony Thomas North West Federation**

Tony Thomas is a member of Southport Croquet Club where he has been actively involved, taking on many roles over the years.

His commitment to the North West Federation (NWF), however, has been outstanding.

In 2002 he set up the [www.croquetnw.co.uk](http://www.croquetnw.co.uk) website and is still maintaining it to this day – that is 17 years of enthusiasm! This has been a valuable resource for all



ce, Chris Roberts, Simon Hathrell and Tony Thomas  
to by Frances Colman)

information relating to NWF and its clubs.

The site is always up to date with information on national and regional matters, all league results as they come in and requests for publicity for upcoming events at the various clubs are posted promptly.

The website has become a valuable archive for all things croquet related in the North West.

His photography catches the magic that is the NWF's Festival of Croquet, a unique and very special event, and this is a valuable archive for the future.

Tony also ran the extensive NWF leagues from 2009 until 2016, bringing in many changes which have improved the experience for all North West croquet players.

## **Andru Blewett St Agnes CC**

St Agnes Croquet Club has just celebrated its fifth anniversary and therefore to put forward one of our members for the CA Diploma may seem presumptuous.

But Andru Blewett has achieved as much in five years as others might have done in longer periods of service.

Anyone who has been involved in setting up a new club will know that it requires teamwork and leadership.

Leadership can be shown in many ways, not necessarily by office, speech-making or handing out prizes: the greatest of all attributes is setting an example with standards of hard work and enthusiasm.

Andru has been at the forefront of all our activities from the start and his zeal for the game has been matched by his hard work and commitment, both on and off the lawns.

He has served on the club committee from the beginning, now as vice-chair, but more importantly has taken the initiative in organising annual competitions against other Cornish clubs and his latest venture is a Cornwall Singles Championship.

Andru is also involved in the running of the in-house competitions and also works with the 'greens' team, which includes maintenance of our ride-on mower.

He acts as one of our general handymen and has made three wooden trollies for our lawn equipment.

His strength in this area is that he often foresees problems before anyone else and, amongst other tasks he has seen to mole-catching (humanely, I might add) and the positioning of wire-netting to keep out stray dogs.

A well as being one of our leading players and a regular member of the handicap team, Andru was the first, on his own initiative, to take GC coaching and refereeing courses.

He runs weekly coaching sessions for members; and has single-handedly raised the level of play in the club so that we can run two league teams.

In addition, he has been very active in promoting the game on our regular 'taster' days for the community and visiting groups, and has also been heavily involved with all our fund-raising activities.

It is fair to say that without Andru's exceptional energy, commitment and practical skills, the St Agnes Club would not be where it is today.

## **Anthea Carter Dowlish Wake CC**

Since 2007, when Anthea Carter joined the Dowlish Wake Croquet Club, she has worked tirelessly in the interests of the club. As a talented new player, it took only a year for her to win the Club doubles competition in 2008, join the committee as treasurer and play in league games. Her enthusiasm for the game and the players was unbounded.

By 2009, Anthea became the chairman of the club and she quickly became familiar with all aspects of running the Club. In fact, nothing escaped her attention and her encyclopaedic knowledge of all things croquet has stood the Club and its members in good stead for many years. She is still a role model and mentor whose advice is sought on many occasions.

In 2015, Anthea gained her club coach qualification and has consistently run coaching sessions at the beginning of croquet seasons.

In November 2016, disaster struck when the pavilion was burnt to the ground in an arson attack and this was a testing time for everyone concerned with the playing field.

Nothing deterred Anthea, and with dogged determination, she organised a temporary "portacabin" to be used as a clubhouse, together with storage units for equipment that had escaped the flames.

With financial support from the Dowlish Wake Playing Field Trust, croquet was able to continue operating for the next two years without a break while the new clubhouse was built.

At a time when many would have given up after looking at the dreadful destruction and the magnitude of the problems of those two years, Anthea's extraordinary organisational skills, made it possible for the club to remain operating. She encouraged fundraising and coaching, found new members, organised competitions and tournaments all at a very difficult time.

One of her final acts was to persuade members to change the name of the club to Dowlish Wake Croquet Club (dropping the word Golf from the previous name), thus encouraging all types of croquet to be played, and there is now burgeoning interest in Short and Association Croquet.

It was a sad day for the club when Anthea, exhausted but with a tangible sense of achievement, decided to step down as Chair and Dowlish Wake CC will be forever in her debt.

## The GC Inter-Club Championship winners ~ Nottingham

**N**ottingham CC retained the GC Inter-Club Championship at Phyllis Court in a late-September repeat of the 2018 final.

### Strong 20 Club entry

The entry for this Championship has grown in recent years; last December twenty clubs entered and by late summer the scene was set for two very competitive Semi-Finals.

### Semi-final 1 Nottingham v Northampton

In the first of these, a very strong Nottingham side hosted a Northampton team missing Pete Dowd and Stuart Smith.

Peter Stansfield, aged over 80, was called in and along with Mike Hills they shared the morning singles.

In this context, the result of the doubles was always going to be pivotal to the outcome of the match and Nottingham's Ian Burrige and James Death managed to fight their way back from a game down after flamboyant hoop-running from Jayne Stevens had won that game for her and Lionel Tibble.

This made the lunchtime score 2-1 to Nottingham.

In spite of another fine win from Mike Hills, the other three afternoon singles went to Nottingham to secure them the first place in the national final.

### Semi-final 2 Phyllis Court v Roehampton

The second semi, between Roehampton and Phyllis Court, was certainly fiercely fought with two of the morning rubbers suspended for a late lunch with the scores at 1-1.

It seemed that the outcome was always in doubt and this was especially true during the third game between Chris Roberts and Tim Russell.

Phyllis Court's Roberts needed to make hoop 13 from the boundary to win that match and in doing so move the outcome of the tie back to the suspended doubles match.

He did this and Phyllis Court went on to win the deciding game in the outstanding rubber to conclude a titanic tussle.

### The Final Phyllis Court v Nottingham

This set up a repeat of last year's Final and again Nottingham were very happy to forgo a neutral venue and return to the hospitable and enthusiastic Phyllis Court Club at Henley.

Nottingham are a formidable team, fielding James Death (-4), Ian Burrige (-4), Richard Bilton (-4) and Euan Burrige (-3) against the hosts' Charlie von Schmieder (-2), Raouf Allim (-3), Chris Roberts (-2) and Ian Norris (0).

Nottingham must have been the happier at lunch with a 3-0 lead, but Phyllis Court

stuck to their task, in the afternoon, and there were times when they could legitimately dream of a 4-0 miracle in the singles.

However, it was not a fairytale ending and the much stronger team came through to win the afternoon session 3-1 and retain the Trophy 6-1.

### Looking forward to 2020

Over the summer, I asked the participating clubs to comment on whether any changes to the format of the Championship were warranted.

I have received 25 responses from 8 clubs. These were discussed at the November meeting of the Tournament Committee and if any changes are to be made for 2020 these will be published in good time.

~

A fully functional enhancement to the online booking system now sees it able to accept TEAM entries for Inter-Club events, such as this Championship, the Inter-Club (Murphy) Shield and Federations Shield.

An article on [page 5](#) of this Gazette issue details this new facility which will be a big help for everyone.

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

Photos - A content Nottingham captain Ian Burrige surveys the scene at Phyllis Court and Richard Bilton runs a long hoop.  
(Images by Russell Robinson)





## The GC International Performance Development Squad

~ a reflection by Steve Leonard

Two years ago, I received an email from Lionel Tibble, the Director of the GC International Performance Development Squad (IPDS), inviting me to join for a two-year engagement.

The Development Squad is aimed at rapid improvers with the intention that hopefully one or two of them will make the step up to the Elite Squad, and if not then at least help the participants to achieve their maximum potential, whatever that may be.

Being part of the IPDS would involve attending two weekend squad sessions in each of two years of involvement.

So on a freezing March weekend, ten new IPDS recruits joined up with others, who were already one year into their squad membership, at Wrest Park CC.

We had been informed whites were not compulsory and that trying to stay warm and fighting off frostbite was the order of the weekend.

Lionel Tibble, assisted by Rachel Gee, led some classroom work, which consisted of various match situations played out on a whiteboard, tactical decision-making and watching Reg Bamford beating Ahmed Nasr on video.

Braving the weather, we ventured out on to the lawns and started to replicate some of the situations we had seen indoors.

Another spell inside followed, this time with guest speaker and sports psychologist Rich Waterman, who has worked with top sportsmen and women from various fields, including tennis, golf and cycling. Rich concentrated on the mental approach and 'mindset' as applied to croquet, and he also spoke on the nutritional aspect of 'brain food'.

*Continues on next page 18...*

## Inter-Club (Murphy) Shield winners ~ East Dorset

East Dorset won this season's second-tier national GC team competition, the Inter-Club (Murphy) Shield in a close final at Budleigh Salterton.

The competition is run as a straight knock-out for teams of four, with handicaps satisfying two criteria:

- The total handicap of the team must be at least 12.
- A team may include one player with a handicap of 2 and others must have higher handicaps.

It is played to the same seven-rubbers format as the top tier Inter-Club Championship – one doubles and six singles, all best-of-three game matches.

This season's competition attracted 22 entries and eventually came down to a final contested by two teams from the South-West Federation.

Enjoying their first-time entry in the competition, East Dorset (represented by

Keith Southern (2), Sandra Allan (3), Mark Hamann (3) and Tony Green (4)) reached the final by beating Sussex County, Merton and Guildford & Godalming.

They faced Camerton & Peasedown (Brian Wilson (3), Ros Key-Pugh (3), Mo

Boys (3) and Patrick Knight (4)) who had got past Leighton-Linslade, Croquet Durham and Ashby, to reach the final played on the excellent courts at Budleigh Salterton.

With virtually nothing between the

aggregate ranking scores of the two teams a close match was anticipated and that was indeed the case with East Dorset eventually winning 4-3 in a dramatic finish.

But they found it hard going, only winning the first game of the three in each match in one of the seven rubbers.

East Dorset won both singles but lost the doubles, establishing a 2-1 lead at the lunch break. In the afternoon, the bottom two singles were shared, taking the score to 3-2, and attention turned to the top two singles rubbers, both of which went deep into third games.

After a long tussle at hoop 12, Camerton's Ros Key-Pugh prevailed over Sandra Allan to bring the match score level at 3-3. So the destiny of the trophy hinged then on the top singles, which had reached hoop 13 in the third game.

Keith Southern played Blue into a two-yard running position and then put Black between Brian Wilson's Red and the hoop, only for the latter to send his Yellow on an excellent 25-yard clearance of Blue.

Southern missed his now angled hoop

attempt with Blue, but then saw the unfortunate Wilson's attempted clearance of Black send it through the hoop!

Brian Shorney presented the Shield on behalf of the CA to

the victors and complimented both teams on the high quality of the play that he had witnessed throughout the day.

**Keith Southern,  
East Dorset captain**



## National Veterans Festival winner ~ John Bowcott

John Bowcott won the GC National Veterans Festival from a field of 20 competitors at Hurlingham in mid-August.

Two blocks of ten competed over the first day and the usual main event knockout and plate phases followed. The eight that qualified for the knockout were: Chris Sheen with 8 wins, Robert Clark 7, John Bowcott 5, Mike Fensome 4 from block A; and Noel Gill

with 7 wins, Steiner Olsen 7, Roger Sutton 7, and Colin Britt 6 from block B.

The quarter- and semi-finals were closely fought on the two hottest days of the year and saw Bowcott win through to the final by beating Olsen and Sheen, and he lined up against Sutton, who had beaten Clark and Gill. The final produced the closest of two-game results, with Bowcott winning

7-6 7-6.

Ron Carter beat Anthony Butcher to win the plate.

**Roger Sutton**





# Player Development

## GC IPDS

... continued from page 17.

A lot of it made perfect sense, especially his mental approach and building up self-confidence, etc., but he lost me when he moved on to talk about the 'chimp paradox and our three inner chimps'!

It can all be found in books that Rich has written on the subject, should anyone want to look a closer look.

The rest of the weekend consisted of Rachel, Lionel and a lot of members of the Elite Squad turning up and helping with practice routines, which can be used whenever needed, to improve parts of one's play that needs improvement.

The second weekend session was mostly mentored matches playing with and against the Elite Squad players, who had very generously given up their time to help us.

Year two saw the departure of half the previous year's squad and another influx joining us 'year-two types', and the newcomers included Euan Burrridge and James Galpin – which brought the average age of the squad down significantly.

Rachel was living in Australia by this time and she was replaced by England captain J-P Moberly to work alongside Lionel Tibble.

Tim King was also on hand to give his experience and as a 'rules man', and he explained the reasons for the new wrong ball rule change and the dispute over what is now a legal or illegal jump / hammer stroke.

The ever-enthusiastic Stephen Custance-Baker gave many different outcomes as to what would happen if a wrong ball is played, and I never knew there were so many ways of playing a wrong ball!

Stephen ploughed on, as players' eyes glazed over trying to work out or remember the relevant remedy, be it 'ball swap', 'replace and replay', or 'penalty area restart'.

Tim and Stephen did a great job, assisted by a screen and projector, showing every scenario possible.

Year 2, weekend 2, again consisted of mentored matches.

Richard Bilton had by then progressed from a previous Development Squad to now be a mentor, Rachel and William Gee had returned from their time in Australia, J-P, Lionel and many Elite Squad members turned up to give help, advice, encouragement and allow us to pick their brains.

Thank you to each and every one of them, because they do this for nothing and give up their time to pass on their knowledge and help us to hopefully become better croquet players.

And even if we don't become better players, we will at least now know what we should be doing, even if we can't manage it!

~

**The IPDS has clearly helped some players both of the current and previous squads:**

- 4 played in the GC World Championship in England earlier this year.
- 5 played in the Over 50s GC World Championship in Egypt.
- 2 played in the Womens World Championship in New Zealand.
- Richard Bilton represented England in the Test match.

~

*And on a personal level my handicap when starting with the IPDS was 3; it is now -3.*

So if anyone gets that email inviting them to join the IPDS, I thoroughly recommend taking up the offer, because a lot of Elite players are offering to give you advice encouragement and tuition for free.

You may not make it to the Elite Squad yourself but it will help you become a better player.

Lionel, Rachel, J-P and the rest of the Elite players – thank you very much indeed.

**Steve Leonard**

## Under 25 Summer Improvers Course

GC	AC
----	----

I have had some encouraging enquiries about the 2020 School of Croquet and a suggestion that a name change is in order, which I thoroughly endorse, to 'Under 25 Summer Improvers Course'.

The provisional dates for 2020 are 25 and 26 August and the venue is likely to be Wrest Park CC. So please pencil this in your diaries now.

Over the last few months I have had contacts from Peterborough and High Wycombe clubs where young players are taking an interest in croquet and I look forward to seeing some of their players at the August 2020 event.

There may be other clubs around the country with similar initiatives in place that I am not aware of, so if you have under-25 players at your club who are keen and wish to progress then please get in touch.

Regional or federation coaching officers, development officers or club coaches may know of likely clubs and players. Please ensure that potential candidates in your area are aware and please also email their details to me at [anglion@btinternet.com](mailto:anglion@btinternet.com) and encourage them to come along.

The course schedule includes a full programme covering AC and GC skills development from the basic to advanced, with tactics suitable and of interest for all standards of play.

**Lionel Tibble**  
GC International Performance Director  
*(note that the course covers AC as well)*

~

Photos below from left: IPDS mentors Lionel Tibble & Rachel Gee, and squad members Euan Burrridge and James Galpin (images by Chris Roberts).



## 'Rescued' Croquet Cup is prize draw for new 'GC Teams Event' at Sidmouth

**S**idmouth Croquet Club have extended a warm welcome to its newest members Stuart M. and Louise Smith, and supported their plans to hold a GC Team tournament in May next season.

Some GC players may recall the very popular "Three Lemons" tournament that was hosted by Northampton CC in 2018, and the Sidmouth GC Team Challenge Cup has been created from this tournament model.

Teams of three players are invited to participate in a two-day event to be held on Saturday 9 and Sunday 10 May, 2020 at Sidmouth CC, in an all-play-all format with a mixture of level play doubles and singles games.

Teams may consist of any three players as long as their joint handicaps add up to a combined total of 5 or more, therefore it is a perfect opportunity for partners and friends to participate in a competitive event together.

Along with the wonderful facilities that



Sidmouth has to offer, and courts with fantastic views facing the seafront, there is a very special trophy to be won.

Recently 'rescued' from an internet auction site is this silver-plated croquet trophy which is believed to be Edwardian.

It has three croquet mallets holding an engraved cup with handles depicted as hoops and balls.

The 'three mallets' seem to be particularly relevant to this three-a-side tournament, but if anyone has any information or history that they can share regarding this trophy, the Smiths will be very interested to hear from you!

Details for the Sidmouth GC Team Challenge Cup are available now on the CA Website draft Fixtures Calendar and will appear in the forthcoming Fixtures Book (for Clubs, and individuals who order one) and further information is available from Louise Smith directly at [mrsjsmith@outlook.com](mailto:mrsjsmith@outlook.com) or 07986 239113.

**Louise Smith, Sidmouth CC**

### Secretary's Shield winners St. Albans

**S**t Albans beat Chester 5-2 in the final of the Secretary's Shield on 19 October at the neutral territory of Kenilworth CC, **reports Chris Frost.**

This was a rearranged encounter caused by a previous fixture having been rained off, and the two teams had met a fortnight previously in the 3rd/4th play-off in the Longman Cup.

In the morning session Chester's Brian Walton achieved his Silver Merit award by taking his second ball through all 12 hoops and winning his game, but St Albans won the doubles and the second singles match to take a 2-1 lead at lunch.

In the afternoon session all the games were close (including one going to a golden hoop) and St Albans won three times more to triumph 5-2.

John Dawson from the CA Council presented the trophy to St Albans captain Chris Frost.

The game results are as follows (*St Albans names first*).

Chris Frost (3.5) & Stuart Stafford (16) beat

John Dawson (3) & Robin Tasker (5) 26-11.

Heather Bennett (3.5) beat David Boyd (6) 26-22.

Stephen Mills (11) lost to Brian Walton (8) 26-9.

Frost (3.5) beat Dawson (3) 26-21.

Bennett (3.5) lost to Tasker (5) 20-19T.

Mills (11) beat Boyd (6) 26-24.

Stafford (16) beat Walton (8) 26-17.



This historic house and magnificent gardens in East Devon is available for groups seeking a special place to stay. Cadhay has its own croquet lawn and is within 30 mins of both Sidmouth and Budleigh Salterton croquet clubs.  
[cadhay.org.uk](http://cadhay.org.uk)

# Dyffryn CC

## An update on our move

As readers will know, Dyffryn Croquet Club had a move forced onto them by the National Trust at the end of the 2018 season.

There have been several different reasons for this, as told by the NT, but let's not go into that now.

We have taken up residence at the Glamorgan Lawn Tennis and Croquet Club in Merthyr Mawr, on the outskirts of Bridgend, where we were welcomed by the tennis club with open arms.

The area that we use as lawns is in the picture below and it has not been used as croquet courts for a very long time.

Work began back in October 2018 to reduce the 15cm - yes, that is correct 15cm! - grass height to acceptable heights, removing the excess.

Under the direction of John Evans, Club members wielded rakes and managed to do the job, so that we were able to play this season.

The bonus for us was an email from Nailsea Croquet Club, who were in the process of changing their mower to a newer model and offered us the old one free of charge; all we had to do was to have it repaired.

The generosity of Nailsea will be remembered by us for a long time and Nailsea member Geoff Hughes, who knew the Toro mower back to front, even came across to instruct the hardy band of grass cutters on how to operate it.

The lawn has been cut regularly but we did not ask opposition AC players to try us out and we played all our games away from home this season, because the surface has its own vagaries shall we say?

Weston-Super-Mare agreed to risk a GC league game on our surface and there were no adverse reports, but this might be due to the drubbing we got!

We also hosted a GC friendly against the newly formed Mumbles club.

### Where are we now?

We are in the process of merging with the Tennis Club as two separate sections, under one umbrella club.

It's our intention to re-lay the lawns and some of our members have generously offered sums to help with the costs.

We are in the process of applying for various funds that will match the sums promised. Hopefully, the club will have two good courts for play from the 2021 season onwards, and we look forward

As players hang up their mallets across the country, the AC Tournament Committee continues its work reviewing the season and making plans for the future.

### AC Inter-Club competition invites 'joint entries'

For the 2020 competition onwards, joint entries will be considered for the AC Inter-Club Competition.

The clubs involved in a joint entry should not currently be active in this competition, and should be geographically close.

Joint entries will be allowed at the discretion of the Tournament Director so please contact Sam Murray if you are considering a joint entry.

### Short Croquet competition

A new format for the National Short Croquet Competition is being introduced in 2020 after consultation with all the Federations. For details, please *see page 21 (opposite)*.

### New 14-point AC tournament

14-point is becoming a popular version of the AC game, so a new weekend tournament is being introduced at Compton (Eastbourne) CC in September.

Players will be split into classes, with the higher handicaps playing 14-point level and the lower handicaps playing 14-point advanced.

There will be plenty of play so perhaps you would like to have a bit of a change and give this a go.

### The AC Opens

As a result of the consultation conducted in the summer, the AC Opens will now have the first three days dedicated to the Open Doubles Championship, followed immediately by the Open Singles Championship.

Please note that play is scheduled to start at 10am on ALL days.

### Bidding for National and international events in 2022

Club secretaries should have received the invitation to bid for AC and GC events

in 2022 (plus a couple in 2021).

The deadline for responses to be received at the CA Office is 5pm Monday 27 January.

### Fixtures Calendar / Book

The paper copy of the Fixtures Book will NOT be dropping on your doormat unless you have ordered it from the CA Shop (*see page 5*)

To find out which tournaments are being held and where, you should look on the CA website using this navigation:

#### Tournaments > Fixture Calendar

*(be sure to select AC, GC or Courses and 'draft entries' from the display options).*

Entries will not be accepted until the Fixtures Calendar goes live at the beginning of February but you can still spend your long winter evenings planning your summer campaign.

The AC Tournaments Committee is also designing an electronic leaflet to send to each club entitled 'What's On Near You' which club secretaries will be asked to distribute to their members.

Hopefully everyone will see something there that inspires them.

### CA Merit Awards

Did you know that you can be awarded a medal for improving your skills in Association Croquet?

The requirements for the achieving a Bronze, Silver, Gold or Platinum Merit Award are detailed on the Coaching Pages of this Gazette issue along with a list this seasons 'achievers' (*see page 27*).

Next time you have a turn you are proud of, think about mentioning it to the tournament manager and see if you qualify for an award.

If your progress has stalled then have a look at the courses offered at the Croquet Academies to help you progress to the next stage, details of which can also be found on the Fixtures Calendar.

Further information of the National Merit Award Scheme can be found on the CA website under:

**Tournaments > Individual Competitions (eighth item in the list).**

**Beatrice McGlen,  
Chairman AC Tournaments Committee**

to being able to welcome our old adversaries from the SW Federation Leagues to come and have a go at us!

You may well recognise faces next season

as Dyffryn players, but we will be sporting a new name shortly, to be decided at the final AGM of Dyffryn Croquet Club.

**Paul Pristavec, Secretary, Dyffryn CC**

## What is Short Croquet?

This is not a game for the vertically challenged, nor does it involve stumpy mallets!

Short Croquet is a shortened, speeded-up version of Association Croquet, played on a smaller court and only contesting 14 points per side. The court sizes that are most commonly used are half-size croquet courts (28 x 17.5 yards) or a tennis court (24 x 16 yards) and the game can be played individually or as a team.

## How is Short Croquet very different to AC?

The main differences between Short Croquet and Association Croquet, other than the court size and the number of points, are the wiring rule and mandatory peels. The wiring rule, simply put, means that if you leave your opponent's balls unable to hit each other, then they are entitled to claim a lift, meaning they can lift either of their balls and play it from anywhere on either baulk line.

The mandatory peels rule makes the game more challenging for better players because, depending upon how good they are, they are required to do one, two or even three peels on one of their own balls.

## Is Short Croquet good for all?

Short Croquet is a great game for coaching, both for beginners who can get to grips with the concepts of 4-ball breaks and break building much more easily on a small lawn, but also for better players learning the intricacies of peeling turns.

It is played extensively in the South-West, North-West and Yorkshire but has gradually disappeared elsewhere over the last twenty years. So, how about giving Short Croquet a go at your club?

Further details of Short Croquet are available from the home page of the CA website under side menu tab 'The Games'.

If you would like to learn how to play or coach Short Croquet, the Northern Academy at York is running 'Learn Short Croquet in One Day' course on 13 May 2020 – contact John Harris for details on 01904 620211 or [jharrisnet@gmail.com](mailto:jharrisnet@gmail.com).

## National Short Croquet Inter-Club Competition

The format of the National Short Croquet Inter-Club Competition has been changed this year so that the preliminary rounds will be Federation based and each federation will decide what sort of competition it will hold to select the team that represents it in the regional finals.

A team consists of four players, who can be any handicap from beginner to expert.

Games are played with the full allocation of bisques so everyone has a chance to shine, and a time limit of 75 minutes means no-one is sitting out for long.

If your club is interested in putting together a team and entering the National Short Croquet Competition, with the opportunity to go through to regional and national finals, please contact your Federation Secretary as soon as possible and definitely before the beginning of March.

Details of the National Short Croquet Inter-club Competition can be found on the CA Tournaments Fixtures Calendar.

Navigate from the Home Page > Tournaments > Fixtures Calendar (*be sure to have AC selected in the display options*) and see under the date of the Final 12-13 September.

Or, if viewing this article on-line, copy and paste this link:

<https://www.croquet.org.uk/?p=tournament/caCalendar&TwOpen=y&CalendarEntryID=3592&pup=y>

**Beatrice McGlen**  
**Chairman, AC Tournaments Committee**



Seated with the silverware at York CC, are National Short Croquet Inter-Club Champions Bowdon with runners-up Bury standing behind.

Having been located at a single-court busy city-centre park for most of its 30-year history, Leicester Croquet Club had made the most its visible location with membership growing steadily year on year, competitive teams doing well in Federation leagues and the club developing players for CA tournaments.

However, the club was dealing with a number of threats:

- the local government landlord was seeking significant rent rises,
- there were (strenuously denied) rumours that the high hedge around the lawn was to be removed to improve the view of the park's gatehouse,
- plans for a new cycle path would impact on the club.

Just before the start of the 2018 season, the landlord decided to close the lawn as part of a cost-cutting exercise and the club was offered alternative facilities three miles away on the eastern edge of the city.

## Rapid move

The club found that it didn't have an up-to-date occupational licence and had no legal grounds to resist the action, so the decision was taken to garner support for a rapid move.

The new facility on the east of the city was without doubt better suited to croquet, with two large flat bowling greens with well-kept grass, a lovely clubhouse adjacent to the lawns and a car park.

However, the new site is within in a very quiet park with little passing footfall to attract new members and promote taster sessions, on both of which the club is financially dependent.

## Grant applications

Leicester CC's constitution was changed so it could apply for grants, and a five-year rent freeze and occupational licence was secured from the landlord.

The club applied to Next (a local employer), the Federation of East Midlands Croquet Clubs and the Croquet Association for financial support, so that the club's own financial reserves could

*continued overleaf...*



# CA Grant - Help for Leicester's emergency move



... continued from previous page 22

be used to get through a period of reduced membership and income streams.

All three organisations responded positively and **the club was very grateful for the CA's rapid response in its moment of crisis with a grant of £625.**

## Relocation for start of season

Relocation took place in time for the start of the 2018 season and two seasons later, the club has settled into the new facility, with members really enjoying the extra space to play on full size courts.

Membership has fallen as some members have left due to difficulties getting to the new venue and the quieter park has meant that 'learn to play' numbers are also down, so the club is changing its marketing approach with CA support.

Thankfully income from taster sessions has remained at similar levels due to loyal contacts developed over many years.

This has been a sobering moment in the Leicester CC's history and thanks to the grants received the club has sufficient financial reserves to try to restore its membership levels over the next three years.

**"We have been amazed by the support we have received from the croquet community"**

And what of the old club?

The hedges have been removed to improve the view of the park's gatehouses and the lawn has been covered in tarmac to act as the contractor's yard for the construction of the new cycle path.

It's funny how rumours often turn out to be true!

**David Bell, Leicester CC**



## Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines

# Cruise with Fred. Olsen

Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines are offering Croquet Association members a very tempting 10% membership discount\* on your first sailing with them – and that's on top of any current offers. Existing Fred. Olsen customers can save 5%, in addition to their 5% Loyalty Club discount.



To book using your discount code **THECA10** call the booking hotline **0800 0355 108** or visit **www.fredolsencruises.com/CA**

*Bringing the world closer*

\*All bookings are subject to Fred. Olsen's (FOCL) standard terms & conditions, available on our website & on request. All prices quoted under the Croquet Association members discount offer are exclusive to qualifying members & their travelling companions only, members must quote their discount code at time of booking. Membership discounts cannot be applied retrospectively. Bookings must be made via the booking hotline number 0800 0355 108. Proof of membership will be required at the time of booking. Offers cannot be extended to any unrelated third party, are subject to availability & may be withdrawn or amended at any time without prior notice. From time to time FOCL may run special offers which cannot be combined with this discount, including selected group travel deals. All guests booked under this scheme are requested to refrain from disclosing the fare paid whilst on board. Offer is for first-time cruisers with Fred. Olsen only. Fred. Olsen Oceans members are entitled to a 5% Croquet Association discount subject to the same terms & conditions, to be applied after the standard Oceans discount, where applicable. In this instance, Oceans Terms & Conditions apply. This offer expires on the 30th September 2018. E&OE.



# The GC Series Tournaments for 2020

## Championship Series (unrestricted)

25-26 April	Sidmouth
09-10 May	East Anglian (Colchester)
06-07 June	Cheltenham
13-14 June	Ramsgate
27-28 June	National Forest (Ashby)
11-12 July	Nottingham
18-19 July	Lancashire (Pendle & Crav.)
08-09 July	Hunstanton - <i>NEW</i>
19-20 Sep.	FINAL (Southport)

## A-Level Series (unrestricted)

18-19 April	Cheltenham
02-03 May	Northampton
23-24 May	Hunstanton
30-31 May	Wrest Park
08-09 June	Woking
13-14 June	Pendle
08-09 July	Ryde
18-19 July	Wiltshire (Hamptworth)
25-26 July	Dorset (East Dorset)
12-13 Sep	Sussex (Sussex County)

## B-Level Series (handicaps 3+)

28 Apr	Camerton & Peasedown
02 May	Sussex County
04 May	Watford
11 May	Ryde
13 May	Wrest Park
16 May	Pendle
28 May	Roehampton
23-24 May	East Dorset
03 June	Northampton
10-11 June	Woking
13 June	Leighton-Linslade
20 June	Colchester
27 June	Hunstanton
27-28 June	Hamptworth
01 July	Ealing
04 July	Bury
09 July	Bath
15 July	Nottingham
01 August	Guildford & Godalming
07-08 Aug.	Phyllis Court
11 August	Nailsea
15 August	Ashby
22 August	Budleigh Salterton
22-23 Aug.	Hurlingham
05-06 Oct.	FINAL (Roehampton)

## C-Level Series (handicaps 7+)

25 April	Crake Valley - <i>NEW</i>
03 May	Sussex County
12 May	Ryde
18 May	Phyllis Court
20 May	Wrest Park
03 June	Woking
04 June	Northampton
06 June	Guildford & Godalming
09 June	Camerton & Peasedown
11 June	Roehampton
27 June	Colchester
28 June	Hunstanton
07 July	Hurlingham
12 July	Middlesbrough
15 July	Cheltenham
16 July	Nottingham
22 July	Bury
30 July	Broadwas
14 August	Ashby
15 August	Hamptworth
23 August	Budleigh Salterton
19-20 Sep.	FINAL (Colchester)

There is a slight change to the line-up of **English National Singles Championship Series** qualifiers for 2020. Surbiton has dropped out and is replaced by a new event at Hunstanton.

The final, for the Ascot Cup, will be held at Southport & Birkdale CC on 19-20 September.

**Jonathan Powe, Chairman, Golf Croquet Tournaments Committee (GCTC)**

There is no change to the line-up of venues in the **A-Level Series** but some dates have altered significantly from 2019, so players who attend particular tournaments on a regular basis are advised to check the dates carefully.

Perhaps the biggest change of arrangements is to the Ryde Open which switches to being a midweek affair for 2020 with the hope that clashes with the growing number of festivals and rallies on the island will thus be avoided.

For those who have not visited Ryde CC yet, you are missing a treat, for the hospitality offered (which includes pick-ups from the hoverport) is legendary.

The date shift to midweek will reduce accommodation costs and ease booking availability so a visit to Ryde is

recommended.

The **B-Level Series** also remains unchanged for 2020 but again there are some big date changes so check your diaries carefully.

The Series continues to grow in popularity and 2019 saw many of the tournaments over-subscribed again.

It's a nice problem to have but the B-Level Series is pretty well at capacity, bearing in mind the ideal scenario that 16 players will qualify and wish to play in the National Final. This is ideal because it allows the well-liked 'all play all' 15 game format to be played over two days.

The potential difficulty looms for the occasion when there are more than 16 different winners who all want to take up their right to play in the National Final, as happened in 2018.

A more complicated tournament format was employed then, but it wasn't easy at a four-court venue, and for this reason enlarging the Series to beyond the current 24 qualifying tournaments would be courting trouble.

To minimise such a headache, this is the last season that a four-court venue will be used for the National Final (the requirement for this event has now been increased to

five courts) and playing on the immaculate surface of the Roehampton Club next year will be an extra carrot for those with ambition to qualify.

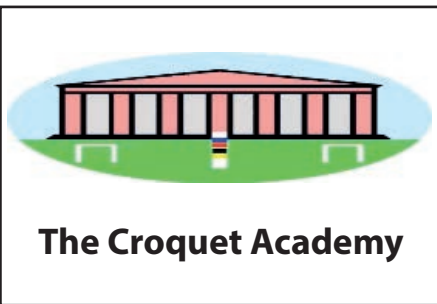
The **C-Level Series** now enters its third season with the big news that results will be included on the National Rankings for the first time in 2020.

This means that the ladder for progress up the Series competitions is even throughout and all participants will at last be able to see their names in the same rankings structure as the England Captain J-P Moberly and World Number One Amr Alebiary!

Back at the C-Level Series competition, the roster of tournaments for 2020 sees just one change to 2019, with Surbiton dropping out and being replaced by Crake Valley in Cumbria. This is a new club to the tournaments scene, and its inclusion as a Series venue provides another event for our northern-based players.

The C-Level Series National Final goes to Colchester CC which is a fitting reward for Dick Strover who was an early advocate for the development of a national competition for players in this handicap range.

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



**T**he Croquet Academy at Southwick has launched its programme of 16 courses aimed at AC and GC players, from complete beginners to advanced.

~

New for 2020, we offer:  
- 'A GC Workshop' including a Swing Trainer and Video Analysis to learn where to improve.

- 'One Step Further' into Advanced AC, designed for those in the 4 – 8 handicap range.

- 'The Winning Mentality', whether GC or AC, with former World Champion Stephen Mulliner.

~

Additionally, Tim King will run a 'GC Master Class' for aspiring A and B-Level tournament players.

There is also an opportunity to participate in an 'AC Master Class' with England International Jonathan Powe, who will share his insights into how good, low-handicap players can make that next step forward with their game.

And we also offer Cliff Jones's popular courses, that are accompanied by his excellent course manuals.

~

For further information on all courses, please contact The Croquet Academy Secretary, Chrissie Merrington - [courses@thecroquetacademy.com](mailto:courses@thecroquetacademy.com).

The Croquet Academy - Southwick				
Date	Course	Ideal h'cap	Course Leader	Cost*
1-2 April	Coach Training Course (CTC) - Club Level Coach (£40 subsidy may be available)		Daphne Gaitley	£75/£65
8-9 April	Coach Qualification Course (CQC) - Grade 1 & 2 GC & AC (£40 subsidy may be available)		Daphne Gaitley	£75/£65
15 April	AC Developing the advanced game	8 - 12	Chris Coull	£50/£40
29 April	One Step Further	4 - 8	Chris Coull	£50/£40
29 April	GC Beginners & Improvers	7+	Daphne Gaitley	£50/£40
1 May	Improve Your Skills	4+	Richard Carline	£50/£40
5 May	AC The Basics	18 +	Morgan Case	£50/£40
Early May	Developing a Winning Mentality		Stephen Mulliner	£60/£50
18 May	GC Master Class	4 or less	Tim King	£60/£50
22 May	AC Master Class	3.5 or less	Jonathan Powe	£75/£65
28 May	AC Break Building	16 - 20	Clive Hayton	£50/£40
1 June	AC Playing the Game	12 - 18	Morgan Case	£50/£40
4 June	GC Workshop incl. Swing Trainer & Video Analysis		Richard Carline	£50/£40
24 June	GC Coached Games Day	6 - 10	Richard Carline	£50/£40
13 July	AC 14 pt Handicap Supervised Tournament	14+	Frances Lowe	£30/£20
15 Oct	GC Winter Workshop		Richard Carline	£50/£40
* Premium Members of the Croquet Association receive a £10 discount off all courses (as shown above).				
Full details of each course are available on the following websites: The Croquet Association – <a href="http://www.croquet.org.uk">www.croquet.org.uk</a> > Tournaments > Fixtures Calendar The Croquet Academy – <a href="http://www.thecroquetacademy.com">www.thecroquetacademy.com</a>				
To discuss a course in more detail, or to book One to One/Small Group Coaching, contact: Academy Secretary Chrissie Merrington – <a href="mailto:courses@thecroquetacademy.com">courses@thecroquetacademy.com</a>				



**A**ny Grade 3 qualification is not given lightly and only after the due consideration of the candidate by the CA Coaching Committee.

I am delighted to announce that, at the recent meeting of the Committee, Stephen Custance-Baker was noted as having more

Photo: Stephen Custance-Baker playing in Austria earlier this year, by Bettina Dürrheim

## Recent Coaching

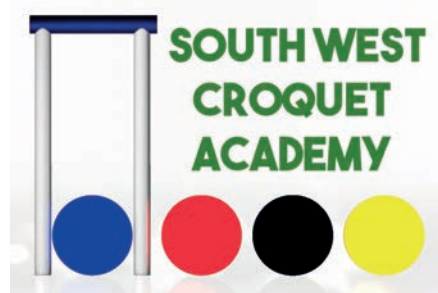
than met all our requirements and may now be considered as qualified.

Our warm congratulations to Stephen and our thanks for all his work – long may it continue!

### GC Graded Coach Grade 3

**Stephen Custance-Baker**  
- Taunton Dean CC -





The South-West Croquet Academy - Budleigh				
Date	Course	H'cap range	Lead Coach	Cost *
All season	AC/GC One to One or Small Group half-day session	n/a	Roger Mills	POA
21-22 April	Coaches Training Course for Club Level Coaches AC & GC	n/a	Roger Mills	£75/55
23-24 April	GC Rules & Referees Course	n/a	Tim King	£65/55
23 April	GC Rules & Referees Course – no exam	n/a	Tim King	£45/35
29-30 April	Coaches Training Course for Grade 1-2 AC & GC	n/a	Roger Mills	£75/55
1 May	Developing GC Strategy, Tactics & Consistency	6 and below	Cliff Jones	£45/35
2 May	Practical Sports Psychology for Croquet	n/a	Cliff Jones	£45/35
3 May	One to One/Small Group Coaching with Cliff Jones 1 or 2 hour sessions	n/a	Cliff Jones	POA
3 May	Silver Course – Winning your AC Silver Badge	12 and below	Roger Mills	£45/35
14 May	GC High Handicappers Development	10 plus	Stephen Custance-Baker	£45/35
29 May	Bronze Course – Winning your AC Bronze Badge	18 and below	Roger Mills	£45/35
5 June	AC Masterclass – a day with Jonathan Powe	3.5 max	Jonathan Powe	£45/35
On demand	Gold Course – Winning your AC Gold Badge	6 and below	Roger Mills	£45/35
On demand	Short Croquet – Skills, Tactics, Bisques & Breaks	16-24 6-10SC	Roger Mills	£45/35
On demand	Start Peeling	12 and below	Roger Mills	£45/35
* The costs shown are for Ordinary members / Premium members of the CA				
* Premium Members of the Croquet Association receive a £10 - £20 discount off all courses (as shown above).				
Qualification Courses may be eligible for CA subsidies and/or SWF travel assistance				
Full details of each course are available on the following websites: The Croquet Association – <a href="http://www.croquet.org.uk">www.croquet.org.uk</a> > Tournaments > Fixtures Calendar The South-West Croquet Academy – <a href="http://www.southwestcroquetacademy.co.uk">www.southwestcroquetacademy.co.uk</a>				
Additional courses may be available later – please check the SWCA website (see above) SWCA Secretary, Maureen Smith – <a href="mailto:enquiries@southwestcroquetacademy.co.uk">enquiries@southwestcroquetacademy.co.uk</a> – 07821 45 8447.				

The SWCA had a very successful 2019 and its wide range of coaching opportunities proved popular with players from the South West and beyond – we even welcomed one visitor from Germany! Our programme for 2020 is wide-ranging as always, and there is coaching available for all players of all handicaps, and in all forms of croquet – GC, AC and Short Croquet.

To mention a few highlights – Players of every discipline will benefit from a new course being run by Cliff Jones: Practical Sports Psychology for Croquet. No need to go into detail here: it does what it says on the tin!

For budding coaches, there is a CTC course to become a Club Level Coach, and for coaches who wish to upgrade their skills there is a CQC course for Graded Coaches.

**For GC players,** Tim King offers his massively successful GC Rules course with the opportunity to qualify as a GC Referee with a two part course.

Cliff Jones is running a new GC intermediate / advanced course focusing on strategy, tactics and decision making, and Stephen Custance-Baker continues his ever popular course for GC high handicappers.

**For AC players,** we are supporting the CA's Merit Award Scheme and running courses to help players achieve their Bronze, Silver or Gold badges under the Scheme (see Sarah Hayes' Coaching Pages in this issue for full details of the Scheme). Low AC handicappers have the opportunity of a one-day AC Masterclass with Jonathan Powe, winner of the AC World Championship Bowl.

The SWCA is also trialling 'on-demand' coaching next season, for those who need to be flexible with their time. There are several one-day courses that can be run at times to suit individual players, as well as One-to-One coaching. Please see our website for details about this.

For further information please see the foot of the table (left).

## Appointments

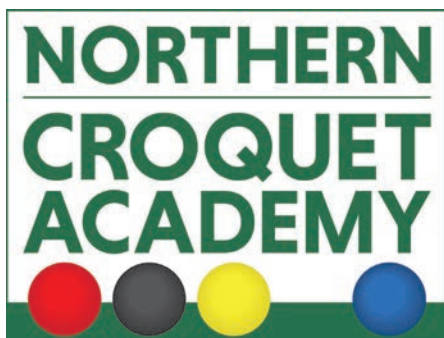
The end of the year sees seven new Club Level Coaches having completed their extra sessions and being awarded their badges – so very well done to:

The more observant amongst you might just have noticed that the name of this award, the first on the ladder, has changed to Club Level Coach. There will be more about this name change when time and Gazette space allow next year.

### Club Level Coaches

<b>Patricia MacGillivray</b>	<b>Crake Valley</b>
<b>Chris Evans</b>	<b>Bowdon</b>
<b>Mike Steer</b>	<b>Bowdon</b>
<b>Sylvia Steer</b>	<b>Bowden</b>
<b>Jan Smith</b>	<b>Fylde</b>
<b>Cyd Harbottle</b>	<b>Fylde</b>
<b>Philip Bass</b>	<b>Fylde</b>
<b>David Marcus</b>	<b>Sussex Co.</b>

Sarah Hayes,  
Coaching Committee Chair



**T**he Northern Croquet Academy at York launches its fourth season with a number of new courses to meet demand, balanced with courses that have proved particularly successful and popular.

Almost all 2019 courses were full, with waiting lists, and strong demand is expected again for the 2020 programme.

For AC players, new courses include 'Moves and Methods' aimed at higher handicap players; an AC Referee course; and 'So you think you know the Laws of AC?'

Complementing these, James Hawkins, author of 'Complete Croquet', returns with a linked pair of days aimed at middle and lower handicap players which together cover many aspects of the AC game.

New GC courses include one for coaches seeking a GC Graded Coach qualification, and – following on from the well-received 'Classic GC Skills and Tactics' – a new course for middle handicap players on 'Golf Croquet Strategy'.

Courses of interest to both codes include the all-important dimension of good mental readiness; the ever-popular 'Back to Basics' on getting core technique right; and One-to-One coaching with Cliff Jones on any aspect of technique, mindset or tactics.

There is also a one-day course to introduce GC players to the delights of Short Croquet, and this should also interest clubs seeking a ready-made model to introduce this accessible and enjoyable form of AC to their members.

For new coaches, both AC and GC, the Northern Academy programme includes a revised Coach Training course. Subsidies of £25, funded by the CA, are available for qualifying applicants.

Meanwhile a new course, 'Power up your coaching mojo!', offers existing club coaches new ideas and approaches to refresh and develop their coaching skills.

Application levels are expected to be high and so early booking is advised. To discuss a course in more detail, please contact details in the panel (right).

## The Northern Croquet Academy - York

Dates	Course	Course Leader	Cost *
1 April	GC/AC One-to-One with Cliff Jones	Cliff Jones	POA
2-3 April	AC So you think you know the Laws of AC?	Cliff Jones	£30/25
2-3 April	AC Become a qualified AC Referee	Cliff Jones	£65/55
4 April	GC Become a GC Graded Coach	Cliff Jones	£38/33
5 April	GC/AC One-to-One with Cliff Jones	Cliff Jones	POA
10 April	AC How to make twelve hoops in one go	James Hawkins	£38/33
11 April	AC It's not all about breaks	James Hawkins	£38/33
18 April	GC/AC It's all in the head: get the mindset	Derek Knight	£38/33
19 April	GC/AC Back to Basics	Derek Knight	£38/33
9 April	GC/AC Power up your coaching mojo!	R Staples, J Harris	£38/33
2-3 May	GC/AC Become a CA Club Level coach	Roger Staples	£65/55
10 May	GC Classic GC skills and tactics	John Crossland	£38/33
12 May	AC Moves and methods for higher bisquers	John Harris	£38/33
13 May	GC/AC Learn Short Croquet in one day	John Harris	£38/33
16 May	GC GC strategy	John Crossland	£38/33

\* The costs shown are for Ordinary members / Premium members of the CA

Full details of each course are on the CA website  
– [www.croquet.org.uk](http://www.croquet.org.uk) > Tournaments > Fixtures Calendar

Contact: John Harris - [northerncroquetacademy@gmail.com](mailto:northerncroquetacademy@gmail.com) - 01904 620211

## High Wycombe CC

Dates	Course	Ideal h'cap	Course Leader	Cost *
10 March	AC - Ten Plus Course	10-18	Raouf Allim	£50/£40
21-22 March	GC - Rules and Referee Qualification Course <i>or reduced fee if not taking the exam on Day 2</i>	NA	Cliff Jones	£75/£65 £50/£40
18-19 April	AC - Development Course in Advanced Play	6-12	Cliff Jones	£75/£65
21 April	GC - Five Plus Course	5-7	Ian Shore	£50/£40
28 April	GC - "Fun Coaching Mk II" Course	NA	Ian Shore	£15/£10
5 May	GC - Zero Plus Course	0-5	Raouf Allim	£50/£40
29 Sept.	GC - Seven Plus Course	7-12	Ian Shore	£50/£40

\* The costs shown are for Ordinary members / Premium members of the CA  
Premium Members of the CA receive a £10 discount off all courses (as shown above).

Full details of each course are on the CA website  
– [www.croquet.org.uk](http://www.croquet.org.uk) > Tournaments > Fixtures Calendar

To discuss a course in more detail, or to book One to One/Small Group Coaching, contact: Head Coach: Ian Shore - [ianshore@gmail.com](mailto:ianshore@gmail.com) - 01494 718615

## Grades Coaches to need Merit Awards

There is now an additional criterion which has been added to the requirements to become a Graded AC coach.

This is to have won a relevant merit award – after all, if you are coaching to Bronze standard, then shouldn't you have achieved that standard yourself?

So, the playing requirements for AC Graded Coaches now are:

- AC Grade 1 coach - must have a Bronze award
- AC Grade 2 coach - must have a Silver award
- AC Grade 3 coach - must have a Gold award

Examining Coaches should please note that candidates without Merit Awards should still attend a Coaches Qualification Course (CQC) and be signed off as a suitable candidate, however they may not be officially appointed to a Graded Coach position until they have then obtained their relevant playing merit award – so, no qualification or badge till all the boxes are ticked!

And for GC...

The criteria for the Graded GC Coach badges is in the final stages of preparation too – there will be more about this in the next Gazette.

We are just dotting the i's and crossing the t's! So, there is even more GC excitement to come – I spoil you I know!

**Sarah Hayes**



**H**igh Wycombe CC in Buckinghamshire has launched its programme of seven courses aimed at both AC and GC players. This 2020 programme builds on the experience gained by High Wycombe coaches in delivering courses over the

## The Merits Award Scheme

Merit Awards continue to be made throughout the year and, for 2019, a list of those completing the necessary requirements to be able to claim an award is contained within these pages.

Well done to all of you!

The CA Coaching Committee have noticed a decline in recent years of players coming forward to claim a Merit Award – indeed many new players don't actually know what they are!

In brief – the tasks listed below need to be achieved at a CA Calendar event and the game must be won.

The achievement must be reported to the Manager of the event as soon as possible after the game.

There is minimal paperwork to complete but the manager and the opponent both needs to sign.

~

Merit awards are presently available for AC play only (but see below for GC news):

- Bronze – a break of 10 (or more) hoops with bisques.
- Silver – a break of 12 (or more) without bisques.
- Gold – a Triple Peel
- Platinum – a Sextuple Peel

More information can be found on the CA Website under History/Awards and Medals.

The Coaching Committee would like to give all Event Managers a big push to make sure they make sure all entrants are aware of the Merit Awards Scheme and also that they have a supply of application forms.

Come on all you beginners – see if you can get the set of three, Bronze, Silver and Gold, Awards over the next few years.

More experienced players - if you achieve the Silver standard you will skip the Bronze!

Message to Managers – please encourage players to have targets to achieve and once more popularise the CA Merit Award Scheme.

I can hear echoing around the country a lot of players asking "What about GC?"

All I can say is wait and see – full details of the NEW GC Merit Award Scheme (you heard it here first) will be described in the next Gazette – exciting eh? I can't wait and I know about it!

**Sarah Hayes**

## The Merits Award Scheme ~ the 2019 achievers

### Platinum

Chris O'Byrne  
Omid Hallam

Reigate Priory  
Nottingham

### Gold

Derek Knight  
James Galpin  
Raouf Allim  
Chris Coull  
Callum Johnson

Beverley  
Nailsea  
High Wycombe  
Sussex Co.  
York

### Silver

Brian Walton  
Colin Davies  
Andrew Beaumont  
James Thomas  
Keith Pound

Chester  
Letchworth  
Nottingham  
Chester  
High Wycombe

### Bronze

Diana Plant  
Adam Wheatley  
Jack Good

Nottingham  
Ashby

Richard Leach  
James Thomas  
Margaret Eccles  
Heather Hardy  
Julian Gibson  
Carol Driver  
Philip Jay  
Alan Rush  
Mike Hedge  
Gordon Mills

Bury  
Chester  
Bury  
Ashby  
Middlesbrough  
Purley Bury  
Huddersfield  
Budleigh  
Nottingham  
Pinchbeck

**Sarah Hayes,  
Coaching Committee Chair**

past few years.

The aim is to meet players' needs with a range of courses, each with a good coach-to-player-ratio.

The courses run by Cliff Jones will be accompanied by his excellent course manuals; course notes will be available for

the others.

Full course and entry details can be found on the CA website.

For further information on all High Wycombe courses, please contact:

High Wycombe Head Coach, Ian Shore, [ianshore@gmail.com](mailto:ianshore@gmail.com), 01494 718615.

## **"Be Bolde, Be Wyse"** an interview with James Galpin by Sarah Hayes

"Be Bolde, Be Wyse" is the family motto of the Galpin family!

And it couldn't be more correct as the young James Galpin has shown this year, with his deadly accuracy, steely strength and self-belief!

As James is just 18 years old, I thought it might be interesting to find out exactly how he 'found' croquet and, more importantly, how the coaching programme at his club (Nailsea CC) enabled him to progress so quickly...

Early this season, a polite, smart young chap turned up at Cheltenham CC, a couple of days before one of the Advanced events.

I introduced myself and James explained that he had just passed his driving test and wanted to make sure he not only knew the way but also would not be presented with any major problems getting there – this being one of his first trips out on his own.

Well, I thought, talk about being prepared! If his croquet is similarly treated this young man is certainly going to be one to watch...

**Q: How did you find out about Croquet and did you join a club fairly soon afterwards?**

My brother and I were taken by our Mum to an Open Day at Nailsea CC and I joined there after a couple of lessons as a Student Member.

**Q: How old were you at the start and did you get 'hooked' straight away?**

Back in April 2013, I was only 12 and, to be honest, was not hooked immediately – I just kept on going to the club and croquet grew on me.

**Q: When did you buy your first mallet?**

After using various club mallets for a couple of years I "adopted" a Manor House mallet and in the 2018 season I was lucky to have my very own brand-new Trimmer mallet.

**Q: What was your early coaching experience as a 12-year-old?**

Junior Coaching was a weekly affair on Friday evenings; there were a couple of other players but I was the only one to keep going over a period of time.

**Q: Being so young, was it easy to integrate with the mainstream members and participate in most club activities?**

Being no different to the adult beginners, I was not immediately

integrated, as I was simply not good enough to participate in everything. As soon as I was able (AC 24 handicap), I entered my first competition, a high-handicap event in 2014.

**Q: How long were you playing for before you realised you could actually be quite good?**

The first two or three years were a great learning experience and I seemed to have entered a rapid improvement stage by the end of 2017, which saw my handicap reduce significantly.

**Q: What sort of coaching was available to you at the start, and also now you are playing to a high A-Class standard?**

Most of my coaching has come from Peter Dyke, who has brought my game to where it is today. He has passed on a great wealth of background knowledge and experience for which I will always be very grateful.

I am lucky to be at Nailsea really, as there are experienced older A-Class players Marcus Evans and Kristian Chambers, who have both given me lots of help with A-Class play.

Shortly after passing his driving test James, completed his first triple peel; when asked which was the most rewarding, he replied, "My first triple of course!"

I also asked him if it had become annoying (having turned 18) to discover he was able to purchase alcoholic drinks to console his ever-growing list of conquests? These could become expensive days!

Typically James answered that it didn't really matter as it will all equal out over time!

Well James, I really think you are wrong there, for if you keep on playing and improving the way you are now, it will be many years before people are buying you the drinks consistently!

Thanks very much to James for his frank replies and I extend my appreciation to Peter Dyke too for the manner in which he has coached this young man into being the fabulous player he is today.

Take a leaf out of the book of Galpin - Be Bold and Be Wise!

**Sarah Hayes,  
Coaching Committee Chair**



## **The Terrace LT&CC** - a new club looking for advice -

Just over a year ago, on 15 August 2018 to be precise, The Terrace Lawn Tennis and Croquet Club, joined the Croquet Association. Their first anniversary of CA membership seemed a fitting time to learn about this new member club and how they started. **Ann Wickert** takes up the story...

**T**he Terrace Lawn Tennis Club (TLTC) is situated alongside the High Street in the historic part of the Yorkshire village of Boston Spa.

This is an established, four grass court tennis club with traditional pavilion, formed in 1923 in the grounds of an original Georgian Spa hotel. The hotel and ancillary buildings, all in mellowed stone, have long been private residences, are historically grade listed and known as 'The Terrace'

The tennis courts sit within the grounds of The Terrace surrounded by mature trees and with the River Wharf on one of the boundaries. We could not have been provided with a more picturesque setting to set up a croquet club.

TLTC was looking to give over the fourth tennis court, for a trial period, for a sport which would sit comfortably alongside tennis, because they currently use two tennis courts regularly and a third court only occasionally. Active player membership is slowing annually, whilst social membership is growing.

An invitation to lay a half croquet lawn on the fourth tennis court came in late May 2018 and by 1 June, with assistance from Derek Knight, Chair of the Yorkshire Croquet Federation and John Harris, Chair of York CC, we were open for play.

Initial local interest was encouraging and we achieved 19 members in that first season. The Yorkshire Federation coaching team has provided our coaching and continues to assist us.

However, the challenges of recruitment remain. We have the advantage of access to our half court over four full days and several evenings each week and the potential is there to increase the sessions.

**I would welcome any suggestions on organising sessions and recruiting membership. In particular how do clubs collaborate with the local U3A?**

We have a very successful, large U3A audience of around 1,500 members, and I would like to know how other clubs have recruited within that sphere and fitted U3A croquet groups successfully into their own club structure. How do clubs negotiate a fee which

*continued on page 30...*

## Duncan Hector Turf Care

*Croquet player and turf care specialist.*



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duncan@DuncanHectorTurfCare.co.uk  
[www.DuncanHectorTurfCare.co.uk](http://www.DuncanHectorTurfCare.co.uk)

## Seeding

In the drought of 2018, most croquet lawns that weren't irrigated turned brown from edge to edge. When rain returned some of the grass recovered but quite a lot didn't.

Much depended on the cultivar - bents and fescues don't recover from drought as well as rye grass. For this reason, those that were predominantly rye came back to life with only limited damage. Grass that hadn't recovered by September didn't recover at all and as a result some clubs went into 2019 with a lot of bare patches. To seed these in spring means that play can't start until the new plants have established, therefore it is better to seed in the autumn so that the plants can grow during the winter.

I strongly recommend the use of dwarf rye grass which recovers from stress and drought much better than any other cultivar.

Barenbrug Ultrafine or Sport Extreme are my favourites and I supply these to croquet clubs at prices that you won't find elsewhere.

## Red Thread

During 2019 an abnormal amount of Red Thread appeared on croquet lawns caused by the warm wet conditions that prevailed through the summer. Red Thread is a fungal disease that initially appears as brown patches but if you look very closely you will see the pink tinge of fungus on the leaf. To identify Red Thread, the best thing to do is to pluck some grass from the lawn so that you can look at it close-up.

The simple cure is to spray with Soluble Iron at a strong dilution; this kills the fungus on the leaf instantly and the plant will then recover. However it may return if the weather is right, so be prepared to spray again if necessary. There are photographs on my website under the Maintenance/Red Thread tab.

I levelled my lawn in September, finished seeding in October, the sward is developing and is now perfectly good for croquet.

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last weekwww.burycroquet.com or via www.oxfordcroquet.com/equip



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provides a preferential fee for U3A members, without penalising its own members? Our annual club fee is £50 and there are only four sessions when our members must give priority to tennis. Croquet members are also included in all Tennis Club social events and we consider this makes an attractive package.

I look forward to any advice I might receive from people who know.

**Ann Wickert, Croquet Secretary,  
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## 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>

## Publication Details

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**Copy should reach the Editor before the 20th of the month before publication is due.**

However if you have something that you think the Editor may be willing to expand this deadline for, please contact him direct.

E-mail contributions, including tournament reports should be sent direct to the Editor, or copied to the Editor if they are being posted to the Nottingham List.

Digital images are preferred, but photographic prints may also be acceptable.

Please send digital jpeg or tiff format files.

Please accompany all images with a description of the subject.

If you require any material to be returned please enclose an SAE. Queries regarding the delivery of the Gazette to members should be directed to the Manager of the Croquet Association and not to the Editor.

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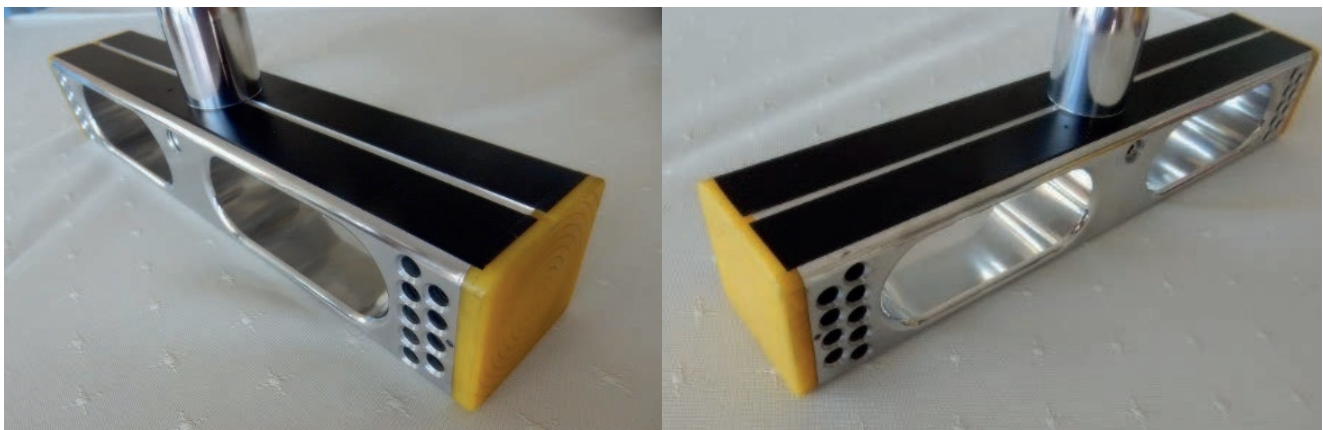
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