

The

Issue 387 September 2020

CROQUET

Gazette

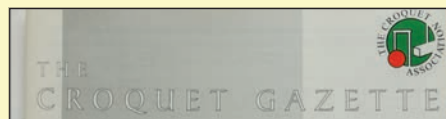


**William Ormerod
1937 - 2020**



From our files researched by Frances Colman

10 years ago - 2010



Biltons win at Lincoln Castle -

... Richard Bilton aged 13, and his father Mike from Richmond Park won block A. . . both semi-finals were close affairs . . . It was pleasing to see so many people stop and watch the final, and although Angela Mumby and Keith Whitelam put up strong resistance, the Biltons were eventual easy winners.

68 players from East Midlands clubs descended on Lincoln Castle as members of the Woodall Spa club organised the annual GC doubles event.

The object of the exercise was to encourage beginners to try their hand at tournament play supported by more experienced players. This year's event was organised by Roy Ware.

~

"Complete Croquet" by James Hawkins

The CA Shop is now selling James Hawkins' new book, which is aimed at improving play at handicap level to understanding top-class, championship level tactics.

~

Six Triples, Six Universities and 17 players at the Students Championship

Players from Cambridge, Gloucester, Nottingham, Trinity College Dublin and Warwick met at Oxford University . . . In the semi-finals of the team event Will Gee (Oxford,-1) tripled his novice partner, Luke Valori, against Trinity. Tom Whiteley (Oxford) also notched-up a well-controlled triple in the other semi against Cambridge, with the assistance of his partner Harry Fisher.

Not content with that, Tom repeated the process in the final to win the Edmund Reeve Varsity Trophy.

In the Singles, Will Gee was knocked out in the semi-finals by some audacious play by Harry Fisher – unfortunately Will's shooting was not at its best. In the other semi Tom Whiteley beat Danny Johnson (TCD), this time without a triple - Danny had managed one in an earlier round.

The final was an all-Oxford event: Tom played some precise croquet and won the Dudley Hamilton-Miller Student Championship cup for the second year running . . with another triple!

Dr. Ian Plummer

50 years ago - 1970



Editorial – The Editorial Panel has requested us to make it clear that the view expressed in the leading article and the Rover Notes are not a reflection of Council's deliberate policy... the Gazette is independent in its views but 'official' in its announcements – Editor Bryan Lloyd-Pratt.

~

Letters to the Editor,

"EDITORIALS ATTACKED"

Sir, ... the arrogance of the editorial in your spring number should not be allowed to pass unchallenged. Such diatribes against the present age will only serve to confirm the worst fears about croquet and croquet players of those who might otherwise become interested in the game.

In your summer issue you state that you have no intention of departing in the smallest detail from the non-political tradition of the Gazette but then proceed to do just that... England has not gone mad, but has become a more civilised and humane country to live in.

While I would be on balance in favour of welcoming a South African team, there are respectable and responsible reasons for not doing so, and these should not be lightly dismissed out of hand.

Yours truly, John Soutter, Henley.

~

Sir, ... May I add that I find the sentiments expressed by the Editor in the latest Gazette on the subject of South Africa regrettable, to say the least.

Charles Townshend, Warlingham.

~

Sir, ... I must express alarm about certain sections of the current issue, no.111, in that they appear to disregard the admirable non-political traditions of the Gazette.

Such phrases as "our halcyon days before socialism and punitive taxation", attributed to you, Sir, contribute to my impression of a certain rightward bias creeping into the editorial contents.

Might I express my fervent hope that my impression will not be confirmed in future issues.

J.N.Robinson, Walsall.

~

Continues on page 3 (opposite)

100 years ago - 1920



The Peel Memorials – It is well that once a year croquet players should be reminded of the immense debt they owe to the late Mr. Walter Peel, and a small band of pioneers, amongst whom should be named the Hon. Col. F.C. Needham, Capt. G. R. B. Drummond, Mr Arthur Little and Mr. G.P. Willoughby.

Those who get so much enjoyment out of croquet tournaments owe the very existence of the modern game of croquet entirely to the organisation of Mr Walter Peel and his coadjutors, as without the Croquet Association there would be no croquet tournaments today, or indeed any game of croquet worthy of the name.

It is well to remind those who say they get so little out of the Croquet Association of the real facts.

Before the days of Mr Walter Peel croquet was synonymous with pettiness, crinolines and cheating, and it is only in quite modern times that the game has become sufficiently attractive, scientific and difficult, to spread tournaments in every part of Great Britain and the Colonies.

The Peel Memorials ought to serve as a reminder to all croquet players that it is their first duty to support the Croquet Association and induce others to join.

~

Dear Sir,

I have recently received a communication from the Croquet Committee of the Roehampton Club, drawing my attention to the fact that the number of Members of the Croquet Association joining the Club is gradually decreasing, and pointing out that the expenses of maintaining the Club and providing adequate facilities for playing and developing that game on a scale suited to that (*our*) Headquarters are undergoing a constant increase.

... Associates have the opportunity several times every summer of satisfying themselves as to the privileges which attach to membership of the Club, in addition to the excellence of its croquet lawns. It would seem, therefore, very desirable that as large number of Associates as possible should become members of the Roehampton Club ... Arthur N. Gilbey

Editorial

This Gazette has been a challenge to produce alongside ever-changing situations in our sport as the Covid-19 restrictions have eased and attitudes from club to club have varied markedly.

My own observation is that the CA Council, Executive Boards and Task Force in particular have led us all superbly and they continue to do so, as you will read within these pages.

The need to resolve some constitutional matters and arrangements for our AGM to be held by Videoconferencing have contributed to the delayed delivery of this Gazette issue, which I trust you will find both informative and entertaining in equal measure.

The passing of the universally-loved William Ormerod is recorded here in warm detail by Stephen Mulliner and the reprise of the cover photograph from 2014 has as much to do with my liking of the image as the occasion when it was taken - when William won the GC Selectors Second Eight (Kate Jones Memorial Trophy) beating me in the deciding match, for his first GC title since 1954 when he had won the Golf Croquet Doubles Championship!

The other major article in this issue is John Harris's *tour de force* on Croquet during World War II, which is a remarkable feat of research and detailed writing.

As John says in his opening paragraph, our difficulties related to Covid-19 are of nothing compared with the difficulties being faced 75 years ago.

Difficulties aside, Croquet is now adapting well to the 'new normal' and both social and competitive play is in evidence at the majority of our clubs, and the tournament circuit has survived well enough, albeit with a much reduced programme.

'Hats off' to all our administrators at CA, Federations and Club levels, for your sterling work in making all this happen, and more power to your collective elbows in what will doubtless still be challenging times to come.



Chris Roberts Editor

49 Ancastle Green, Henley on Thames, Oxon. RG9 ITS
07973 787710 gazette@croquet.org.uk



Issue 387 Sept. 2020

Front cover: The late William Ormerod winning the GC Second Eight in 2014 and in Presidents' Cup action in 1977. **This page:** The Editor with beginners Janet, Andi and Sandra. (By C. Roberts, D.M.C.Prichard's "History of Croquet" and F. Colman)

Next issue published to be decided
Next copy deadline to be decided

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50 years ago - 1970 - continued -



Sir, ... You say "A small clamorous minority, using the threat of disorder and violence, has caused the enforcement of a political ban on the forthcoming cricket test matches."

This statement is a blatant political jibe.

Sir, you do not speak for us all in this matter and at least one Associate rejects utterly your partisan comments and, indeed, the whole tone of your provocative and gratuitous leader...

Chris Miller, Lambeth

The Editor replies -

... all the correspondents above seem to share something of the woolly and petulant fatuity of the 'Angry Young Men' of only two decades ago.

Passé, and a little *sad*.

- Editor Bryan Lloyd-Pratt.

Every Shot is Tactical

a new Golf Croquet book
by
Stephen Custance-Baker

I was delighted to receive an advance copy of this excellent new book by Grade 3 GC Coach Stephen Custance-Baker.

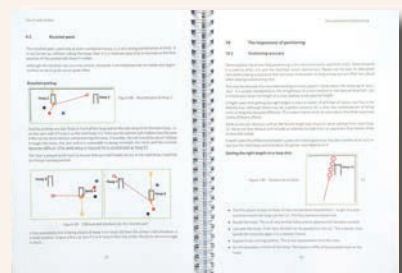
Examining the 'chess moves and counter-moves' that makes competitive Golf Croquet such an addictive game, this book is a must-read for improving GC players and seasoned tournament circuit players alike.

I found myself often thinking - "Ah, that's an interesting one, I'd not thought of doing that" and "Oh yes, that's what I do, but not for that additional reason!"

'Every Shot is Tactical' is well written, peer reviewed and illustrated with clear hoop and ball diagrams throughout.

Stephen Custance-Baker certainly knows his stuff - so buy this book and you will too!

Chris Roberts,
Editor, The Croquet Gazette (GC -3)



See the advertisement on page 23

Chairman of the CA Council

When the governance changes were agreed, the then Chairman of Council Brian Shorney wisely advised Council to implement the Council changes in the first year of implementation and then go on to examine the functioning of the Executive Board in year two. This was good advice.

The examination has taken place and it was agreed to implement a structure which included six members of the Executive covering specific areas of the CA's responsibilities for the sport.

Council, via its Nomination Committee, have appointed a new Chairman of the Executive Board, Beatrice McGlen, effective from the October 2020 AGM. The posts for the six positions were advertised in in the June edition of the Gazette. From the applicants six have been selected and ratified by Council ready to take their places in October.

The new group brings together a team offering a combination of experience and youth. Details of the new team are published elsewhere in this edition.

I wish the new team well.

Their role is to implement the strategies of the CA as well as running the day to day business of the CA.

~

I would particularly like to thank Roger Staples, who stood in at short notice to chair the Executive Board during the first year of the new structure. His help in formulating the structure going forward cannot be underestimated.

In addition he has played a major role with the CA task force. This has been no easy task with the rules and advice from government changing daily.

Fortunately Roger has agreed to stay on the Executive Board in a slightly less demanding capacity.

~

The fact that croquet has been recognised as a suitable 'social distancing sport' has stood the game in good stead and has hopefully attracted new players.

Under the new structure my role as Chairman of Council will expire in October 2021, at which point I intend to retire as an active member of the CA Council.

They feel it is important that we have continuity in this role and as such they have elected a Chairman Designate to take over the reins in October 2021.

I'm delighted that they were unanimous in asking Samir Patel to take on this role.

~

David Openshaw has been asked and has agreed to chair a working group to determine our competitive play strategies for both Association and Golf Croquet. As you know we have two very different situations, GC is growing and many have commented that the standard of play is improving. On the other hand AC has been in decline for several years and continues to be a concern.

The problem with the decline in AC is worldwide and David has also been asked to conduct a similar exercise for AC on behalf of the World Croquet Federation. Pooling ideas worldwide can only help to find a better solution.

With GC, New Zealand and some other countries have been successful in attracting more youth into the game. I am hoping that there are lessons to be learned that we can adopt in this country.

~

During my time in office, I want to launch an initiative to develop an inclusivity and diversity policy. The first step will be for Council to agree the top line policy. From there the intention is to appoint a working group to develop a robust plan to implement the policy.

~

Just as I was drafting this column, we received the sad news that William Ormerod had died peacefully at home on 31 July. I would like to pay a personal tribute to a man who was a true ambassador for the game. His unique style of play baffled many a good player. William was much loved - one of croquet's true characters, he will be sorely missed.

Jonathan Isaacs



Chairman of the Executive Board

As I write this, I have just heard that one of our stalwarts, William Ormerod, has sadly passed away. Although I did not know William personally, like many of you I know of his many achievements over a playing career of almost 70 years.

He will be remembered as a true ambassador for the game and be sorely missed both by Parkstone and the wider croquet community.

~

Many of you will now be enjoying the benefits of our glorious summer weather, playing croquet.

We have been able to address the concerns that the Government Covid-19 restrictions imposed on us and a reduced tournament programme is operational.

My continued thanks to the CA Task Force, who have worked tirelessly to produce regulations that can meet the stringent conditions required by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport.

Good luck to all in your endeavours this season.

~

Your Board has also been busy and the lockdown has given us a chance to look in detail at the strategies the Council have decided on and to start implementing them.

Most of the work will be done by the committees and working groups.

Your Board has been re-organised and a new Board will take up office in October and there is more detail elsewhere in this issue.

Some committee chairmen will be retiring in October and the CA committees are always looking for help, so these initiatives should help in recruiting new blood. Could this be you?

As always, your Board and its committees are happy to receive comments about how our sport is administered.

The recent governance revolution and the changes in responsibilities it brings, is still bedding in.

As usual the devil is in the detail, but suffice to say that the organisation is a lot more energised towards delivering a responsive outward-looking administration.

Roger Staples

Annual General Meeting of The CA 2020



The Annual General Meeting of the Croquet Association will take place by Videoconferencing on Saturday 17 October 2020, commencing at 10.00 am.

Because of the Covid-19 pandemic, the Council have decided that the AGM will be held by videoconference, rather than as a physical meeting, this year.

As a consequence, the start time has been brought forward to 10 am. The links to view and participate in the meeting will be published in a news item on the CA Website.

Individual Members wishing to vote must do so in advance of the meeting either electronically on the website, or by post; it will not be possible to vote at the meeting.

Votes in advance of the meeting must be received by 7 October.

To access the voting app, postal ballot paper and other documents mentioned in paper copies of this agenda, login to the website, click on the news item titled "AGM Agenda" and click on the relevant link in that.

Members wishing to speak, ask questions, or introduce other business at the meeting must notify the President or Hon. Secretary by 7 October, stating the agenda item(s) for which they wish to do so.

Appointment of Beatrice McGlen as Chairman Designate of the Executive Board

The Chairman of Council, Jonathan Isaacs, was sad to hear from Roger Staples that he had decided to retire from the post of Chairman of the Executive Board with effect from the AGM in October.

Members both of Council and the Executive Board have thanked Roger for steering the newly formed Board through what has proved to be an unexpectedly challenging first year and particularly commended him for his handling of the Coronavirus emergency.

Council's Nominations committee met to consider who should replace him and had little hesitation in deciding to ask Beatrice McGlen, the current Vice-Chairman of the Executive Board.

Having agreed, the committee was very happy to recommend to Council that she should be appointed as Chairman Designate of the Executive Board. Council has done so unanimously.

~

Beatrice's first task will be to join the Nominations Committee to decide which of the other nine applicants for places on the Executive Board should be recommended to Council for appointment to it.

There is a profile of Beatrice and the new Executive Board on page 8.

Ian Vincent, Hon. Secretary

AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence.

2. Minutes of the AGM held on Saturday 19 October 2019.

The minutes are on the website at <https://www.croquet.org.uk/?d=2391> and will be sent to Home Members on request to the CA Office.

3. Report of Council.

The Chairman of Council, Jonathan Isaacs, will present Council's annual report, which will be published on the CA website in advance of the meeting at <https://www.croquet.org.uk/?d=2637>.

4. Accounts for the year to December 2019 and Hon. Treasurer's Report.

The accounts are on the website at <https://www.croquet.org.uk/?d=2635> and will be sent to Home Members on request to the CA Office. There is a commentary on them at <https://www.croquet.org.uk/?d=2636>.

5. Motions to Amend the Constitution.

The Council proposes to amend the constitution to change the conditions for Affiliate Club membership; reduce the quorum required for Special General Meetings; to add provisions to enable dissolution of the Association; and to correct some inconsistencies introduced by past amendments. Full details are available on the CA website at <https://www.croquet.org.uk/?d=2638> and will be sent to Home Members on request to the CA Office. **Please see the article on page 6 for a summary of them.** A 6 to 4 majority of those voting is required to pass these amendments.

6. Election of Hon. Secretary.

Ian Vincent offers himself for re-election and is the only nomination.

7. Election of Hon. Treasurer.

Ian Burridge offers himself for re-election and is the only nomination.

8. Election of Independent Examiner.

David Boxell is willing to continue as the Independent Examiner.

9. Benefactors' Book.

The names of the benefactors will be recited.

10. Presentation of Trophies for the Most Improved Players for 2019.

Apps Memorial Bowl (AC male): Callum Johnson (York);

Steel Memorial Bowl (AC female): Sophie McGlen (Oxford & Nottingham);

Spiers Trophy (GC player): Steve Leonard (Winterborne Valley & East Dorset).

11. Presentation of Coaching Awards.

12. Coach of the Year: Ian Shore (High Wycombe)

13. Presentation of Croquet Association Diplomas.

14. Presentation of Bernard Neal Awards.

The Bernard Neal Award for Exceptional Services to Croquet is to be awarded to Peter Death and John Grimshaw.

15. Any Other Business.

16. President's Closing Remarks.

Ian Vincent, Hon. Secretary



Summary of Proposed Constitutional Changes

The Council is proposing a few amendments to the CA's Constitution at the (virtual) AGM this October. The full text is available in a document published on the website linked from the agenda, but this summarises the intention of them.

A. Change to Eligibility for Affiliate Membership

A Council Working Party has reviewed the conditions for CA membership and recommended that a loophole that allows clubs with playing facilities to become Affiliate Members, which was inadvertently opened when the Constitution was amended in 2009, should be closed.

A few such clubs that were previously Full members have taken advantage of the current wording and downgraded to Affiliate membership. If the amendment is passed, they will be asked to return to Full membership.

New clubs with playing facilities, or those which have only ever been Affiliate members, will be eligible for the introductory rates for Full membership, which are £60 for the first year, and capped at £90 and £120 for the second and third years.

It is anticipated that some 15 current Affiliate Member clubs would be affected. The CA wishes to support Federations in encouraging them to transition to Full Membership, as Small or Large clubs as appropriate.

The change will also clarify that overseas clubs will only be eligible for Affiliate membership.

Individual Affiliate Membership would also be abolished, as it has not been available for some years.

B. Reduction of Quorum for Special General Meetings

The quorum for special general meetings is currently 25. Given that most votes are now cast electronically before the meeting, this seems unnecessarily large and it is proposed to reduce it to 12, the same that as for AGMs.

C. Dissolution Clause

The constitution currently has no dissolution clause. It is thought that one should be added, not only to cope with the, hopefully theoretical, possibility that croquet ceases to exist, but more practically to facilitate a possible change to the legal status of the Association. The clause allows the CA to be dissolved, in extremis by an inquorate meeting, and specifies possible organisations to which any surplus funds should be given.

D. Tidying up

Finally, there are a few amendments to tidy up the text, to correct inconsistencies that have arisen from previous changes, which are not expected to have any practical consequences.

Ian Vincent, Hon Secretary

Change to Introductory Discounted Premium Membership Scheme

A change to the introductory rates for Premium membership of the CA, which was agreed last year but too late to be implemented then, has now come into effect.

The position used to be that anyone joining the CA for the first time as what was then known as a Tournament member, and who was willing to provide a Direct Debit mandate for future subscriptions, was entitled to a two-thirds discount for the first year, one-third off for the second year, and only then moved to the normal rate.

The introduction of Standard membership and consequent changes in subscription rates and entitlements has made this both over-generous and unnecessarily complicated, so there is now just an initial discount of approximately 50% for the first year of Premium membership when choosing to pay by Direct Debit after which the full rate applies.

The new rates are currently £20 for the first year and £38.50 thereafter.

Standard members are eligible for the discount and it is still the case that anyone joining the CA after 1st August in any year does not need to renew their membership until the end of the following year.

Please tell your friends!

Ian Vincent, Hon. Secretary

The use of the CA Membership Database by Clubs

The group responsible for the CA Membership Database have taken two decisions after consultation with member clubs:

- That use of the bulk upload facility will be restricted to clubs reporting data about their CA members for the first time.

Updates to existing data will then only be accepted interactively, to avoid possible conflicts where members have updated their own data.

- That there is sufficient interest from clubs in using an enhanced version of the CA membership database to store their own membership records to make the effort required for development, testing and support worthwhile.

Some 30 clubs indicated interest, of whom over 20 were willing to take part in a field trial.

The plan is for the development to be undertaken initially in collaboration with one or a very small number of clubs in the autumn, before opening it up more widely as a service by the CA for its member clubs.

Ian Vincent, Hon Secretary

Photo, right: Duncan Hector captured this striking image at Great Dunham CC on 12 July.

New CA Working Group to tackle big questions

How to increase the amount of competitive croquet played
and how to revitalise Association Croquet?



To answer these important questions, a new CA Working Group has been formed.

It has three objectives:

- (1) To recommend the overall CA strategy for the development of competitive croquet;
- (2) To recommend a specific strategy to revitalise Association Croquet and arrest its decline;
- (3) To recommend a specific strategy to further strengthen the growth of Golf Croquet.

I have been asked to chair this Working Group.

We aim to address these three important issues and produce some well researched and thought-out recommendations for the CA Council for their March Meeting.

All levels of competitive play are included: at club level, inter-club, regional federation level, national and International levels.

The numbers playing Association Croquet are declining and we will look at ways to reverse this. It will however be important to retain and expand the playing of the traditional game.

In addition we will be looking at ways to encourage more GC players to play an AC type game and to attract more new AC players to our clubs.

Golf Croquet has been expanding over the last fifteen years and we are keen to ensure that there is further growth.

The Working Group contains two members who are Council Members - Frances Colman and Rich Waterman.

We have also looked to have a wide geographical spread of members and from all sizes of club.

We intend to consult widely on these issues and welcome submissions from all croquet players.

What has worked for you and your club?

What new ideas for developing croquet do you have?

Do let us know.

The members of the main Working Group (with main club and federation details) are:

- David Openshaw** - Roehampton CC, South East;
Frances Colman - Phyllis Court CC, Southern, Council Member and Member of GC Tournament committee;
Rich Waterman - Colchester CC, East Anglia, Council Member;
John Harris - York CC, Yorkshire;
Roger Mills - Sidmouth CC, South West, Member of AC Tournament Committee;
Rachel Gee - Nottingham CC, Midlands;
John-Paul Moberly - Bowdon CC, Croquet North;
David Cornes - Crake Valley CC, North West.

We will be recruiting other players to our range of working groups and already Chris Williams and Stephen Mulliner are providing data from the Ranking Systems.

We will use information from the recent club survey 2019, and Kevin Carter's player surveys.

Both New Zealand and Australia are facing similar issues to ourselves and we will ensure that we also take account of their experiences and plans.

One of the working groups, under the chair of John-Paul Moberly, will be composed of younger players only and it will focus on what we need to do to encourage younger people, and particularly those in their teens, to take up croquet and to develop their interest.

All of us on this working group are determined to find some effective proposals to meet the three objectives.

Please help us with any suggestions, comments about what you like currently, how we might make constructive changes.

Please contact a member of the Group or email me,
David Openshaw at davidopen123@gmail.com

David Openshaw

No Most Improved Players Awards for 2020

The Handicap Committee announce that the awards for the Most Improved Players will **NOT** be made for the 2020 season.

This is because not enough croquet has been played this year (nor have there been sufficient opportunities for everyone to play).

In coming to this decision, the Committee were guided by the wording on the relevant CA webpage, which can be viewed via this navigation: [Home > Compete > Honours Boards](#) (on that page, click on 'Most Improved Players')

On-line readers can use this direct link: <https://www.croquet.org.uk/?p=tournament/caCalendar&callInfoID=10>

Frances Colman, Chairman, CA Handicap Committee





Chris Alvey



Paul Brown



Paul Hetherington



Beatrice

Ten members responded to the advertisement for members to serve on the Executive Board from October of this year.

The CA Council has ratified the recommendation of its Nominations Committee that those below should be appointed, under its new Chairman, Beatrice McGlen.

They are to take charge of the portfolios indicated.

Beatrice writes: "I am really pleased to introduce the new team that will form the Executive Board in October.

Some of these people will be well known to many of you and others will be new faces, but they will be joining the ex-officio members of the Executive Board: Ian Vincent, Hon. Sec.; Ian Burrige, Hon. Treasurer; Mark Suter, CA Manager; and Jonathan Isaacs, Chairman of Council.

With this mixture of wise heads with lots of experience from within the CA and a wealth of new experience and ideas from outside it, this new team will be aiming to take the Croquet Association forward.

We will be striving to bring new drive to the CA's attempts to reach a wider, larger audience and impetus to the strategies put forward by Council, whilst managing the day-to-day affairs of the CA and keeping our existing members happy. A big ask!"

Beatrice McGlen - Chairman

Beatrice is a former British Women's AC Champion and is currently Chairman of the AC Tournaments Committee.

She is also Chairman of the Nottingham Croquet Club, where she has played since taking up the game at the Coal Research Establishment at Bretby. Her career was as a geophysicist exploring for coal, oil and gas throughout the world, before retiring last year.

She has two children and a long-suffering husband. She keeps both bees and hens, so is well used to managing systems of

production to extract the most from them: there must be an analogy with CA committees there!

Chris Alvey – Performance

Chris has specialised in the Audio-Visual industry since 2000.

Working in the Technology Innovation Centre in Birmingham, running the AV team and progressing to lecturing in the North West covering both audio and visual mediums.

He is still involved in the audio industry as a freelance sound engineer whilst working full time as a Senior Referral Administrator in Dental Referral Management.

With GDPR and safeguarding training, Chris provides online webinars for support and teaching purposes using Zoom, as well as dial-in technical support.

Playing his croquet in the North West, Chris is a member of Bury Croquet Club and captains their Caesars weekend handicap team. He is a Grade 1 AC coach and helps his club's GC players make the conversion to AC.

Paul Brown – Development

Raised in North Staffordshire, Paul returned to his native Yorkshire to study at the University of Leeds, where he gained a first-class honours degree in Civil Engineering.

He spent the first nine years after graduation working for Balfour Beatty Construction on civil engineering projects across Great Britain and became a chartered civil engineer during that time.

Paul then joined ICI and progressed from Construction Engineer to Senior Project Manager with responsibility for a large variety of engineering projects.

In the nineties, he moved to Hong Kong and from there to Alabama, USA and returned to the UK in 1999 to support Zeneca's UK manufacturing plants before returning to Hong Kong to create and lead a

regional procurement team for Syngenta.

In 2003, Paul was posted to Syngenta's headquarters in Basel, Switzerland where he remained until retirement in 2016. During that time, he was Global Head of Goods and Services Purchasing and latterly Head of Global Engineering.

Since 2016 he has been a part-time lecturer at Stuttgart University of Applied Science where he teaches on a masters course in International Project Management.

Paul and his wife Celia retired to Angmering, West Sussex where he joined the local club then subsequently Sussex County CC. He is a grass-roots player who has become "hooked" on the game.

Paul offers the CA a wealth of management skills and a track record of getting things done.

Paul Hetherington - Marketing and Communications

Paul graduated from the Open University and Durham University with degrees in Social Sciences and Natural Sciences.

In 1999, (following 10 years working in the Labour movement including a spell as Chief of Staff to a Hertfordshire MEP advising businesses on European grants), he became Media Officer for Save the Children.

He gained extensive experience in brochure and leaflet design, writing articles for charity magazines and the Big Issue, motivational speaking at supporter events and made many TV and Radio interviews.

In 2005 he became Media Relations Manager for Water Aid where he doubled their coverage, secured grants and held successful fundraising appeals. He initiated the corporate PR plan, produced fundraising films, including working with CNN and BBC World Service and initiated media training for staff in many countries.

In 2008 he became Head of Public Relations for The Woodland Trust, tripling their media presence in two years,



McGlen



Tim King



Alison Maugham



Roger Staples

including regular slots on Today, the One Show, Springwatch and Autumnwatch, plus regular coverage in the tabloids and broadsheets. Developing a media team of six plus four field-based staff and 50 volunteers, he created corporate partnerships with many household names including Disney, Asprey's and Ikea. Taking on responsibility for internal communications he developed a new strategy for staff engagement including launching a staff newsletter and extranet for all Trust volunteers.

Paul also introduced and optimised new and social media including YouTube, Facebook and Twitter.

Since 2012, Paul has been Director of Fundraising and Communications for Buglife, generating over £1.5M.p.a. of additional income through fundraising. He created £50,000 corporate partnerships with Waitrose, J Crew, and other household names and now acts as a spokesperson and motivational speaker. He has started major donor work and a legacy pipeline, both creating over 100K per annum.

Paul founded Buglife trading services generating over £50K surplus in the first year and obtained Heritage Lottery funding and Partner status with the People's Postcode Lottery. He is a regular columnist in magazines relevant to the sector.

Paul is an experienced croquet player leading Durham University to the 1985 and 1986 University Championships and the Aps Healey Award.

A coach, handicapper and referee, he is a member of the East Anglian Croquet Federation board and club secretary at Peterborough CC.

Tim King – Infrastructure

Tim has been privileged to participate in CA committee work since 2005 and has built a wide range of experience in the operation of the CA, including being a committee chair (GC Tournaments,

International and Management) and Chair of Council.

He has also played more ranking games of GC than any other player in the world (!?).

He played in four GC World Championships and managed a further three. One day, he will find the time to play more AC, as croquet definitely requires both codes to be the complete, rounded sport that it is.

Professionally, Tim is an engineering consultant, who is used to working with collaboration technology (especially useful under the current situation with Covid-19), developing standards (he has led about 150 world-wide experts to develop ISO 8000, the international standard for data quality), team leadership (responsible for up to 40 staff) and developing strategy (working with numerous large clients including NATO, UK MOD, Rolls-Royce and Network Rail).

Tim is a Chartered Engineer, Chartered IT Professional, Fellow of the Institution of Mechanical Engineers and Fellow of the British Computer Society.

His wife Ayako is Japanese and (to his chagrin) their three children have chosen badminton as their sport of main interest. Otherwise, croquet is his passion and he will defend and support any activity that builds the sport to thrive in this troubled world.

Tim looks forward to working with the new membership of the Executive Board, who he is sure will come together effectively to serve the further growth and strengthening of the CA.

Alison Maugham - Competitive and Grassroots Croquet

Having fallen in love with playing croquet six years ago, Alison has not only discovered a passion for competitive sport, but also for encouraging the development of the sport and its players.

Alison was previously awarded Most Improved Croquet Player, she has competed at AC handicap events and level advanced

championships, enjoying competitive club croquet, through to playing against international players at the Open Championship for the last five years.

Alison is a qualified coach, has coached club players, and having recently passed a Diploma in Psychology, she is now specialising in sports coaching for junior players.

Previous appointments within the Croquet Association include being a member of the Marketing Committee, writing articles for the Croquet Gazette and holding the position of International Performance Director (AC).

Using her own experiences on and off the lawns, Alison hopes to bring her enthusiasm and energy to the Executive Board to help drive new and exciting proposals for encouraging competitive croquet from the grass roots and upwards.

Alongside playing and coaching croquet, Alison also enjoys ballroom dancing with her husband David, who is also a croquet player and represents England. Alison and David also enjoy life with their eight-month-old baby, Ben, whose favourite thing to do at the moment is standing and jumping.

Roger Staples – Standards

Roger has been playing croquet since 1979, originally with Norton Hall Croquet Club. He has been an active committee member of Croquet North (*Federation*) since the late 1990s and has served variously as Coaching and Development Officer. He is a member of Middlesbrough CC & Pendle CC.

Roger is now retired, and helping to serve the cause of croquet by serving on some of its committees.

He was Chairman of the Coaching Committee from 2011 to October 2015, Chairman of the Development Committee from 2016 to Oct 2019 and was a member of the CA Council from 2011-2019

He the current Chairman of the Executive Board.

Memories of Eric Solomon

Dear Editor,

The obituary of Eric Solomon in the June issue (*Gazette 386*) brings to mind his kindness to me when I attempted to take up the game in the late 1970's.

My first move was to purchase the Know The Game book, and then to assemble the necessary equipment – half inch steel rod bent into hoops, and a wooden pole for a centre peg. Mallet heads were made from birch and rather crude shafts from broomstick, the only purchase at that stage was a cheap set of wooden balls.

An enquiry at the local Clissold Park revealed that the lawn behind the Mansion had been used previously for croquet and that we were welcome to play there.

Thus it began, with us having no idea of what it was really all about, and it was our greatest good fortune that one day Eric Solomon turned up (he lived on the opposite side of the park) and introduced himself.

Much good advice and instruction followed on subsequent sessions there, and I then invested in a set of Eclipse balls, an LV mallet and a set of correctly proportioned hoops. This continued for some years, until work commitments changed and I wasn't able to fit in any more games.

Consequently I didn't pick up a mallet

Algarve Croquet Club is now open for visitors

Dear Editor,

The Quinta dos Poetas Nature Hotel is a family run country Hotel (22 rooms and 9 apartments), located between Faro and Olhão in Portugal.

It was with great satisfaction that we saw our location being selected by the Algarve Croquet Club to be their home.

As a result of this partnership, we built the first international standard croquet court currently in operation in the Region, whose presentation and photos are attached.

The current Coronavirus situation does not allow us to carry out the official inauguration as we wished, so we would ask that you'd kindly include the information of our opening in your prestigious magazine.

João Viegas,

Quinta dos Poetas, Nature Hotel & Apartments, Olhão, Algarve, Portugal

Tel: 00351 289 990 990

www.quintadospoetas.com

again until five years ago, but I owe a great debt of gratitude to Eric for his kindness, and only recently it was pointed out to me that he had written an article for the *Gazette* No. 156, in which I get a mention!

An amusing incident arose at that time with the start of my new position.

I rarely needed to visit the Head Office in Suffolk as my work was always in London, and the Company Secretary had sent me forms for my signature for insurance purposes.

One question had been crossed out "Does the applicant take part in any dangerous sports?"

Thinking that my response would be taken lightly, I wrote back mentioning that I was a member of the Stoke Newington Croquet Club (my own invention) and that while I had never been injured there was always the possibility.

Thinking nothing more of it, and hoping that the office staff would be having a good laugh, I was surprised to receive from them a photocopy of a very official letter from the insurance company stating that for the purposes of insurance, croquet was not considered a dangerous sport.

Perhaps it was the insurers who were laughing!

Michael Broadway, Enfield CC

Croquet: It's an engine for flirtation

Dear Editor,

I have recently discovered what our sport is all about. The following item appeared in the *Living Age Magazine*.

In 1898, *Living Age* magazine described the game as a "source of slumbering depravity, a veritable Frankenstein monster of recreation." The author suggested that "it would be well if the enthusiasm of the clergy and laity were enlisted for suppressing the immoral practice of croquet." What made croquet such a source of turpitude? As historian Jon Sterngass explains, croquet was a very popular context of socializing between genders.

As a character in Charlotte Yonge's *The Clever Women of the Family* (1865) put it, young people were using croquet "as an engine for flirtation."

It has only taken me 155 years to find that out!

Klim Seabright, Cheltenham CC

Croquet, Covid, Cash & Crowdfunding

Dear Editor,

There probably isn't a croquet club in the country which has escaped the financial effects of the Covid-19 crisis.

Many clubs, like Hamptworth CC, will have lost income through the cancellation of tournaments, lost new member recruitment opportunities, and maybe, even lost members in these difficult times.

However, it seems that there is little awareness in croquet clubs, of a Sport England scheme which might be available to help.

You can find out more about this by searching "*Sport England: Active Together. Crowdfunder*".

I did this and have been told by Sport England that we are the only croquet club to have applied through this fund for their support.

Clubs can set up a crowd-funding project, which, if it meets the acceptance criteria, Sport England will then match-fund up to a total of £10k.

I am no expert, and the process did present a few challenges, but if it makes the difference between croquet clubs staying in existence or folding, it would be well worth the effort.

I am very pleased to say that the Hamptworth CC submission has been accepted by Sport England and our successful submission (which includes a short video as part of our 'pitch') is available to view at:

www.crowdfunder.co.uk/hamptworth-croquet-club-safe-storage

This might give other club a few ideas about presenting a project and, while you are there, please feel free to make a donation!

Steve Bennett, Chair, Hamptworth CC

~

CA Hon. Treasurer Ian Burridge writes: Congratulations to Hamptworth Croquet Club who we believe are the first club in the country to have been approved for this scheme, which sees Sport England offer to match-fund Crowdfunder projects up to a maximum of £10K for sports clubs experiencing financial difficulty as a result of the pandemic.

Details of the scheme can be found here: crowdfunder.co.uk/funds/active-together

'Easyfundraising'

Do you want to raise money with minimal effort?

Dear Editor,

In 2018, I wrote to the Gazette highlighting easyfundraising.org.uk, having at that time just received our first money-for-nothing payment.

High Wycombe CC has now raised over £650 - simply from the regular online shopping of its members.

In essence:

A croquet club can register as a good cause;

Anyone can then sign up to support your good cause;

Anyone can visit retailer websites via easyfundraising.org.uk, or by activating a browser extension, and then;

Each online purchase attracts a small % donation paid by the retailer to your good cause.

So, every time you buy new white socks, car insurance, a TV, or a holiday, you could be raising funds for your club.

There are thousands of participating retailers including big names such as Amazon, the major supermarkets, John Lewis, Expedia, etc.

If your club has not (yet) signed up for easyfundraising, then please consider supporting one of the 15 forward-thinking clubs that are signed up :).

**Duncan Reeve,
Treasurer, High Wycombe CC**



My part in Wylie's first Sextuple

Dear Editor,

I am now of an age when I find the snippets in "From our Files" from 50 years ago of great interest and the Cambridge University report entitled "First Sextuple Peel" in the June 2020 issue was one such.

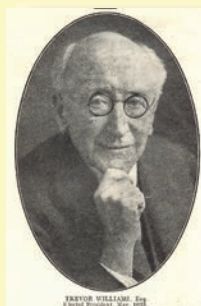
I have good reason to remember this landmark achievement by Keith Wylie, as I was the Heley Club member who had to play my balls onto the court in this game.

Thereafter, I was an admiring spectator.

Arthur Reed, Watford CC

"The dedication of an ageing croquet star"

From 'The Tailender' by Patrick Kidd in the Sports Section of *The Times* on 18 July:



Above: **Trevor Williams** (1859-1946) (with thanks to Martin Murray's historic collection).
Left: **Humphrey Hicks** (in 1963).
Below: **Stephen Mulliner** - I am very grateful to Chris Williams for his image research - Ed.



After recent items on longevity, Chris Williams (*the Archivist of the Croquet Association*) emailed to say that the career spans of three players in the Croquet Championship go back to 1897.

Trevor Williams played for 40 years, overlapping with Humphrey Hicks, who won seven times between 1928 and 1984, while Stephen Mulliner has played every year since 1977.

Croquet is not the most energetic of sports, but it requires stamina and nerve to play it well for so long.

Last year I went to Eastbourne to watch the World Championship, where I saw the 65-year-old Mulliner lose a quarter-final to a New Zealander 42 years his junior.

Croquet is becoming a young man's sport, he said (the oldest semi-finalist was 35), but Mulliner still had the desire to compete.

"To strike one ball on to another, right in the middle, from 20 yards, takes a lot of self-belief and practice," Mulliner, whose daily routine involves hitting 50 balls in a row through a hoop, said.

"Fortunately," he added, "I really enjoy practice."

Long may he whack.

Narrow hoops no worries for my grandchildren

Dear Editor

I refer to the letter from Tony Lee in the last issue (*Gazette 386*), in which he argues that young people may be put off playing croquet because it is too difficult to run hoops set at 1/8th of an inch.

I have a small croquet lawn in my garden, and I set the hoops at about 1/16th inch to give me more of a challenge.

My grandchildren Arthur, Henry and Ettie (aged 9, 7 and 5) have never known wider hoops and have no problem in running them. The 7-year-old Henry, in particular, delights in going for the hoops whatever

the distance, and is so pleased when he runs them (which he does with remarkable frequency).

But what is very important is to have a suitable mallet.

I had some old Victorian mallets which had smaller than modern heads, which I cut down to their size. So each of them has their own small (but not a toy) mallet, and play with gusto!

**Mark Macnair,
Exeter CC**





While Covid-19 has posed challenges for our game, these are of nothing compared with the difficulties being faced 75 years ago this year, as World War II ground to its conclusion.

As war began in 1939 and the lights went out over Europe, the CA was clear: it was to be business as usual.

The CA would organise nothing centrally, but encouraged clubs to carry on and keep the game flourishing. But the reality turned out to be very different.

The very survival of organised croquet was hanging by a thread.

"Don't you know there's a war on?"

The summer of 1939 had seen competitive croquet in excellent health, with the game widely enjoyed at club level, increasing numbers of players, and an abundance of tournaments.

With the declaration of war, the curtain fell quickly. Tournaments were cancelled across the country as competitive croquet was put on hold. This Gazette, then a substantial weekly, was reduced to brief annual bulletins on austerity paper. Domestic lawns, a strength of inter-war croquet, were given over to vegetable plots.

The impact of war was immediate.

Clubs in strategically important locations were quickly commandeered for military use.

Three Southwick lawns were requisitioned for civil defence; the Army took over the Bournemouth grounds and, at Budleigh Salterton, several of the lawns and the

changing rooms. Hurlingham was home to 450 RAF and Army personnel and an array of barrage balloons.

Other croquet strongholds suffered at enemy hands.

Bexhill and Chelmsford were among clubs receiving direct hits. Even the CA's London headquarters was damaged. Cheltenham committee members each took home two sets of balls for safe keeping in the event of an air raid.

Blackheath was particularly unlucky: the Club's dwindling band of members organised repairs when the clubhouse and lawns suffered bomb damage, but both were then put beyond use by a second direct hit, leaving the Club no alternative but to close.

"Do your bit!"

The numbers on active service had all sorts of repercussions for clubs as men were called up and women encouraged into war work.

Labour shortages made grounds staff almost impossible to find. Larger clubs advertised repeatedly for cleaners and stewardesses.

The experienced older generation skewed the skill balance so newcomers found themselves outclassed and discouraged; the younger generation all but vanished from the lawns.

Surbiton spoke for many in saying its ranks were "sadly depleted". Compton, with its five lawns, was reduced to 12 members.

All this placed an increasing strain on club finances. Tournament income was hit by transport restrictions; lunches and teas, a key part of balancing the books pre-war, were hit by food rationing. Costs were falling on fewer and fewer shoulders. Some clubs raised fees to make ends meet; others reduced them to try and attract new players. Bowdon abandoned its joining fee and encouraged teenagers as "holiday members", but by 1942 was calling an Extraordinary General Meeting to consider possible closure.

As the Gazette put it, this was "suspended animation". Those clubs that did survive were saved by, for instance, a committee whip-round (Edgbaston), lawn sharing (Guildford), amalgamation (Warwickshire), sub-letting (Surbiton), or, most often, donations.

Eastbourne urged members to give "in full measure" – an exhortation aimed squarely, and it seems successfully, at the well-to-do and gloriously eccentric Lord Tollemache.

"Is your journey really necessary?"

Petrol was rationed from the outset and had an immediate impact on travel. Bristol was lucky – a good bus service passed the ground – but Cheltenham was just far enough from the town centre for access to be greatly reduced, and Abingdon lost out-of-town members because of transport difficulties.

Guildford's location was its undoing: wartime restrictions made it effectively impossible for most people to get to it, and it closed in 1944.

But the impact went further. Reports refer regularly to petrol shortages hampering lawn maintenance.

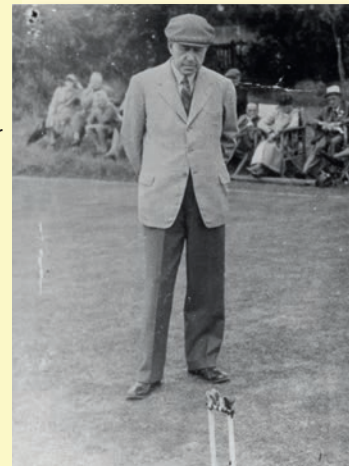
Rydal CC spoke for many: "In spite of the ever-growing difficulties of keeping the courts mown and other results of war-time conditions – lack of petrol for the mower, for instance – we have kept going. This year we are reduced to one court." Many clubs were forced to cut their lawns with a hand mower; Compton used a scythe.

"Present difficulties"

Replacement balls, mallets and hoops became virtually unobtainable when a 1940 Act of Parliament curtailed the manufacture of croquet equipment: "A present difficulty in keeping the game alive is the dearth of croquet balls."

Fertiliser too became scarce. Bristol, blessed with a resourceful committee, substituted soot and manure; other grounds simply deteriorated.

Sidmouth allowed sheep to graze its lawns during winter



Croquet in World War II

n Harris



unplayable. We hear no more of the Club after that.

"Dig for victory"

By 1940 The Scotsman was calling for increased food production: "Many a croquet and tennis lawn might be converted into an asset instead of a heavy liability" if used for hens.

Debate raged. Should croquet lawns do their bit for the Dig For Victory campaign by growing potatoes and cabbages? Was it right for scarce labour to be used repairing croquet lawns: "Is this war work?" Or was some relaxation through croquet essential, to prepare those on the home front for emergencies?

Private lawns up and down the country were given over to crops.

Parts of the Wimbledon and Roehampton Clubs were ploughed up "for victory" and the entire Shepton Mallet Club was handed over for use as allotments.

Meanwhile one club was ahead of the game. A perk for the Cheltenham groundsman had long been an on-site allotment, and this allowed the Club to keep its full complement of lawns, meanwhile impressing Queen Mary with "a stand of 18 varieties of vegetables grown on the grounds".



and the lawns at Woking declined to the worst condition in the Club's history.

Maintenance became such a problem for Trowbridge's Westbourne Club that by VE Day the ground was sporting a fine crop of thistles, making the lawn completely

"Put that light out!"

Where clubs were able to keep going, it became the norm to donate competition fees to the Red Cross. This was a national campaign: "All those who are playing for the Red Cross on the sports field are doing a great work. Useful sums have come from such games as croquet."

Significant sums were involved; in today's values, Nottingham CC raised several thousand pounds a year for war relief; Wollaton CC raised the equivalent of £35,000 for Salute the Soldier.

Clubs supplemented their tournament charity fundraising in a variety of ways as the war ground on: Bristol ran annual Exhibition Matches featuring top players; Southport members made regular weekly contributions; several clubs ran winter bridge drives "in spite of the difficulties of the black-out".

But even this could have unexpected consequences. Three Leamington members who left a light on after bridge spent Christmas Eve at the magistrates and were each fined for breaking the blackout, plus a second fine for wasting electricity.

"Make do and mend"

Croquet lovers unable to get to a ground were shown how to make their own 'make do and mend' table set using cork, cardboard, nails, meat skewers and packing wire. Meanwhile those with enough space for a floor set could use tennis balls, bent wire, a broomstick, and for mallet heads a section of curtain pole, or postal tubing filled with cork.

Croquet lovers could also enjoy the game vicariously at the cinema.

Go West (1940) featured Harpo Marx, a self-confessed croquet fanatic, playing his favourite game.

In 1941's The Prime Minister, a young Gladstone is beaten by Disraeli at croquet. The scene was set long before croquet came to England, and the mallets used were twentieth century weight, but what did



these anachronisms matter when there was a war to win?

MGM's Madame Curie from 1943 showed the Curies cogitating during a game of croquet.

And a player on active naval service off the coast of Norway in 1944 might have been surprised that the codename chosen for an attack on enemy shipping was Operation Croquet.

"Your cheerfulness will bring us victory"

Soon, as had happened in WW1, second-hand croquet sets were in high demand for those in front line service needing recuperation.

The Red Cross requested sets "for the use of temporarily shocked airmen in hospitals in this country ... Very large supplies are called for." Calls came from Regimental Medical Posts, Merchant Navy convalescent homes, a Newcastle hospital for recuperating Polish servicemen, a Royal Navy hospital in Westmorland, military hospitals for wounded soldiers in France and throughout the country. "Croquet, certainly, is a good game for convalescents."

A reporter at a Northern Command Convalescent Depot watched "three men putting up a gallant show at croquet... You'll see that some of them have left their crutches behind. They start, of course, by putting down the crutch while they take a shot.

continued overleaf...



Photographs

- Top left: GI's playing at the villa of an English publisher used as a rest home for US officers, 1943
- Bottom left: Southport CC members, 1940. Note the hats! How many men?
- Top centre: The Wimbledon car park is ploughed up for 'Dig for Victory', 1940
- Bottom centre: Daisy Lintern vs Capt Vaughan-Jenkins, one of the charity Exhibition Matches run annually at Bristol from 1942 to 1945
- Top right: Twin Nurses C and H Pollard challenge convalescent soldiers at Stapleford Park, 1940
- Bottom right: Greer Garson and Walter Pidgeon in the MGM film Madame Curie. Publicity still, 1943



Croquet in World War II

croquet. The game was thirty years past its Edwardian heyday, but the old boxes of Jaques or Ayres equipment were still there.

This was not sophisticated croquet on greensward. This was garden croquet, which took its place at fetes and garden parties on uneven ground alongside hoopla, skittles, tombola and egg and spoon races, raising funds for the war effort or Red Cross. Women's Institutes embraced it as a popular activity for summer afternoons.

The well-to-do included it as an easy-to-organise attraction as they opened their gardens to wounded soldiers, prisoners of war, or women war workers needing some welcome relief from factory work. It must have given quiet satisfaction to the older generation to find the croquet box among the lumber and dust off the old six-inch hoops, cylindrical mallets and wooden balls ready for another tour of duty.

"Let us go forward together"

The game may have been in great demand in hospitals and fetes, but by 1945 the prospects for organised croquet were dire. Many clubs simply faded from view. Carlisle, Charnwood, Chester, Claughton, Clevedon, Cooden, Croydon were just a few of the scores that sank as casualties of the war and did not resurface.

The CA had kept going with the aim of reviving the game after the war, but faced huge challenges; only 500 players had retained their link with the CA.

The first priority was the parlous state of club croquet. "Private lawns, much used in old days, have almost become a thing of the past"; the game now depended on the clubs. And those which remained were struggling. "Through war-necessity most clubs have had to allow some of their lawns to go out of use altogether, and other lawns to be lacking fertilisers, etc., while club buildings remain unpainted and in need of

repair." A Victory Fund was set up, with an entreaty to apply only if "the survival of the Club is at stake".

But another priority was generating a younger intake. A strong push led to the almost invincible team of Aspinall, Ormerod, and world champion John Solomon.

Before long the Gazette could boast: "That croquet is now a Young Man's Game has... become a truism which this year's Eight goes only to confirm. One wonders whether there was ever an entry with only a single player of 60 and another in his forties, with at least three, one believes, in their twenties" – success indeed!

by John Harris, York CC

References available on request from the author at jharrisnet@gmail.com

Sources: Contemporary newspapers, journals, books and photographs; CA Gazette and Yearbooks; Club histories. Special thanks to staff at CA HQ and the British Library, and to the many Club secretaries and archivists who delved into their records to help with this article, in particular at Bristol, Nottingham and Southport.

continued ... Then they bend down to pick up the crutch to move to the spot for the next shot. Before long they get tired of dropping the crutch and bending down to pick it up. The game takes hold of them, they forget about the crutch – and that is just as it should be. They make themselves stronger as they play."

Nor was the game limited to convalescents.

Off-duty American GI's played it avidly. Aboard midget submarines a "vicious" version flourished, played "until the balls fall to pieces".

Replacement balls were urgently needed: "Have a look in that cupboard under the stairs". And the game found itself "exceedingly popular with certain R.A.F. officers in Yorkshire whose mess has the use of a croquet lawn. Indeed, the game is so popular that the mallets and balls have been badly split. The problem is how to replace them. Such weapons are no longer made... If any reader has a set that he can spare I shall be happy to put him in touch with the Officers' Mess. It is the case of a staff who find their recreational facilities exceedingly limited."

"Keep calm and carry on"

On the home front, the war effort needed all the rubber it could get, so replacement tennis balls, cricket balls and shuttlecocks were virtually unobtainable. Instead, attention turned to other pursuits, including

Photographs

Top left: "From combat to croquet, somewhere in England": two Illinois GI's, Capt Bohlen and Lieutenant Judas from the US 8th Air Force, "find croquet tame sport after aerial combat but it's a lot of fun and ideal for relaxation on fatigue leave at an English country estate", 1943

Bottom left: War wounded play the game at Preston Hall British Legion Hospital, Kent, 1941

Below: Make-do-and-mend, table and floor croquet, 1940

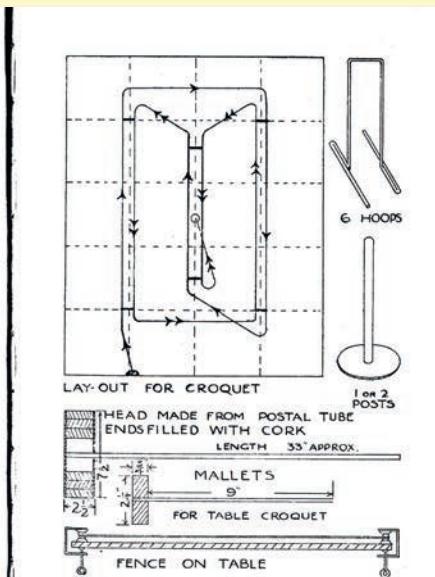


CROQUET FOR THE TABLE AND THE FLOOR

A modified game of croquet can be played on a table or carpet as well as on a lawn. The size of a croquet lawn is 33 yd. by 28 yd., and, as far as possible, any modified game should be played on a surface having the same proportions; for example, a floor game 5 yd. by 4 yd., or a table space of 4 ft. 6 in. by 3 ft. 6 in. would do. The lay-out shown on the next page can be adapted to circumstances.

The floor game can be played with ordinary tennis balls and ping-pong balls for the table game. The hoops and mallets should be made to suit. Hoops are easily made from 1/4 in. dia. iron rod for use on the floor, and with 1/4 in. dia. galvanized wire for the table. It will be seen that the hoops are supported by bottom extensions to form feet. One or two posts will be needed according to the game to be played, for floor use an 18 in. length of broomstick should be screwed to a 6 in. circle of zinc or stout tinned sheet. Dowel rod of 1/4 in. diameter, mounted on a tin disc, will do for the table.

Mallets for floor use may be made from lengths of old wooden curtain rails or any round wood about 2 1/2 in. dia., but equally effective heads can be made from short lengths of stout postal tube filled in with cork or wood discs. The diagram on the next page gives a section of a suitable head. The core should be glued in securely and should be strong enough to stand up to the work required. Handles, approximately 33 in. long, may be either lengths of dowelling or bamboo; if the latter material is used the inside should be plugged at the end so that a screw can be driven in from the outside of the head. The mallets for table croquet can be made from suitable dowelling to the sizes given. In both games the ordinary rules of croquet should be followed.



Croquet for All: 'even young people' – part 2

Back in pre-history (before Covid-19 struck), when life was simple and one could make plans for the future, an article was published in the January 2020 Gazette about the schools initiative run during 2019 by Nottingham Croquet Club, and the strategy to develop this in 2020.

A programme for this year was agreed at five local primary schools, three of whom had taken part in 2019, and it was scheduled to begin in late May.

So much for our best-laid plans...

We had three enthusiastic juniors from last year and a keen group of volunteers at the club who wanted to do something to build upon last year's success, so we decided to run a five-day Summer School for children aged 9-12 in the first week of the school holidays.

Advertising consisted of a banner facing the dual carriageway that runs alongside the Nottingham Club grounds and another near the playground at the other side of the large park in which the club is situated.

We also had a letter sent out by the schools and a posting on Facebook.

Terrible weather was forecast for the scheduled first day and it was touch and go whether to cancel – but our fingers-crossed approach paid off when the rain stopped half an hour before the start time and only resumed again half an hour after the finish.

Thereafter, the weather got better and better until Friday was one of the hottest days on record and sun-stroke rather than drowning was more the concern!

Nine children attended, although not all came every day, and taster sessions for accompanying parents / guardians took place on the adjoining court.

Once again the emphasis was on having fun, with as little time as possible spent on talking.

We divided sessions up into some skills learning and practice and then games of **Pirates** (see box panel), target practice, golf croquet, **Racing Croquet** (see the box again) and an introduction to short croquet on the last day.



Some children found it really difficult to hit a ball more than a few feet at their first session but on Day 4 we had a competition to see who could hit the furthest and we had to play it across three full-sized courts!

The plan now is for these new recruits to join our junior section, meeting up at least once a week, with the option

to come and play at other times as well, and maybe one or two of them will join the adult beginners' tournament.

One of last year's juniors, 11-year-old Elizabeth (photo left), has already won her first trophy, lifting the Hallam Trophy in our two-day club AC doubles tournament, with a little assistance from her partner Omiad Hallam.

What did we learn?

- The age restriction should have been wider. Most of the children came as pairs of siblings so we would recommend a wider age bracket such as 8-16.

- Two-hour sessions, with a break for a drink and a snack in the middle, worked well.

- Ideally you need a ratio of one coach to every three children per session and another coach for the parent's taster sessions alongside.

- Advertising, particularly on Facebook, should have started at least two weeks before the event.

What is the plan now?

- The new recruits will join our junior club which will continue over the summer with extended coaching and integration events, competitions and ideally a meet-up with juniors at another club.

- Next year we shall run the out-reach programme at five local primary schools that had to be cancelled this year.

- We will follow this with an after-school club and/or a five-day summer school at the start of the summer holidays.

- Parents will be encouraged to bring younger siblings to a 'Tots Club', have a coffee, a chat and to 'have a go' at our sport.

And finally

Although Covid-19 caused mayhem to our plans this year, it also opened up opportunities.

So, if you want your club to reach out to a broad cross-section of your local community, this is a great way to start.

Beatrice McGlen and Ian Draper
Nottingham CC



Pirates – a fun game all about hitting opponents and stealing their points. The simple rules are on the CA website via this navigation:

Home > Play > Fun Games > Pirates

On-line readers can click this link: <https://www.croquet.org.uk/?p=games/fun/pirates>

Racing Croquet – a quick fire fun game in which speed rather than the number of strokes is all that matters (see Bernard Pendry's letter on page 11 of Gazette 380)



William Ormerod ~ 14 May



William Ormerod was a member of England's croquet elite for over twenty years, beginning with his MacRobertson Shield debut in 1956 and continuing until 1978 when an ear infection caused him to withdraw from the President's Cup.

He continued to enter the Open Championship until 1983, with one more appearance in the 1996 Test Tour year, but otherwise confined his later Association Croquet tournament appearances to Hurlingham and Parkstone (more formally the East Dorset Lawn Tennis and Croquet Club) which was his home club for almost sixty years.

William was also a regular Parkstone team member and a mainstay of the Dorset Inter-Counties teams for both Association Croquet and Golf Croquet for many years.

He also joined the Swanage Croquet Club near his home in Corfe Castle and was an enthusiastic coach of new players. He was on court at Swanage in the week of his death, playing Golf Croquet doubles in partnership with Marion, to whom he had been married for almost 43 years.

William took up Golf Croquet in 2004 at the tender age of 67 and rapidly became a strong player, culminating in victory at the age of 77 in the 2014 Kate Jones Memorial, Golf Croquet's second invitation event. William remarked that this was his first Golf Croquet title since 1954 when he had won the Golf Croquet Doubles Championship! He continued to play competitively until 2019.

However, although William's playing



career was distinguished, it was not really that which caused the news of his death to lead so many to express their affectionate and heartfelt regrets.

For William was one of the game's best-known characters, with a reputation stretching back to his glory days, based on his unique style of play, his extraordinarily phlegmatic and consistent personality and, above all his affability and courtesy.

He seemed to age much more slowly than ordinary mortals. Admittedly, he had something of a head-start in this department because he seemed rather middle-aged even from the early part of his career! Nonetheless, he carried on being the same old William as the years and decades rolled by and the only difference between William in the 1970s and William in the 21st century was that the latter was slightly more rotund.

~

His playing style was unique and instantly recognisable.

His stance was based on "the grip and posture of a left-handed batsman with a pronounced two-eyed stance, certainly not modelled on Frank Woolley" in the words of D.M.C. Prichard, author of *The History of Croquet*, who is quoted again below. Woolley, to explain, was an epitome of left-handed batting elegance.

William's aiming style was deliberate and involved much aligning and pointing of the mallet. But the results were extraordinarily effective because he seemed almost never to miss – all the more remarkable because he was achieving this in an era of all-wooden mallets which were much harder to swing accurately than today's peripherally-weighted examples of precision engineering.

This allowed William to adopt what later became known as "Jacksonian" tactics (named after the great New Zealander, Bob Jackson) which meant running hoops hard, looking round for the nearest ball and hitting it, regardless of range. This approach tended to drive more conventional opponents to despair.

~

His croquet strokes were another strength.

William played big roll strokes with ease by standing up and striking down firmly on the striker's ball which would then jump into the air and, loaded with forward spin, travel the length of the court.

He would then plod after the balls "with the measured tread of a soldier in full



marching order, showing no sign of elation in success nor concern in adversity".

Indeed, William enjoyed big croquet strokes so much that, after an opponent had cornered, he would often decline to make immediate progress and, instead, simply use big splits to re-organise the balls so that the opponent was left still widely separated but with all the balls in different places.

This, too, was likely to induce frustration in impetuous players who would eventually crack and take an incautious shot at William's balls.

When they missed, William would nod sagely and then take full advantage of the situation.

This tactic was even effective against the late, great John Solomon who admitted that, in his heyday, he regarded William as one of the opponents he least wanted to play.

~

William's rather understated approach could disarm the unwary.

A new doubles pair was drawn to play William and Nigel Aspinall in the Open Doubles Championship at Hurlingham in 1980. The debutants reached their court





Counties Championship at Southwick and, after only quarter of an hour's play one morning, was standing near the west boundary when Phil Cordingley passed by and called out a cheery "Morning, William".

"Morning, Phil" was the reply, "I seem to have a bit of a break going already. It does rather spoil the game!"

~

William was a General Practitioner by profession and not inclined to over-diagnose.

"I think we should let nature take its course" was said to be the advice that he gave most often and it did not seem to do his patients any harm.

He was equally tranquil about life's little difficulties when they affected him.

Once, when playing in a Parkstone tournament, William let a friend borrow his new car for a short local journey.

A little while later, while William was in play, he was asked to come to the phone and was informed that the friend had had an accident and was uninjured but the car was damaged.

"That's a pity" said William and went back to his break.

He was called to the phone a little later to be told that the car was, in fact, badly damaged.

"Oh, well. These things happen." was his reply before returning to continue the break.

A third phone call was from the police who wanted his permission to take the wreck to a scrapyard.

"Yes, that should be fine" replied William calmly, before returning to the court to

complete the break successfully.

~

William never changed in character.

He had a rather deliberate style of speech and play and was uniformly cheerful and affable to all he met, with particular warmth towards new players.

Quick to tell someone how well they had played, he would reassure an opponent he had beaten that they had been unfortunate.

He was part of a Great Britain team that travelled to the USA in 1981 to promote Association Croquet and immediately formed friendships with players like Jim Bast that were to last for decades.

When the United States team toured England in 1985, William ensured that they were welcomed at Parkstone in addition to Roehampton and the Test Match against Great Britain at Nottingham.

~

William was a contented soul who always seemed to enjoy whatever he was doing.

In his case, croquet was one of his keenest interests for almost seventy years.

He gained a huge amount of pleasure from the game throughout his life and, very happily, gave just as much pleasure to others by his personality and friendship.

He died peacefully at home watching the World Snooker Championship and leaves behind Marion, his children Alison, James and Amanda and a host of friends who will all miss him very greatly.

Stephen Mulliner

and introduced themselves to Nigel, whose reputation was well known. There was no sign of his partner who they had not met before.

After a few minutes, a player shambled into view, donned a glove, and, being informed by Nigel that they had won the toss, played a ball into court (there was no warm-up in those days).

Astonished by his stance, grip and general demeanour, the newcomers assumed that Nigel's regular partner was indisposed and that this casual performer had kindly agreed to play at short notice to give them a game

Faced with a choice of shots

that would give one or other opponent a break if they missed,

they reasoned that there was no harm in taking the one that would enable Nigel to get going, as he would surely just lay up for his stand-in partner.

They missed and Nigel went to 4-back and, an hour later, William completed an immaculate triple peel!

William liked to get full value from a game. He was once playing in the Inter-



Playing achievements

- MacRobertson Shield (winning teams) 1956, 1963, 1969, 1974
- President's Cup winner 1966
- Men's Champion 1970
- Open Doubles Champion 1960 (with H.O. Hicks), 1971, 1972, 1975, 1976, 1978 (with G.N. Aspinall)
- New Zealand Open Championship finalist 1963 (Solomon)
- Open Championship finalist 1962 (Cotter), 1977 (Heap)
- Surrey Cup 1956, Roehampton Challenge Cup 1956
- Association Plate 1960, 1965
- MacRobertson Shield Playing Record:
- Singles Matches 18, Won 13, Lost 5
- Doubles Matches 18, Won 15, Lost 3

Photographs, top row from left:

- 1956 England v New Zealand
- 1963 England MacRobertson Shield
- 1968 President's Cup
- 1969 England MacRobertson Shield

Centre below:

- 1974 Great Britain v New Zealand

Centre page:

- 2007 Reunited with the Association Plate.

Bottom corners:

- 2014 GC Kate Jones, Second Eight (aged 77)



Obituary

Mike Lambert died in his sleep in the early hours of Monday 15 June.

He had been a long-time member of the croquet section of Ember Sports Club, and having shown a passing interest as early as 1989, he joined the Club as a member just after the major re-alignment of some tennis courts and the construction of the new full-size croquet court in 1996.

His participation in all aspects of Ember club life was significant and he contributed to the croquet section with his knowledge and skill on the lawn as player and with his enthusiasm as a woodworker and for DIY.

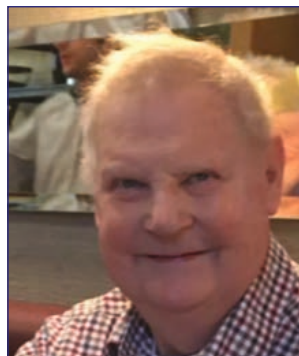
Mike served as Chairman of the Croquet Section from 2007 until 2011 and as such also served on the Club Management Committee.

His main interest for croquet however, lay with Surbiton CC where he played most of his croquet, also served on the committee, and was for the last couple of years, their Secretary.



Mike was interactive with many of the Croquet Association Council members and was

Mike Lambert



always mindful of Ember Croquet Club.

His work for both Surbiton and Ember was invaluable when the CA started their IT register of members, actively assisting with the usage of the CA application.

Mike read Engineering at Edinburgh University, joined Rolls Royce in Bristol as a Graduate Apprentice and then worked for many years in the IT field for various companies and he used that IT knowledge to set up numerous little applications for Ember CC to control club competitions.

Mike was also very active around Elmbridge as a keen amateur artist with both Molesey Art Society and Chertsey Artists, as secretary of Molesey & District Antiques Society and involved in a music appreciation society.

Mike viewed Ember CC as a very convenient social venue for Sunday afternoon and evening croquet because he was able to access the club from the

back gate of his house and in the winter he would appear ready for indoor croquet wearing his head light.

Mike had been coping very well with cancer for some 15 years but was informed last autumn that it had now turned more aggressive.

He was a family man and leaves wife Linda, son Matthew and daughter Sarah, both married just two years ago, and a granddaughter Felicity born just last year.

Roger Dollimore, Ember CC

~

Nick Parish of Surbiton CC added:

Many of those who have visited Surbiton Croquet Club will have met Mike Lambert, and all who played there will have benefited from his wonderful lawn-setting trolleys, which are a work of art.

Mike was one of the earliest members of Surbiton, an enthusiastic and a dangerous opponent, a wonderful craftsman and a long-serving Committee member.

But most importantly he was a lovely, warm and generous man who will be much missed.



Obituary

Derek Beard died at home in Taunton, on 4 July. Born in Mansfield, where his father was in the motor trade, he had a lifelong interest in cars, the faster the better.

After National Service in the RAF, Derek trained with the Rootes Group and then joined the family business. He took part in the RAC Rally in the 1960s and moved to the South West, with periods living in Wincanton, Frome and Bideford.

While at Wincanton, he took up gliding and became a qualified instructor at the gliding club at RNAS Yeovilton. At Bideford, he started a new career as a chiropodist and finally settled in Taunton in the 1980s, where his passion for croquet began.

A founder member of the Taunton Deane Croquet Club in 1985 and Chairman during the early years at Cheddon Road

Derek Beard 1932 - 2020



and the move to Taunton School, Derek was at the heart of the club for the rest of his life.

An attacking and accomplished player, he captained the Club's Federation Team and became a popular and encouraging coach and mentor for new players and members, also becoming a referee.

Always ready to put his hand to any task

in the club he managed the maintenance of the lawns and surrounds with thoroughness and enthusiasm for many years.

A member of the three-man team responsible for the move to our present home with the Taunton Vale Sports Club, Derek was an indispensable member of the club, together with Jean, his ever-supportive wife and their accompanying dog.

Not content with all his other interests Derek was also a committee member and Treasurer of the South West Federation of Croquet Clubs for a number of years.

I always enjoyed our many encounters on the lawns despite having to record that the last time we played, last year, he beat me 26-1. We shall all miss him.

John de Winton

25 Hours of Croquet!

Noon Saturday 20 June to 1pm Sunday 21 June



On 10 June my croquet buddy Pete Haydon and I were shooting the breeze on social media, when an idea popped into my head.....

An idea

Guy - "Remember when we were in Ripon last year and Fergus (Thompson) told us about the 24 hour croquet game he did over the summer solstice one year? Why don't we do it this year?"

Pete - "But that's just a week or so away? Who would do it?"

Guy "Well me, obviously, and you, clearly!"

Pete "Ah . . ."

The plan

So, three days later, we launched our fundraising page - to raise £2,000 to split between Dulwich Sports Club (home to Dulwich Croquet Club) and St Christopher's Hospice.

We actually raised over £4,600!

We wanted this to be a whole club effort, so asked for volunteers from hockey, squash, tennis and cricket to partner Pete and I to play each other throughout - and at some point someone said, why not do 25 hours, not 24, then you can have 50-different partners . . . great idea! So, we set up to play from noon till 1pm the following day over the Summer Solstice.

Members volunteered from all sections of the club, from age 9 to 89, with people filling the less social hours in the middle of the night very quickly.

With generous help, the lawns were lit with strings of LED bulbs and spotlights, and yet others offered to keep us going with cake and bacon rolls from dusk to dawn.

Play gets under way

Our opening partners were Cindy Rutherford, a croquet player and frequent fundraiser for the hospice, and Nikhil Roy, our squash playing Club President.

Early on saw our youngest participant, budding cricketer, nine year old Freddie (9) take to the game and he was soon followed by Patricia Goodman, our oldest (89), reminding us that croquet, which doesn't

care about age or gender, is a sport where your playing days are never behind you.

Through the night

Incredibly, hour after hour, new partners arrived, all keen to play, right through the night, with not a single 'no show', which was a great boost for Pete and me who, at about 3.40am, were starting to seriously ache all over as the night time temperature dropped and the dampness in the air rose.

Without the cheerfulness of new recruits, this would have been the point at which we would have been convinced that some hours were longer than others and even the year's shortest night was a bit too long.

Druids being scarce in South London, the solstice sunrise was greeted with generously donated champagne, and the 6am round of bacon rolls were washed down with a pick-me-up Bloody Mary!

Sweepstake

There was an accompanying sweepstake - "How many combined steps will Pete & Guy take in 25 hours?" - to encourage more participation.

The predictions were in scarily high some cases, depressing us no end!!

The sweep as eventually won by our youngest participant.

The last leg

After 6am time was flying, even if we were not, and before the last of many espressos wore off, the final game was upon us, which we played with our respective wives.

This emotional game, which - by chance - finished at 1.01pm, twenty five hours and one minute after we struck our first ball, was made very special by being watched by a lovely (socially distanced) crowd of friends and club members.

A total of £4,200 were raised for St Christopher's Hospice, a charity that is close to the



hearts of very many people in South London and for Dulwich Sports Club, which, in these lockdown days, it's members have learned to appreciate anew.

Would we ever do it again we were asked, "yes, like a shot." the answer.

Thanks to all those who supported us in many ways throughout the event, start to finish 10 days....

You can see pictures of nearly everyone on our Dulwich FB page here <https://www.facebook.com/DulwichCroquetClub>



Guy Scurfield,

Dulwich Croquet Club President

1 [https://www.gofundme.com/f/25-](https://www.gofundme.com/f/25-hours-of-croquetaiming)

hours-of-croquetaiming

2 <http://www.dulwichsports.co.uk/>

3 <https://www.stchristophers.org.uk/>

M C Percival Mallets



Aluminium head mallets made from high grade aluminium & fitted with long lasting Tufnol end caps which can be easily replaced if damaged.

The heads are anodised (hardened) and will be available in a variety of colours including black, blue and red.

They have been thoroughly tested and provide an accurate, reliable, peripherally weighted mallet.

These heads can be fitted with any of the carbon fibre shafts and are available in 10" and 11" head lengths and a base weight of 2 lbs 15 ozs (1332 g) adjustable from (1280 g to 1370 g).

Michael Percival

07780 677943

Michael@croquetmallets.co.uk

AC Championships

The Championship of Surrey

As we arrived on the Friday morning it was clear that this was to be a slightly different 'Surreys' than we were used to,, writes *Alison Maugham*.

A Sunny Surreys, the right side of Lockdown

Hand sanitiser was the first object to greet us upon arrival, with clear systems in place to help us all socially distance ourselves at, for many, the first championship event of the year.

I shall of course start with the important things. The food and the beverages were as delicious as we have become accustomed to at Surbiton, served with all the correct procedures for the 'new normal', this was definitely the start of making sure our beloved tournament scene was as close to our 'old normal' as possible.

The seven courts were scattered with a full house of 26 players, all battling not only for the championship, but the chance to say "I can still play croquet. Phew!"

The only slightly unusual thing about the courts themselves were the tents that popped up around them, the new normal meaning that players brought their own shelter from shine and showers, along with their own mugs.

Over 30 degrees of sunshine greeted us on the first day of play, meaning we weren't just rusty, we were rusty and melting!

Okay, "Enough waffle already!" I hear you say – and onto the good stuff, watched by over 150 people on the video livestream, courtesy of Surbiton CC themselves.

~

The first round was fairly straightforward with no major upsets, although proof of the fabulously challenging courts came in the form of the four games which went to time, which isn't exactly expected at championship level! Even I managed to lose quickly enough to have an early refreshing spritzer before lunch.

As **round two** progressed, it was clear that the big names were big for a reason.

Peeling seemed to be a reminder that the 'old normal' was still lurking, even when court time this season has been as rare gold

dust.

The exciting results came from Alain Giraud versus Paddy Chapman, where Giraud beat the 2018 World Champion 2-1.

His reward was to then be faced by Stephen Mulliner, the 2016 World Champion, in the following round.

The quarter finals were then set and ready to go. To give you a little gist of the calibre of the players, six of these eight players are in the current MacRobertson Shield (England Team) squad and the remaining two players were Robert Fulford, a previous Mac player, and Giraud, 'the one to watch'.

As the day progressed, and match after match finished, Giraud really lived up to that tag-line.

I shall now confess: I didn't hang around to watch the matches finish; I frequented the lovely family run Italian restaurant nearby and sank myself into a fabulous red whilst enjoying the ambience of the secret garden (now not so secret) (*photo below*)

But I did get to see the delight on Giraud's face (he'd beaten Mulliner) as he appeared from the main restaurant to collect his not-so-dedicated supporter/host, who also thought the Italian was a good place to be.

Having beaten two former world champions, he was next set to play Robert Fulford, currently the third ranked player in the world. Having seen the sheer boyish delight in Giraud the evening before, I couldn't help be a little more in his corner for that **semi-final** the next day.

But, alas, Fulford isn't No 3 in the world for knitting, it really is for croquet and spectators far and wide witnessed his fairly speedy two peeling turns that took him into the final with Mark Avery.

Next time Alain, next time!

Avery had reached **the final** by way of wins against Nick Parish, Christian Carter and Jamie Burch. The final took place on Surbiton's now crispy lawn, and the spectators near and distanced looked on to see the world-class croquet we have now become accustomed to here.

Fulford wins

Fulford claimed the championship in two games, but Avery showed his natural class and croquet ease as usual, just reminding us why he was there in the final.

All of us enjoyed this fabulous and prestigious event. Huge thanks to Surbiton CC for making sure we were all welcomed with open arms into a safe yet familiar environment.

Alison Maugham

The Eastern Championship

With a reduced entry, the Eastern Championship was held over two late July days, and was won by Ian Burridge, repeating his win at Wrest Park in 2015, *reports John Bevington*.

As on the previous occasion, the weather played its part. Play on Saturday was abandoned in the mid-afternoon due to heavy and persistent rain, which thankfully cleared up overnight, to allow the semi-finals and final to go ahead the next day with an early start.

Joel Taylor caused an upset by beating David Maugham, while Burridge got the better of Rich Waterman with a triple peel in the third game.

He'd won the first game in that style too, but it was certainly not straightforward, requiring a substantial promotion and a bravura conclusion when, having peeled partner cleanly, he leaped through rover and over the peeler.

Burridge was equally relentless if less dramatic in the final, winning it in straight games.

The tournament was played to super-advanced rules, and in quite a few cases players simply went to 4-back with a contact leave, which usually proved a winning tactic.

The Plate final was contested by Ian and Debbie Lines, with the former victorious, and as the trophy was unavailable the presentation was simulated with a topically inscribed tray.

Our thanks to David Maugham for his management, to George Collin for hoop setting, and to Eddie Fisher for the use of a large gazebo which came in very useful on Saturday afternoon.

And commiserations to Rod Ashwell, who entered at the last minute to find himself outside the already completed draw and (as a retired teacher) was given two Lines in the Plate.

The full results are available at Croquet Scores.

John Bevington



News from the AC Tournaments Committee

CA auspices AC tournaments

The Ladies Sixes (the Barlow Bowl and Longman Trophy) was the first of the CA's AC tournaments to be held this season, on 8-9 August (*see the report below*), and a chance for Cheltenham to test out its Covid-19 rules prior to the AC Opens which were deferred from June to 1-6 September.

The Doubles Championship in the **AC Opens** has had to be cancelled but the blue-riband event, the Singles Championship, will proceed as originally planned.

The Challenge and Gilbey, with its mix of handicap and level play will take place at Sussex County as scheduled on Sept 3-6, but with a new format.

The Gilbey Handicap event will be played on Thursday and Friday, 3-4 September, and the Challenge Class events will be played on Saturday and Sunday 5-6 Sept. There are places still available!

The AC Selectors' choices for '**The Eights**' has been announced and currently all the events have a full complement of players.

The National AC Seniors at Budleigh is fully subscribed, but there is plenty of space in the new 14point South of England Weekend at Compton (Eastbourne) on 19-20 September and the South of England Championship at the same venue on 25-27 September.

The Ladies' Sixes Championship

A lovely sight greeted the 12 players attending the Ladies' Sixes at Cheltenham in early August. The courts were dressed to perfection with flags, corner markers and devilishly set hoops, reports Sarah Hayes.

Boards were in place for the first time this season and the sun was shining; it was just perfect. And, oh joy of joys, we were to use scoring clips again!

Six players competed for the Barlow Bowl and six did likewise for the Longman Cake Stand. Lorna Dewar and Rosemary Saunders Robertson drove from Edinburgh, which involved seven hours in a car with no air conditioning. Now that is dedication!

Each event was played as a single round robin over two days, so everyone had five games in all. In the First Six, Sarah Hayes was unbeaten and won the magnificent Barlow Bowl again, but snapping at her

Clubs who had already entered for 2020, were asked in June whether they would be willing to participate in a revised version of the 2020 inter-club competitions under special conditions set out by AC Tournaments Committee: revised play-by dates, a regionalised first-round draw, encouragement to use neutral venues to minimise maximum journey times for both teams, and a default teams of three arrangement instead of the usual teams of four.

The cancellation of many Federation Leagues across the country and the reduced CA Fixtures Calendar has freed up many weekends for eligible club players, and thus raising a team has been more about personal decisions regarding willingness to travel, rather than croquet diary clashes.

The entry for the **AC Inter-Club Championship** dropped to eight teams from twelve when those who had entered were canvassed about their willingness to continue with the competition.

The draw was regionalised, and teams of three became the default.

Each of the quarter finals has been played, with some taking advantage of the three player provision.

The final is due to be held as normal at Surbiton, but the organisers will be flexible depending in the identity of the finalists.

heels was Alison Maugham who dropped just one game and, as runner-up, received the Silver Mallet Brooch.

In the Second Six, Rosemary Saunders Robertson played extremely well and was also unbeaten. So she received the Longman Cake Stand for the first time and promised to return next year. Heather Bennett came second with a very creditable four wins from five, the game between Robertson and Bennett being the decider.

Both trophies were presented by Mrs Eileen Magee BEM, Vice-President of Cheltenham CC and everyone enjoyed the socially distanced ceremony (*photo right*).

Many thanks to the huge team of helpers who not only had to get everything ready but also allowed for all the new Covid-19 rules which now apply. And personal thanks to the manager of the Longman event, Julia Lowery, who kindly offered her services in order to keep playing 'bubbles' intact and did an excellent job.

Sarah Hayes

AC Inter-Club competitions

The Mary Rose competition (AC level-advanced, for handicap 0+, with a minimum aggregate handicap of 3 or 4 depending on team size) saw eight clubs take up the revised conditions.

At the time of writing, all four quarter finals have been completed ahead of schedule, leaving Nottingham v Watford, and Roehampton v High Wycombe to contest the semi-finals.

The Longman Cup (AC handicap, for players of handicap 3.5+) saw the draw reduced from 27 clubs to 6 when they had all consulted their teams and committees for their views, given that many potential contestants were shielding or unwilling to travel any distance. Team numbers were reduced from four to three players in the hopes of making it more attractive.

Two teams were allocated byes into the semi-finals, whilst the other four were drawn into quarter-finals.

At the time of writing the semi-finals will be Hurlingham v Nottingham or High Wycombe, and St Albans v East Dorset.

Nottingham and High Wycombe have been very busy contesting other inter-club competitions, so we have no qualms regarding their match being played on time.

The Secretary's Shield (AC handicap for representatives of nine Federations, plus 2019 champions) attracted five clubs from the eligible ten, with Watford losing to 2019 champions St Alban's in the only quarter-final for 2020.

St Alban's will play Nottingham next, whilst Hampstead Heath take on Winchester in the other semi-final.

The National Short Croquet Competition was cancelled when the hosts for the final had to withdraw and a poll of the competing Federations showed there was no enthusiasm for finding a new venue.

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



Formal Consultation on proposed 7th Edition AC Laws

by Ian Lines and Ian Vincent

The WCF Association Croquet Laws Committee has produced a draft of the 7th Edition of the AC Laws.

In accordance with WCF Statute 132.5.3, this draft is required to be placed before Members for formal consultation for at least two months before the ACLC is permitted to recommend a draft to the WCF Management Committee for submission to Council for approval.

Members are encouraged to make the draft available to their memberships, and copies of the above documents are now available on the WCF website – www.worldcroquet.org

Please review the draft and send any comments to Ian Vincent, the Chairman of the CA's AC Laws Committee and its representative on the WCF's ACLC, for him to forward to its chairman, Graeme Roberts, by midnight on Sunday, 4 October 2020.

The draft has been carefully checked for typos and cross-referencing errors, but is being separately and professionally proof-read, so please restrict comments to ones of substance rather than typography at this stage.

A number of changes have been made to the draft circulated for public comment last autumn.

In particular:

- The winner of a timed game in which both balls of a side are pegged out has

been clarified.

- The term annulled is used instead of cancelled to describe a stroke which the striker stops after accidentally contacting a ball in a non-critical stroke.

- The treatment of marginal positions has changed, to take greater account of the practicalities of refereeing rather than the possible advantage or disadvantage to the striker. A ball in a relevant marginal position will be treated as being off the court; not in contact with a ball on or near the yard-line; wired (as currently); protruding into and not protruding out of the jaws of a hoop; and that an attempted stroke is critical.

- If players disagree about whether a ball has been hit or moved, greater emphasis is placed on their position to make a judgement than on whether they thought it did so.

- The proposal that a ball could be wired by another ball interfering with the swing of the mallet has been dropped.

- A referee who has not seen a stroke can fault it on the basis of its outcome.

- Any sanctions imposed for slow play can carry over between games of a match.

- Only a referee can require a player to remove headphones which are causing difficulty in communicating with them.

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

Stuart M. Smith and Steve Leonard won the GC English National Doubles Championship on the first weekend in August at Budleigh Salterton CC, reports Jonathan Powe.

The line-up for this season's Championship chopped and changed a bit in the final few days before the event, with Tim Jolliff, Peter Moore and Andrew Wimshurst parachuting in as last-minute replacements, but by the start of play we had ten pairs all vying to get their hands on the Ranelagh Cups.

These included two sibling partnerships – Ivor & Richard Brand and Adam & Andrew Wimshurst, last year's winners Jonathan Powe & Stephen Custance-Baker and top seeds Stuart M Smith & Steve Leonard. Handicaps ranged from -4 to John O'Gorman's 5 (more about him later!).

Every visit to Budleigh is a pleasure – lovely courts, delightful surroundings and always a warm welcome, albeit a socially-distanced one currently. Add some good weather and a bar at lunchtime and it's a winning combination.

We were all very grateful for Budleigh's preparatory work to make the facilities available in difficult circumstances and to have ensured that the hoops were set tight and firm (with thanks to Peter Moore and his team).

The format for the event was pretty standard, with an all-play-all qualifying block to be followed by best-of-3 semis

By the 9 March closing date, 19 clubs had entered the GC Inter-Club Championship and 24 were looking forward to taking part in the GC Murphy Shield.

Almost immediately, the coronavirus changed many aspects of 'life as we know it'.

For these competitions, the Government lockdown meant deferment, followed, in early summer, by hopes of a controlled relaxation of the earlier bans.

During this period, the prospect of clubs' continued involvement in the competitions was discussed with the entered participants.

We needed to know whether there would be sufficient demand for restructured competitions, if future Government guidance was to permit it.

We were pleased to learn that eight clubs wished to continue in the Inter-Club

GC Inter-Club Championship & GC Inter-Club 'Murphy' Shield



Nottingham CC - GC Champions in 2018 (above) and 2019 (photo Chris Roberts)

Championship whilst six remained in the Murphy Shield. Included amongst them were both finalists from each competition in 2019.

We believed that, if possible, it was

important to provide some competitive play for all that wanted it.

As we had hoped, the Government's easing movement and gathering restrictions allowed this in early July and the new draw that had been planned in mid-June became possible. There is now a more leisurely but still hard-fought 'team competition' going ahead in the second half of this truncated season.

Meanwhile those needing to withdraw, all did so for sound and sensible reasons.

I am grateful to all the club organisers, who spent time working with me and especially with their team members to inform the decision making process.

Both of these competitions are very popular and there are a great many reasons for hoping that next year's entry will reaffirm that statement.

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

GC English National Doubles Championship

and a final. We had hoped to get through eight of the nine block rounds on Saturday but it was always going to be a tall order and Budleigh's tight hoops meant that progress was a little slower than expected.

Stumps were drawn shortly before 7pm on Saturday evening after seven rounds, which meant an early start on Sunday for the final two block games.

Block stars

The undoubted stars of the qualifying block were Tim Jolliff (-2) & John O'Gorman (5), who punched way above their weight throughout the weekend. Jolliff was unerringly accurate and gave excellent advice to O'Gorman who did what he was told. They emerged clear winners with 8/9 wins, taking the scalps of the top seeds SM Smith (-4) & Leonard (-3) on the way.

Powe (-4) & Custance-Baker (-1) claimed second spot (7/9) but the last two qualifying places were very much up for grabs going into the final round with Tim King (-3) & Moore (-1) and SM Smith & Leonard both on 5/8, and Lionel Tibble (-3) & Louise Smith (2) on 6/8. In the end Tibble & L Smith took third place spot with SM Smith & Leonard fourth, although both had to endure slightly nervy finishes on the 13th hoop before their games were eventually won.

In the all-play-all Plate, the Sidmouth pair of Philip Harris (2) & Stephen Pearson (3) came into their own with some precise tactical play; having not troubled the scorers in the qualifying block they upped their game considerably, winning 4/5 to claim first place and, more importantly, a bottle each of Anniversary Ale from the well-stocked bar.

Contrasting semis and the shot of the weekend

The semi-finals of the Championship were rather different affairs. Powe & Custance-Baker won theirs against Tibble & L Smith relatively easily in 90 minutes 7-4, 7-5, helped considerably by C-B's ability to jaws from distance (even when he was trying to clear or take position). A skill all of us envied!

The other semi was a much more protracted match – 3½ hours of tactical toing and froing – and was eventually decided in extraordinary fashion over the final few hoops. Before it reached that stage, SM Smith & Leonard had taken the first game 7-3 and looked set fair for a straightforward 2-0 win, but Jolliff & O'Gorman came back strongly to win the second 7-4.

The final game became interesting after Jolliff & O'Gorman had won hoop 10 to equalise 5-5 and then went ahead when Leonard hit his opponent's ball cleanly but unfortunately promoted it through hoop 11.

Smith rescued the situation by running hoop 12 cleanly from 25 yards and so to the final deciding hoop, where much inter-play eventually resulted in Smith unable to do much more with his yellow ball than sit in the jaws but from the wrong side with black already in a scoring position and partner red on the north boundary.

Blue took a good position too and then Leonard, much to the surprise of the watching spectators who should have known better, shot his Red at the hoop from the north boundary, hit Yellow flush in the centre allowing Red to follow through the hoop without touching the sides.

It was a fantastic shot to end the game and match, but a tough loss for Jolliff & O'Gorman who were a whisker away from a place in the final.

To their credit, Jolliff & O'Gorman went on to take third place overall, beating Tibble & L Smith 10-7 in the 19-point playoff, for a fitting end to a very impressive performance.

Deserved winners

After the excitement of the semi-final, the final was a rather more straightforward match, with SM Smith and Leonard taking the honours 7-5, 7-3, with some impressive clearances from distance and accurate hoop-running.

They were deserved winners of the Ranelagh Cups and will be a tough pair to beat in future years.

Peter Nelson closed the event with some kind words of thanks to Budleigh for all they had done to make the event a success. We look forward to returning to Budleigh next year (31 July – 1 August 2021).

All the scores are available on www.croquetcores.com.

Jonathan Powe

Championship and ABC-Level Series

In light of the cancellation of five of the eight tournaments in the English National GC Singles Championship Series the GC Tournaments Committee reviewed the qualifying and selection criteria for the 16 places available at the ENSC Final (for the Ascot Cup), at Southport on 19-20 September.

The details of this can be read in a CA website news item by GCTC Chairman Jonathan Powe dated 29 July.

Rachel Gee made the most hay in those remaining three tournaments, winning at both the National Forest (Ashby) and Nottingham Championships, beating Ian Burrige and Richard Bilton in the respective finals.

The Northern-most outpost of the Series, the Lancashire Open (at Pendle), also survived the disruption, and England captain J-P Moberly took full advantage with victory over Bilton in the final.

continued overleaf...

Every Shot is Tactical

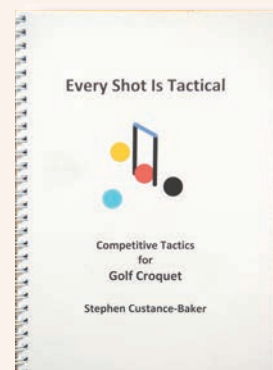
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Richard Carline,
Director of The Croquet Academy and Championship Referee

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GC Series

A-Level Series (unrestricted)

At what amounts to the half way stage in the straight points race that is the A-Level Series, title holder Stuart M Smith leads the field by four points, gained through victory at the Wiltshire Open at Hamptworth, and second place behind Jonathan Powe at the Dorset Open at East Dorset.

With two more tournaments to come at Wrest Park (5-6 Sept) and Sussex (12-13 Sept) there is still everything to play for.

B-Level Series (3+)

The B-Level Series has fared better than the other competitions this season and ten of the original 24 qualifying tournaments have survived. A full field of 16 will be assured for the National final at Roehampton on 5-6 September, albeit with a very short gap this year after the last qualifying event at Hurlingham.

Hamptworth's Aston Wade won two qualifiers at East Dorset and Budleigh but is unable to play in the final unfortunately, and Enfield's Tony Elliott, winner at Ealing, is in the same boat. Other tournament winners David Cornes (Crake Valley), Phil Davies (Reigate), Lynn Percy (Roehampton), Glynis Davies and Marilyn Robinson (both Northampton) will be joined by the leaders of the 'points gatherers' who have all achieved top four placed finishes this season.

C-Level Series (7+)

With scheduled tournaments more heavily grouped in the first half of the season, the C-Level Series has only just about survived this season with just five of its 21 events taking place.

Sandra Cornes was the first to qualify for the National final at Colchester on 19-20 September when she won her home qualifier at Crake Valley (*photo on page 30*). She will be joined by Elaine Wilson (Lodsworth) and Duncan Catterall (High Wycombe) who were winners at Wrest Park and Hamptworth. Other places will be taken by 'points gatherers' as above.

Narrative reports & results digest

Full reports of all three Championship tournaments and accounts of many of the tournaments in the A, B and C-Level Series are available via the dedicated pages on the CA website using this navigation: Home > Compete > CA Events > 'Ascot Cup' or ABC-Level Series.

Chris Roberts, GCTC

Recent Coaching Appointments

Examining Coach

Janet Hoptroff **Sussex County CC**

Sarah Hayes,
Coaching Committee Chair



Although there is only one appointment to report this time round, it is a special case!

The CA Coaching Committee is delighted to announce that Janet Hoptroff of Sussex County CC and the Croquet Academy has been appointed as an Examining Coach; Many congratulations to Janet who has worked tirelessly for a long time now.

An interview with our new Examining Coach – Janet Hoptroff

1) How long have you been coaching for Janet?

I've been coaching for nine years.

2) What started you off down the coaching path?

My then Club, Littlehampton, had a sudden influx of new members.

We didn't have any Coaches, and, following coaching by Daphne Gaitley at a Croquet Academy GC Improvers' course at Sussex Country CC, I found myself fascinated by the coaching process, and realised how much could be achieved by good coaching.

Daphne inspired me to enrol on a Coaches Training Course (CTC) and not long after, in 2011, I moved to SCCC for the challenge of more competitive play, and I became involved with organizing The Croquet Academy, where I have since coached and lead on courses.

3) Any legendary Mentors?

Two people – definitely legendary! **Daphne Gaitley**, who inspired me to become a coach and enrol on a CTC, and recently to become an Examining Coach.

Cliff Jones: Having spent so much time with Cliff over the years during Croquet Academy courses, it would be difficult to find another coach who cares more about coaching and passing on his love of the game

I've lost count of the number of training manuals he has written!

"If you always do what you always did, you'll always get what you always got." rings in my ears... and he's so right!

4) What are your plans now you are an Examining Coach, Janet?

I have been incredibly lucky to have assisted Daphne Gaitley on CTCs and Coaches Qualification Courses (CQC) over the last three years, and I have become more and more fascinated by the coaching and training process.

I want to continue this, and to enjoy being challenged to find new ways of empowering players to progress, whether competitively through the different levels of match and tournament play, or as a social player. I think it is important to investigate different aspects of the game, including the psychology side.

At this stressful time with Covid-19 and the climate crisis, belonging to a club, being outside and having a 'suitably distanced' game can have a profound effect on wellbeing and mental health.

I think it's important to offer support to new coaches as they gain experience and confidence.

5) Did you open that bottle of fizz when you found out about your appointment?

Definitely!

6) How long have you been playing and how did you start?

I've been playing since 2009, when I joined Littlehampton CC for a challenge to mark a 'big birthday', I think 'new challenges' are good, and every 'big birthday' should have one! (plus a bottle of fizz or two!).

So there we are – lots of information for prospective coaches and background on how much work is needed to not only become a coach but to also progress along the coaching path.

Sarah Hayes,
Chair, CA Coaching Committee

Coaching during Covid-19

Strange old times, aren't these? So much is being said about the new normal – well this is it!

Even in these strange times there is still coaching going on, I am pleased to say. I have completed a Tim King course on the use of Zoom, which was great fun and I learned an awful lot; and there have also been several full and half-day courses at High Wycombe CC, plus other ad hoc sessions.

After the Tim King experience, I thought I would give it a go myself, and have conducted a Coaches Training Course (CTC) via Zoom with two candidates – this was an easy thing to do as we could all be sitting in our own homes rather than travelling across the country, and could concentrate on each topic, for which we allowed a full 40 minutes each time.

My friend, Julia Lowery kindly stepped in and ran one session specifically covering Safeguarding, which went down very well.

We have since progressed to on-lawn sessions using taster sessions for prospective new members, and I am pleased to say the two candidates are now on the run-in of extra sessions, and getting ever closer to receiving their coaching badges. The course ran over several weeks, allowing for when all three of us were available – but this was easy and allowed homework to be set, and for some background reading to be done between sessions.

So, do try something new and you might just find you enjoy it!

This new normal could well see many procedures and, perhaps now outdated, methods being forever cast into the "time before the virus" – fingers crossed!!

Sarah Hayes

~

Below: Julia Lowery at High Wycombe



CA Merit Awards

Silver Merit Award AC

Chris Rolph **Sussex County CC**

Sarah Hayes,
Coaching Committee Chair

Chris Rolph made an all-round break of 12 hoops and went on to win the match +3 in the B-Class Advanced event at the Sussex County Midweek Annual AC tournament.

I would imagine his opposition was delighted for him but probably wished Chris

had saved this marvellous turn for someone else.

Many thanks to the tournament manager, John Lowe, for highlighting a new difficulty in the procedures for administrating these merit awards, as presently it is necessary to use official forms that require handling by three parties – the player, the opponent and the manager.

Being mindful of the Covid-19 situation, please do exactly as John did in this case and simply send me an email with all the necessary details which it will be easy for me to confirm using the same media.

Well done Chris Rolph and, who knows, a gold merit award could well follow soon!

Sarah Hayes

Autumn Coaching at High Wycombe CC

Day/Date	Course title	Format	Lead Coach
Tue 5 Sep	GC 7+ Improver	CG Improver C-Level	Ian Shore
Tue 06 Oct	AC 4+ Tactics	AC Advanced Play	Raouf Allim
Wed 14 Oct	Personal Stroke Clinic 2pm	Solo Stroke Clinic	Raouf Allim
Wed 14 Oct	Personal Stroke Clinic 3pm	Solo Stroke Clinic	Raouf Allim
Wed 14 Oct	Personal Stroke Clinic 4pm	Solo Stroke Clinic	Raouf Allim
Wed 14 Oct	Personal Stroke Clinic 5pm	Solo Stroke Clinic	Raouf Allim
Sat 24 Oct	GC 3+ Improver	CG Improver B-Level	Ian Shore

There are still just a few places left on the AC and GC courses being run during September and October 2020 at the High Wycombe Croquet Club.

Entry is via the CA website ([navigation help below](#)) where there are full details of the courses.

A new innovation is a 'stroke clinic' by Dr Raouf Allim, which is all about your mallet, not your brain! Raouf has been running these clinics, which provide one-on-one coaching focused on improving that player's stroke for some time and they are very popular.

If you have any questions, please direct them to the Courses Secretary, Ian Shore (details below).

This is a great opportunity to get quality coaching during a period when there is less pressure from tournaments.

Places are limited, so if you are interested book soon.

Ian Shore, Coaching Lead, HWCC, ianshore@gmail.com

~

CA website: Home > Compete > Fixtures Calendar

If you don't see all the courses marked in pink, you will need to select view 'courses' from the Display Options panel near the top of the page. On-line readers can click this link:

www.croquet.org.uk/?p=tournament/caCalendar



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13th time lucky for Brooks

The GC Veterans' Festival of Golf Croquet



Richard Brooks, of Sussex County CC, finally got his hands on the prized Alan Oldham Memorial Trivet,

when, at his thirteenth attempt, he won the CA Veterans' Festival of Golf Croquet, reports **Richard Carline**.

The 14th running of the event took place at Southwick in mid-July when two days in bright sunshine on six wonderfully prepared courts (thanks to Ben Harwood of Complete Turf Care and his team) rewarded this season's participants.

The 18 players were divided into three (now familiar) bubbles – A, B and C – to play single 13-point games against all the opponents in their own group.

At the end of day one, the top two from each bubble were put into a second phase Group 1 to contest similar formatted 19-point games, while the remainder went into Groups 2 & 3 and played 13-point games as on day one.

The Tournament was instigated by Bill Arliss in 2007 and was first won by Derek Old. Last year's victor John Bowcott (Hurlingham) returned to defend his title, but without success.

Another previous victor's name that caught the eye on the trophy was that of Chris Sheen of Colchester, who won in 2016, and he made the top six again.

The final game of the Championship Block became the decider.

Brooks, playing in his thirteenth Vets, played Roger Barnacle of Dogmersfield, competing for the first time.

Although Barnacle won at the 19th hoop, both players finished on four wins from their five games, and Brooks had the better net hoops tally, so took the title and trophy on that count.

For Brooks, this was a well-deserved victory; he had reached three finals in the past and last year played in the GC World Qualifiers (and qualified) in preference to this event.

CA Development Grants

Croquet will return to Moreton-in-Marsh

Croquet history recalls that "In 1868, the first croquet all-comers meet was held at Moreton-in-Marsh, Gloucestershire."

So says Wikipedia. An "all-comers meet" is (one assumes) the term used by speakers of the American language to describe an open tournament.

Most readers will know that the first Open Championship was allegedly held in Evesham in 1867, but it is widely agreed that, since nobody other than those who participated in it was aware that it was taking place, to call it "open" was something of a stretch.

The event in Moreton was reported nationally in "The Field" magazine, and the details are recorded in the history of the Royal White Hart Hotel, Moreton. The winner was none other than Walter Peel.

Sadly, there is currently no croquet club in Moreton-in-Marsh.

But that is about to change.

Gill Hindshaw and the other vigorous members of the steering committee have made an excellent start; clearing, fencing and levelling of the land leased from the Council has been undertaken.

The next part of the project will be the soil preparation and seeding.

Last month the CA Development Committee was able to offer some urgently needed funds, and they recommended the **maximum grant of £5,000**.

The Major Grants Committee endorsed this recommendation, and the Executive Board felt able to lift the moratorium and to make the money available – not least because there have not yet been any calls upon the Emergency Fund that was established to provide urgent financial relief for clubs affected by the virus lockdown.

Croquet will be extended in Nottingham

Indulging in a frenzy of carefully considered generosity, the Development Committee also recommended a **grant of £5,000** to Nottingham CC.

The club has finally secured a new 35-year lease of the land in Highfields Park, including the adjacent former bowls club, and a programme of redevelopment has been devised.

The first phase involved extending the existing irrigation system (which is fed by a borehole) to the former bowling greens, and the installation of a root barrier.

The next stage is that those greens will be levelled and resurfaced to provide four full-size courts and another small court in the existing space.

Thus, Nottingham will become a 9.5 court club, with the ability to host most of the major tournaments held by the CA and WCF.

They will also have increased flexibility to host smaller tournaments and matches, whilst providing courts for the growing membership. The Development Committee felt privileged to be able to support one of England's most successful, attractive and forward-looking clubs, following in the footsteps of Sir Jesse Boot.

D M C Prichard's 'History of Croquet' tells us that the Chemist "waved his magic wand" in 1928 and "5 croquet lawns materialised" in his "pleasure park".

Beatrice McGlen and the present

Nottingham committee will be extending that good work without benefit of such wizardry, but they will be comforted by the support of the governing body and the relatively modest sum it has been able to add to the substantial funds already raised by club members.

Who will be next? – Could it be your club?

Your club could also receive the grant of a quantity of our British pounds towards the costs incurred in improving or extending its lawns and/or other facilities.

Your Federation Development Officer will offer advice and guidance as to how to acquire suitable grants or loans. Terms and conditions do apply, but we like to err on the side of generosity whenever we can, though we obviously have to have regard to the published guidelines, and the blood pressure of the Honorary Treasurer.

Loans are made available on favourable terms, are interest-free and usually repayable over five years. They are sometimes offered when an application for a grant falls outside the scheme (perhaps because the amount sought is too great or the project is seen to be "maintenance" rather than "development") and the money is needed urgently to enable a club to achieve continuing success.

John Reddish, Chairman of the Development Committee

Have you considered leaving a gift in your will for your croquet club ?

Trying to find funds for unexpected problems can put real stress on a croquet club's finances.

Lawn weed and moss treatment
Urgent repairs
New updated equipment
The development and improvement of club facilities

All these can put stress on the club and undermine its stability.
Usually they can not simply be funded by increased membership fees.
Croquet is a great game enjoyed in many ways by very different types of players and we
all depend on healthy and stable clubs.

That is why leaving something in your will to your club can help members continue to enjoy
playing the game we have all enjoyed so much.

It is simple to do and your club will really benefit from it.

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I usually have used machinery available, including ATCO ride-on cylinder mowers (5mm cut height) and Countax lawn tractors, which are ideal for towing spikers, boom sprayers, spreaders and trailers (for top dressing).

The humble watering can

A watering can is a really useful tool in lawn care. Duct tape or Sellotape can be stuck onto the rose to produce various patterns.

A letterbox shape gives a sprinkle of up to 1 metre wide and a small square is ideal for treating patches.

Use Liquid Iron to control Red Thread, Fusarium and Moss

There has been a lot of Red Thread around this year.

It is recognisable from the pink patches that it makes and it kills the leaf but not the plant. It appears overnight when the right weather conditions (wet and warm) prevail.

Liquid Iron will kill it.

Fill the can with water and add a measure of Liquid Iron (30ml for a 5 litre can; 60ml for 10 litres) and stir. It is easy to apply to patches when they appear and the unused product can be left in the can until needed the next day or even a few days later.

No clogging, no clean up, it's quick and easy and low-cost too.

Patches of Fusarium and Moss can be treated in the same way.

So far this year I have used three 10 litre watering cans to kill Red Thread and a couple of Fusarium patches.

180ml of product has been used, costing only £2.70.

One litre bottles cost me £15, post free.

Duncan Hector ~ (contact details; see my advert, left)

Memories of William Ormerod by Peter Trimmer (Part 1)

My enjoyment of croquet is very much enhanced by the characters in the game – and (even by croquet standards) William Ormerod was an exceptional character.

He had a great memory and would often recount amusing stories, always with a great sense of warmth.

Although I lack William's skills as a raconteur, it seems fitting now to write some memories about him, to allow others to enjoy stories as he so often did for others.

~

As a young teenager, I'd been playing for only a few weeks (at Parkstone), when a middle-aged man sauntered over in golf shoes and introduced himself as 'William'. I'd heard his name mentioned in reverent tones, but I'd started to measure 'experts' by what they could do, rather than what they said. "Would you like some coaching, would you?" William asked gently. We headed out to court five and he placed two balls a yard apart.

"Could you hit this ball with that, could

you?" I did as I was bid. "Well done!" William congratulated warmly, despite the simplicity. The coaching continued for a few minutes, with much congratulation even after a bad stroke.

"Now, what about a bigger shot? Could you send this ball to that hoop [2-back] and yours to that one [1-back]?" We were near corner 3 at the time and I'd not attempted such a big stroke before. I set them up and slugged the balls. 'Not bad', I thought, 'only a few yards out with each ball'. "Very well done," he congratulated. He started explaining something about angles, suggesting that I would be able to play it better next time. "Would you like to try that again, would you?"

It seemed ridiculous to expect an improvement on my attempt. "I'd like to see you play" I said. He looked thoroughly abashed, not at all eager to show what he could do. Suspicious up, I stood my ground. He didn't have a mallet with him so he took mine, weighed it in his hands and waggled the shaft with his foot on

the head. It was home-made, with a pine shaft. He commented that it was unusual, which I took as further evidence that he probably wasn't as good as others claimed. Then he started to position the balls and a calm confidence filled the air. He had what looked like a very awkward playing style: left-handed side-style, and with the mallet shaft off-vertical. 'There's no way that he could play accurately like that!', I thought. After a final few words about angles, William struck the balls. My head scanned back and forth between the balls; they stopped rolling with the striker's ball a foot straight in front of 1-back and the other a yard in front of 2-back; a perfect outcome.

~

At that time, William was fifty and the saying at Parkstone was that, "William was born aged thirty". That saying gradually changed as the years rolled by; the latest version that I heard was "William was born aged sixty".

To be continued, and looked forward to, in the next issue of The Croquet Gazette...



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Contact David on 01706 368214, 07957 103417, davidbarrett.db@tiscali.co.uk
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Winner Sandra Cornes and others in action at the Crake Valley GC CC-Level Series tournament (Photo by David Cornes)

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CA Contacts

Mark Suter

Manager

The Croquet Association
Old Bath Road, Cheltenham
GL53 7DF 01242 242318
caoffice@croquet.org.uk



Quiller Barrett

President

10 Frost House, Chesham Rd
Berkhamsted
HP4 3AY
quiller3@gmail.com



Jonathan Isaacs

Chairman of Council

Meers Farm, The Hollow,
West Chiltington, West Sussex
RH20 2QA 01798 812028
jonathanisaacs@btinternet.com



Patricia Duke-Cox

Vice-Chairman of Council

171 Witham Road
Woodall Spa, Lincoln
LN10 6RB 01526 354878
duke-cox@hotmail.co.uk



Roger Staples

Chairman of Executive Board

Brackenside
1 Darlington Road
Long Newton, TS21 1PE
07778 841625
staplessteeple@live.co.uk



Ian Burridge

Hon. Treasurer

Church Farm, Church Street
Foston, Lincs., NG23 2LG
01400 283157
burridge.ian@googlemail.com



Dr. Ian Vincent

Hon. Secretary

21 Cedar Avenue, Beeston
Nottingham NG9 2HA
0115 925 3664
ian.vincent@cantab.net



Club Treasurer Andy Robertson chair cleaning at Blewbury CC. Surely this should be the Chairman's job? (Photo by Brian Jamieson)

Voting members of CA Council

North West

John Dawson
01244 675929
johngdawson@onetel.com

North East & Yorkshire

Derek Knight
01759 301013
derekknight997@googlemail.com

East & West Midlands

Patricia Duke-Cox
01526 354878
duke-cox@hotmail.co.uk

East Anglia

Brian Havill
01707 873269
brian.havill@outlook.com

East Anglia

Rich Waterman
01206 331334
rwaterman@hotmail.com

Southern

Frances Colman
07774 639061
frances@luxtersfarm.com

South East

Ian Cobbold
020 8642 0533
ianmccobbold@hotmail.com

South East

Jonathan Isaacs
01798 812028
jonathanisaacs@btinternet.com

South East

Samir Patel
020 8892 2172
croquet@patel500.co.uk

South West

Dave Kibble
07976 732934
DaveKibble@gmail.com

South West

Peter Nelson
01395 578487
peter@nelson01.eclipse.co.uk

South West

Klim Seabright
01242 512933
klimseabright@gmail.com

CA Committee Chairmen

Executive Board

Roger Staples
staplessteeple@live.co.uk

AC Laws

Ian Vincent
ian.vincent@cantab.net

AC Selection

Ian Lines
ian.lines@atkingglobal.com

AC Tournament

Beatrice McGlen
beatrice@mcglen.co.uk

GC Rules

Stephen Mulliner
snmulliner@gmail.com

GC Selection

Lionel Tibble
anglion@btinternet.com

GC Tournament

Jonathan Powe
jonathanpowe56@gmail.com

Handicap

Frances Colman
frances@luxtersfarm.com

Coaching

Sarah Hayes
burrowsarah5@googlemail.com

Development

John Reddish
jreddish@btinternet.com

Equipment

Dave Trimmer
davetrimmer@talktalk.net

ICT

Ian Vincent
ian.vincent@cantab.net

International

Ian Lines
ian.lines@atkingglobal.com

Marketing

Eugene Chang
etychang@gmail.com

Publishing

see **Marketing** above

The Croquet Association Website

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

The Croquet Gazette is published six times per year, usually in February, April, June, August, October and December.

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.

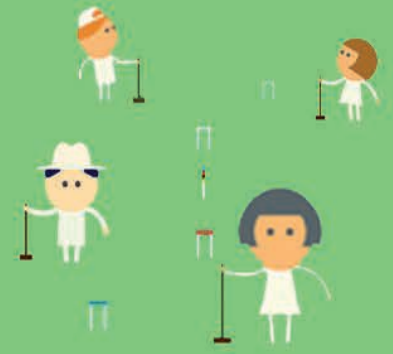
The Croquet Gazette is printed by Belmont Press, Barn Way, Northampton, NN5 7UW.



Do not play if you are unwell



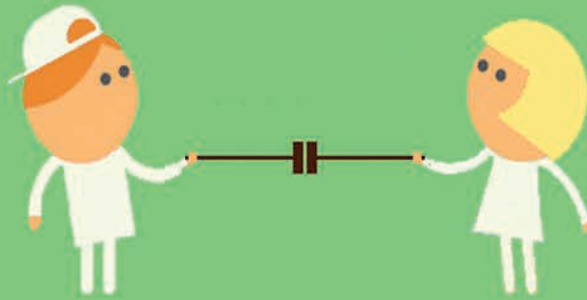
Use a lawn booking system



Max 6 people per lawn (if not from the same household)



Follow health guidelines



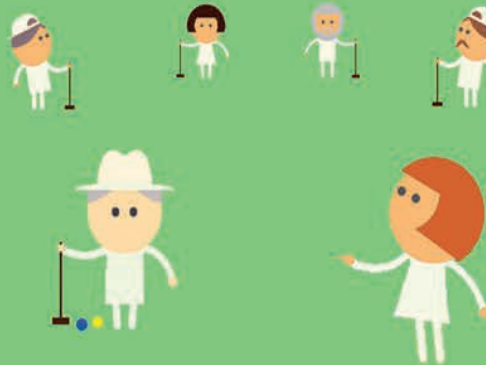
Keep 2 metres apart



Guests and spectators must be recorded



Wash your hands, and any equipment you use



Coaching limited to 5 pupils per coach



Clean padlocks, keys, and door handles

#staysafe #backtocroquet



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