

The

Issue 389 December 2020

CROQUET

Gazette



A sport for all seasons



From our files researched by Frances Colman

10 years ago - 2010



AGM report -

(items of note from committees)

A mentoring scheme for juniors has been introduced.

Development grants had been awarded to Bury, Dowlish Wake, Shrewsbury, Surbiton and Beverley CCs. AC continued to trial Super Advanced rules.

Clubs succeeded in getting local publicity surrounding the MacRobertson Shield but the response from the national press had been very disappointing.

The GC tournaments schedule continues to grow with a new inter-club event for the Murphy Shield this year and a strong group of young players is also emerging, winning six of the major 13 tournaments between them.

Retiring Chairman Patricia Duke-Cox.

~

New Chairman - I was very pleased to take over as Chairman of Council after this year's AGM.

I can only hope that I can continue the excellent work that my predecessor, Patricia Duke-Cox, carried out over the last two years, particularly in her support for our young players . . . we are basking in the success of our MacRobertson Shield team this year.

However, the nature of the success with its close matches gave us early warning that we cannot rest on our laurels.

The general high standard of play, particularly from the exciting new young players, Robert Fletcher from Australia and Paddy Chapman from New Zealand, demonstrated that the other countries are fast catching us up.

In the GC world we have been playing catch-up for some years, with the Egyptians being the top players.

New Chairman Barry Keen

~

Wood beats Roberts at Centre Stage -

The final *(of this GC completion for players with handicaps between 5 - 8)* was an exciting game to watch and Roger Wood, who had beaten Phyllis Court's Chris Roberts 4-3 in the block stage, repeated his success winning 7-4 to take the Egg Cup trophy home to Broadwas CC.

50 years ago - 1970



Croquet and the British Tax Payer -

(Bryan Lloyd-Pratt's last Gazette editorial before being 'relieved' of the editorship)

. . . There has never been, and this is to the game's eternal credit, the least idea that the sport should become in any way a charge to public funds. . .

The Council of the C.A. is negotiating a scheme with the Central Council for Physical Recreation whereby the C.C.P.R. has two representatives, Mrs. Neal and Mrs. Meacham, paid £250 each with expenses which include 10 1/2d per mile car allowance, who will, encumbered with an expensive film-slide projector, scour the countryside, spreading the gospel of croquet . . . It is difficult to imagine such an insane programme attracting even moderately intelligent people.

Other aspects, though, of this lamentable enterprise must be considered. Croquet can never, by its very nature, become a popular sport. Its appeal is an esoteric one, and attempts at popularising (i.e. vulgarizing) the game only dismay the faithful and do not bring any worthwhile converts. And what of these ulterior converts?

No suggestion has been voiced, and no assurances given, that any attempt will be made to try to arouse interest in the game among the sort of people who will support the Association and be an asset to it. The sort of people, to put the matter bluntly, whom it will be a pleasure to meet at tournaments.

It is not, by the flabby standards of nowadays, considered "the thing" to speak out on such matters; but it is, nevertheless, what most Associates think. We believe that no useful purpose is to be served by concealing these thoughts and pretending they do not exist.

Removed from its social context, croquet will not be such an enjoyable game. There is genuine hunger for quality in the over-crowded modern world. If the Croquet World sells out to vague "progressive" phantasies, it will find that it has sold its birthright for a mess of unpitiable egalitarian pottage. . . The integrity and independence of the CA are compromised by this undertaking. Let us hear no more of it.

100 years ago - 1920



A new stance for Ladies - . . . take a look

at some of your friends, and you will notice that many - far too many - have nearly all the weight of their bodies on the right foot, whilst the toe of the left foot is lightly - and sometimes - gracefully poised on the ground, removed as far as possible from its twin.

Providence, dear ladies, has given you two legs to stand upon, and however shapely they may be don't keep one for ornamental purposes when playing croquet, but use then both; stand firm on both.

. . . You miss the roquet, but you don't recognise the reason . . . I should like you to try another stance, and that is to play off the left foot.

Place the left foot some two or three inches off the ball, parallel to the line of direction. Toe and heel pointing to the object ball. The right foot will assume a position behind the left foot, just enough not to obstruct the swing of the mallet.

You will be surprised at the firmness of your stance and the accuracy of the shots.

You probably adopted your present stance without nay reflection whatever, and copied some player with a good eye and who could hit any object in most postures.

These reflections are not for them, but for you who are not so gifted, but whose stance is, in my opinion, unsound. SENEX

~

Dear Sir,

I read with interest SENEX's remarks in the last Gazette.

I have tried the stance suggested by him, and should like to ask him whether he has tried it dressed in a lady's skirt.

Personally, I find that for short shots, when a short swing only is required, the stroke off the left foot is effective, but that for long shots the skirt impedes the back swing.

When playing off the right foot a lady must bear all the weight on the right foot, standing lightly poised on the left foot (if both her legs happen to be the same length) in order that her mallet may swing clear of the skirt, and that the eye, the top of the shaft, the ball and the object ball my form a right angle.

Yours truly, NONPLUSSED

Editorial

The Complements of the Season to all CA members, with the hope that this Gazette brings some warm croquet memories and the enjoyment of looking forward to next season. Or is the concept of a 'season' now rather outdated with something like 50% of our clubs now playing right the way through the winter? Few will be so hardy as those playing in the fog at High Wycombe, so well captured by Chris Webbley for our cover photo this time.

Along with some competition and tournament reports left over from the last issue, this Gazette is chiefly about looking forward with four pages dedicated to coaching and training courses.

May I implore all senior players to ask yourselves why you are not considering qualifying as a referee?

Our tournament circuit is growing and our sport needs more refs and tournament managers (and coaches for that matter) - playing is one thing but coming forward to help our sport and your fellow players is all about putting something back.

This issue also carries news of three new additions to the GC competitive scene.

The GC Women's Open Championship has a re-launch in 2021 with the inaugural event at Nottingham on 12-14 June when it is hoped a strong, full field will contest what is now a Grade 2 Championship.

A new 13-event A-Level (0+) Series answers the call for events for our GC players in the 0-2 bracket, and a new Third Eight for GC shows the growing interest in Selection events.

There is much else besides within these pages and I take this last opportunity of the year to thank all the Gazette contributors, who all do amazing voluntary jobs at their clubs, federations and/or within the CA structure, and then they are good enough to write about it too!

Thank you also to my lovely proof readers: Roger Goldring, Chris Williams, John Filsak, Amanda and Tim Haste, Derek Johnson, Janet Truman, Simon Tuke and Charles Waterfield.

~

Best wishes everyone and, as Roy Wood sings at the end of his song every year, "Why don't you give your love for Christmas"

Chris Roberts Editor

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Front cover: Undamped enthusiasm in the fog at High Wycombe CC (photo by Chris Webbley)

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Contents

- 4 Chairmen's column; Council meeting
- 6 Marketing and notices
- 8 WCF Hall of Fame; GC Dev. Squad
- 10 Charity One Ball
- 11 Do you have a Club Handicapper?
- 12 Letters to the Editor
- 14 GC Inter-Club; GC tournaments
- 16 GC Women's Open; GC Series fixtures
- 18 Dev. Grant - Nottingham update
- 19 AC Seniors; AC Challenge & Gilbey
- 20 CA Diplomas
- 22 Leighton Linlade CC; Obituaries
- 24-27 Coaching Pages (incl. Courses)
- 29 Lawn care & Broadwas CC
- 30 'Memories of William'
- 30 (& 24) Mallet Makers adverts
- 31 CA Contacts & link to website glossary

The Sunday Times 1970

The Cathedral calm of the Croquet World has been shattered by an editorial appearing in the current issue of the Croquet Gazette, the official organ of the Croquet Association. (see 1970 column, left)

In it, editor Bryan Lloyd-Pratt takes his mallet to the association for accepting "tax-payers' money" from the Government.

The association applied for, and got, a Department for the Environment grant of some £1000 to spread the gospel. Part of it will be spent to start new clubs throughout the land; part to give coaching; £500 for a tour of Britain by two zealous ladies . . .

Lloyd-Pratt fears not only the influx of morons into croquet, but an invasion of the unwashed as well. . .

There have been no safeguards, he protests, that the programme will attract "the sort of people, to put the matter bluntly, whom it will be a pleasure to meet at tournaments."

Most crucially, though, Lloyd-Pratt wants croquet to stand on its own two straddled feet. "The idea of taking tax-payers' money for our little game," he tells us, "is absolutely outrageous."

Lloyd-Pratt was sacked by the Croquet Association last weekend.

"We're fairly humming about that editorial," says Vandeleur Robinson, its secretary.

"We plan to put out a special issue of the Gazette in January, and disassociate ourselves with Lloyd-Pratt's points of view.

Sunday Times, 20 December, 1970



Wanted

National Safeguarding Officer

The Croquet Association wishes to appoint a National Safeguarding Officer, who will have primary responsibility for managing and reporting concerns about the well-being of children and vulnerable adults, for putting into place procedures to safeguard them, and to support local safeguarding officers in clubs.

A personal belief in the importance of safe-guarding children and vulnerable adults, and experience of working with them in a professional or voluntary setting are required. The post is unpaid.

Further details can be found in the news item entitled 'National Safeguarding Officer wanted' on the home page of the CA website – www.croquet.org.uk - or (for on-line readers) at this direct link:

<https://www.croquet.org.uk/?p=press/news&Action=NewsDetails&NewsID=7162>

or by contacting John Dawson:
johngdawson45@hotmail.com, 07717 773508.

Applications by 17 January 2021 to Hon. Secretary Ian Vincent
ian.vincent@cantab.net.





Chairmen of the CA Council and Executive Board's Column

It was certainly a year with a difference.

A new governance structure was starting to get established and then Covid-19 with two national lockdowns.

In spite of all that we have managed to establish ourselves as one of the safer approved sports. This recognition was achieved through our PR initiative.

Thanks must go to every club that re-opened its lawns this summer and for ensuring that members knew the rules for play and looked after each other.

Marketing and Communications

The first new strategy to be implemented covered Marketing and Communications.

The Marketing and Publishing Committees were merged and the newly formed committee hit the ground running by introducing a series of webinars, and improving our communications enabling us to discuss issues that can improve our sport.

The next innovation was the monthly e-Newsletter, giving up to date information and further improving communication with our membership.

This has been very well received and a big thank you goes to the Marketing and Communications team for a job well done.

Membership changes

A working group looking at membership issues recommended some important changes in its interim report, which are now being implemented.

The first of these was to give Premium and Standard members equal rights when entering tournaments or selection events, apart from the discounted entry fees for Premium members.

On this point I would urge as many Standard members as possible to consider Premium Membership, the extra cost can

easily be covered in tournament fee savings alone, and receiving the paper Gazette and discounts in the shop are added bonuses.

In addition, the extra income gained by the CA from Premium membership will enable us to invest more in our sport.

Some changes have been made covering Affiliate Membership status, which affect a small number of clubs. It was never intended that Affiliate Membership would be for clubs with their own grounds. This anomaly is being rectified.

Competitive Play

A Competitive Play Working Group is currently looking at our competitive play strategy. They have issued an interim report which has recommended that more level play GC Tournaments are implemented in the 0-2 handicap range. It also identified a need for more AC tournaments covering players in the handicap range 3-12. Its full report is expected next year.

New Executive Board faces

The new Council has completed its first year. The Executive Board has restructured itself to improve its effectiveness in implementing the CA's strategies, as well as running its day to day business.

The key posts were put out for application and have been filled. It was gratifying that we received more applicants than vacancies.

The introduction of new people to the Executive Board is working really well. We are working our way through the impressive list of jobs handed down and starting to tackle some of the bigger issues.

Marketing, sponsorship and upgrading the CA website are high on our list.

Development of our sport and increasing its appeal to a wider audience is also in our spotlight.

Junior Task Force

The instigation of a Junior Taskforce this year, aimed at bringing together the youngsters that are spread about in different clubs and this has been very successful indeed. Eugene Chang led this initiative, supported by a willing band of experienced players. Daniel Gott has agreed to take it forward and hopefully this will start to build year on year.

Call for more volunteers

The CA needs more volunteers at all levels. More often than not, the CA finds itself in a position where it has to search hard to fill some of our positions and many volunteers are fulfilling more than one role.

We would love to know what skills you have and where your interests lie, so that we could draw on a larger pool of members for current and future tasks.

If you feel you can help please send an email to cainfo@croquet.org.uk with 'Volunteering' on the subject line.

Zooming to you

As many of you know, the CA has adopted Zoom as a communication tool. The catalyst for its implementation was certainly Covid 19, however, whilst face to face meetings are important, it has enabled us to function and saved considerable meeting costs.

The AGM was a case in point and, from the feedback we received, this format was well received and generated the highest turnout that can be remembered. During the next year we will examine whether we can use this method again and allow more immediacy in our voting procedures.

Finally may we wish all of you a very Happy Christmas and hopefully a full welcome back to croquet in 2021. Stay safe.

Jonathan Isaacs & Beatrice McGlen

**Merry Christmas
Everyone!**

**Why is this croquet court
so special at Christmas?**

Answer on page 7





Council met by Zoom on the morning of the Saturday after the AGM.

Chairman

Council quickly re-elected Jonathan Isaacs as its Chairman.

Samir Patel was elected Vice-Chairman and Beatrice McGlen was appointed to chair the Executive Board.

The main focus of the meeting was to take stock after the first year of the new governance structure.

It exercised its scrutiny function by receiving reports from the officers and the Executive Board, before moving on to consider submissions from some of the working groups it had created.

The Treasurer

The Treasurer, Ian BurrIDGE, who ruefully pointed out that he had taken over just days before the first lockdown, presented a projection which showed a deficit of £20K for the year, compared with a budgeted one of £30K.

This variance happened to match the £10K Small Business Support grant the CA had received, but there were other significant swings in a topsy-turvy year.

Meeting and travel costs had reduced, but income from tournament levy had halved, due to cancellations. Shop sales had held up well under the circumstances. Financial support had been offered to clubs, but it was good news that few had needed to call on it.

Budgeting for next year would be challenging, as a first draft, assuming a normal playing season, again showed a deficit of £30K, even before some proposed initiatives were included.

Ian asked that committees should flag up any proposed new expenditure early, so that it can be considered alongside other outgoings.

The CA had the advantage that most of its income came in the first quarter of the year, so we may be faced with cutting our cloth according to how strongly it does.

The Secretary

The Secretary reported that the proposed constitutional changes had been agreed at

the AGM.

The Membership Working Group, chaired by Ian BurrIDGE, will notify affected clubs and was asked to consider the introductory rates for new Full Member clubs, along with possible further changes to individual membership.

The General Meetings working group is to be re-convened to re-consider its recommendations in the light of experience with the virtual AGM this year and the comments made about the lack of voting at it.

He ended his report by confirming his intended retirement from the role of Hon. Secretary and was authorised to advertise for a deputy, with a view to finding someone willing to take it over next October, after a significant overlap period.

The former Chairman of the Executive Board

The former chairman of the Executive Board, Roger Staples, reported that it had been somewhat challenged by the double whammy of Coronavirus and the significant number of policies which it had been asked to implement by Council.

Good progress had been made with some of those, notably the e-mail Newsletter, but the majority would need to be tackled this year.

Roger was thanked for leading the board in a difficult year, having been thrown in at the deep end. He thanked Council for its support and trusted that would be extended to his successor.

Eugene Chang, who was retiring from the Executive Board as his partner was expecting a child, was also thanked for his energetic contribution in the areas of marketing and communications, both within the CA and with the Federations.

Competitive Play Working Group

After a short break, David Openshaw joined the Zoom meeting to present an interim report from the Competitive Play Working Group.

It had three initial recommendations: that there should be more level-play GC tournaments for those with handicaps in

the range 0-2; similarly in AC for 3-12 handicaps, and that there should be a budget of £5K for junior development next year.

These were accepted, though Beatrice McGlen was keen that there should be a clear set of aims, including recruiting more juniors into clubs, and a co-ordinated strategy before a budget was allocated

Safeguarding Review Group

John Dawson then went through the recommendations of the Safeguarding Review Group, noting that Jean Hargreaves was standing down after long service as the CA's Safeguarding Officer.

The review had concentrated on safeguarding of children: that of vulnerable adults would be tackled separately this year.

Its principle recommendation, that all clubs should be required to adopt the policy in principle and appoint a Safeguarding Officer, was agreed, though it was recognised that detailed implementation would vary according to local circumstances. A major effort would be required to communicate this to federations and clubs.

Looking ahead

Samir Patel requested Council to review the proposed authorisation matrix, which was to clarify which person or group within the organisation had authority to take decisions of certain types, to avoid uncertainty and speed up decision making. As the Chairman pointed out, the devil is in the detail.

Looking ahead, the Chairman put some flesh on his proposal for a review of Coaching and Performance, and announced that Rich Waterman had agreed to lead it.

Dave Kibble offered to try to resolve the issue of merit awards for GC, possibly by polling the membership.

Patricia Duke-Cox offered to recruit a more diverse group of members to sit on disciplinary and appeals panels, pending a review of the process.

Finally, it was agreed that there would be a short meeting of Council in mid-December, with a full one on 30 January 2021.

Due to the continuing possibility of disruption to the playing season next year, the decision has been taken NOT to produce a paper copy of the Fixtures Calendar for 2021.

No printed Fixtures Book for 2021

We apologise for those people who like to sit in front of the fire in February and tick off

the tournaments they want to enter, but we are sure that you will understand the need for flexibility in these uncertain times.

Beatrice McGlen,
Chairman of the Executive Board

Thank you to some recently retired CA volunteers ...

A number of long-serving members of CA Committees have retired from them this year. At considerable risk of overlooking some of them, I have noted:

Bill Arliss	– AC Laws, GC Rules and GC Tournaments
Pierre Beaudry	– GC Selection
John Bowcott	– GC Tournaments
Jeff Dawson	– Membership Changes Implementation Grp.
Peter Death	– Development and ICT
Phil Eardley	– Publishing
David Mooney	– Handicap
Tobi Savage	– GC Tournaments
Roger Staples	– Publishing
Charles Waterfield	– Publishing

Some continue to serve in other ways, but either way their contributions deserve our heartfelt thanks.

... and an appeal for some replacements

However, their retirements leave holes that need to be filled by a new generation of enthusiasts.

If you have skills and enthusiasm that you are willing to offer your fellow players, then please respond to the appeal in the Chairmen's column on page 4.

For further information about what individual committees might be looking for, please contact the relevant chairman: there is a list of them on the inside back cover.



Order now
<http://CAshop.org.uk>
-> Accessories -> Jewellery



Marketing Column by Eugene Chang

It has been a busy second lockdown for the Marketing Team as we, alongside other CA committees, press on with our winter work.

Personnel update

Our ranks have been boosted by some wonderful new faces: **Stephen Mills** (St Albans) and **Duncan Catterall** (High Wycombe/Surbiton) who responded to our calls in the Newsletter.

They bring their own skill sets and experiences, and I'm looking forward to working with them.

Others are joining for specific projects, and we are very grateful for all the hard work that is being done in this space.

CA Website revamp

Paul Hetherington (Peterborough), the CA Marketing and Communications Director is hoping to secure funding to revamp the CA website.

Look out for more on this in the future.

Club Marketing & Development toolkits

I am working with **John Reddish** (Norwich) and **Ian Cobbold** (Cheam) to review and update the CA guidance for clubs pages that are located on the CA website, some of which have not been updated for a few years.

We are hoping to complete this over the winter so that clubs can utilise the new materials in time for the 2021 season.

We will also be running CA Webinars on these topics over the winter, so keep an eye out for news and details on the website.

Croquet videos

We are looking to produce several croquet videos over the winter, which will target gaps in the market.

There are lots of excellent croquet coaching videos and full matches available (including some of our livestreams), but we could do with more promotional videos across the spectrum, showcasing or documenting some of the amazing ways that croquet has enriched our lives.

This will involve a combination of editing existing footage and commissioning new videos.

There are some projects underway on this already and I look forward to sharing them when they are complete.

On a related note, I have recently joined the World Croquet Federation's Media Committee, with representatives from USA, New Zealand and Spain.

It has been great to meet them and discuss all things media.

We will be feeding into the WCF's efforts to promote, produce and share high quality croquet videos from around the world.

Social media

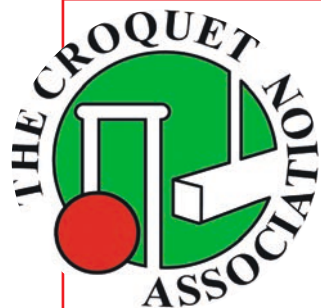
Do you post about croquet on Facebook/Twitter/Instagram - either personally, or on behalf of your club/Federation?

Look us up - we're **@croquetengland** and are always keen to promote and share croquet stories from around the CA, and beyond!

Our YouTube channel is

www.youtube.com/croquetengland

Eugene Chang,
Chair, Marketing Committee



More for your membership

All croquet club members are entitled to be Standard members of the Croquet Association for **FREE** - provided they opt in. Recent rule changes mean that now you will get so much more for being a Standard member.



- A 2% discount on purchases in the CA shop.
- A paper copy of The Croquet Gazette in the first year of membership and electronically thereafter.
- A regular e-newsletter.
- Full entry rights to tournaments, courses and other events in the CA Fixtures Calendar.
- Eligibility for consideration for Selection and Representative events.
- Subsidised training as a club coach or referee and ability to hold CA qualifications.
- You can claim awards under the CA awards scheme.
- You can vote in CA elections.

Contact your club secretary to make sure you are registered for these great free benefits.

And if you want even more benefits why not upgrade to become a Premium member and gain:

- A £5 per day discount on all CA Fixtures Calendar tournaments & coaching courses.
- An extra 8% discount (total 10%) on purchases in the CA Shop
- A paper copy of The Croquet Gazette for as long as you remain a Premium member.

Full details are on the CA website - click on front page 'Join Us' tab

Kick-starting croquet in LEEDS

The Yorkshire Croquet Federation and the CA are in early discussion with Leeds City Council re the possibility of setting up the city's first croquet club.

We are looking for Leeds locals with an interest in croquet, who would be happy to get involved in this project with support from YCF and the CA.

Please pass on this call to any contacts you know that might be able to help.

Contact: Derek Knight

derekknight997@googlemail.com - 01759 301013



Answering the Christmas question posed on page 4:

... because that croquet court is in the garden of the Gothersley Hall, Stourton, Stourbridge.

And in 1973, Gothersley Hall was owned by your Editor's hero, the fabulous musical Wizzard Roy Wood, and it was where he wrote, "I wish it could be Christmas Everyday"!





WCF Hall of Fame inducts CA's Jenny Clarke and Chris Hudson

I am very pleased to announce that the WCF Hall of Fame Committee has elected the following five individuals to membership of the WCF Hall of Fame:

Bob Alman (USA), Jose Alvarez-Sala (Spain), Jenny Clarke (New Zealand), Salah Hassan (Egypt), Chris Hudson (England).

Stephen Mulliner,

Secretary-General, World Croquet Federation

Jenny Clarke and the late Chris Hudson (*photos right*) are/were both CA members, and their citations follow below. The citations for all five inductees and existing members of the WCF Hall of Fame are available on the WCF website using this navigation: www.worldcroquet.org > About the WCF > Hall of Fame, or this direct link: <https://worldcroquet.org/index.php/about-the-wcf-bottom/41-hall-of-fame/278-wcf-hall-of-fame-members>

Like many people, **Chris Hudson** (1934 – 2015), came to croquet by happy accident.

He had bought a house near Crewe which had a croquet lawn/bowling green, so he joined the Croquet Association (CA) so that he could play in tournaments.

The Croquet Secretary at Bowdon CC, Neil Williams, found out about him and wrote to him in 1973 asking him to join the club, which he did, and he quickly became heavily involved, becoming Croquet Secretary in 1974.

Over the next 42 years of his membership, he made an outstanding contribution to the development of croquet in the Club, the UK and internationally.

He served as Bowdon's Croquet Secretary from 1974 to 1980, and became Chairman of the committee in 1981.

Thanks to his recruitment initiatives, the Club acquired an enthusiastic team of younger players, many of whom went on to play at the top national and international level, to serve on the CA Council or to become coaches and referees.

Chris was elected to the CA Council in 1982, and served as chairman of the Publicity and Development Committee until 1985, when he took on the role of CA Development Officer.

During his 15 years in that role he stimulated many initiatives, not always without controversy, but it is fair to say that his time was a golden period for the development of croquet in the UK.

The National Croquet Classic for garden players and the National Competition for Schools were two of his initiatives. The National Junior Championships were started and Short Croquet, which could be played on a tennis court, was introduced.

He edited the Croquet Gazette from 1985 to 1992, modernising the format to widen the appeal, with less emphasis on tournament reports and more articles of general interest; many will remember the musings of his regular correspondent, Dolly Rush.

Together with the then CA Secretary, Brian MacMillan, he worked to increase the sponsorship of croquet, to the benefit of many major events.

In the early 1990s, Chris became an enthusiast for Golf Croquet (GC), which at the time was very much a poor relation of Association Croquet. GC soon became a major project for him, something that was not universally popular in some croquet circles.

Chris was heavily involved in the foundation of the WCF, which was initiated by the CA under Andrew Hope's chairmanship in 1986, and Chris was elected the first Secretary-General in July 1989. One of his first initiatives was an appeal to supporters worldwide to donate £100 to become a Friend of the WCF, the aim being to raise £25,000 as a reserve. The response was positive, and ensured the future financial stability of the WCF.

Concurrently, Chris had linked with the GC enthusiast, Syd Jones, and they persuaded Samantha Curry at the Ripon Spa Hotel to use the hotel's croquet facilities to promote international competition. GC brought a whole new cadre of players into the croquet world, who became the economic base for many clubs, with the result that GC is now a fundamental part of croquet's vitality and development.

In 1996, Chris met General Ahmed Hamroush, the President of the Egyptian Croquet Federation, and as a result Egypt joined the World Croquet Federation, and the world was shown a whole new way to play GC; the first GC World Championship was held in Italy in that year.

Chris retired from the WCF in 2001. During his twelve years of service he had seen its international membership grow from 12 countries to 22, and assisted with the organisation of eight AC World Championships and four GC World Championships.

Chris Hudson was a quiet and self-effacing man. He just got on with things without any self-publicity, and the full extent of his contribution to the development of croquet will probably never be realised.

Induction into the WCF Hall of Fame is a fitting recognition of his contribution to the sport.

Jenny Clarke began playing croquet whilst studying for her PhD at Oxford University in the 1990s, becoming a regular player on the UK tournament circuit the following decade as an accomplished A-Class player.

She returned home to Christchurch in her native New Zealand where she still lives with her husband Chris Clarke whom she married in 2008. She is a life member of the Canterbury Croquet Association and the United Croquet Club. Jenny plays both AC and GC and won the Women's AC World Championship in 2012. The GC title has always eluded her but she has two silver and three bronze medals in the event.

She has been a member of the New Zealand AC and GC Test Teams for many years. In addition to playing in various Trans-Tasman matches she has made three appearances in the AC World Teams Championship (MacRobertson Shield) including the victorious 2014 New Zealand team and as captain for the 2017 tournament. She was also a member of New Zealand's victorious GC World Teams Championship (Openshaw Shield) team of 2016, and only she and her husband have won both the AC and GC events.

Jenny has won various Open and Women's domestic titles both in NZ and the UK but her stand-out titles are her three Australian Open Singles titles, 2010, 2018 and 2019.

Whilst it is her playing success which is particularly noteworthy, Jenny, a lecturer in Sport Science at Canterbury University, is also an accomplished coach. She coaches both AC and GC at an International level, has developed a coaching website and introduced the athlete-centred coaching methodology to croquet. She has also spent a good deal of time honing her own skills including changing from playing right to left handed in the midst of her career.

In addition to the many titles won, Jenny has regularly been the top ranked female player at both AC and GC throughout the past 15 years, and has also achieved the highest AC grade of any woman since the rankings began.

Jenny Clarke is without doubt the outstanding female player of her generation.

GC Development Squad new members 2021



Whilst only a limited amount of play has taken place in 2020, the opportunity has arisen for the GC selectors to make some significant choices for the 2021 Development Squad.

With the CA mission remit for the International Performance Development Group (IPDG) specifically in mind, 'To create and manage a sustainable International Pathway to take talented beginners through to elite performers', a small number of younger players have been squeezed into the squad, now totalling 16.

Congratulations to the following new recruits; Will Mellor, Aston Wade, Harvey Smith and Sam Cuthbert.

The 'significance' aspect alluded to refers to the fact that they are all much younger than the average Development Squad recruit, indeed Harvey and Sam are 14-year-olds.

The development of the Junior Programme, under the guidance of Eugene Chang, has given young players the opportunity to display their skills and enthusiasm for both AC and GC to a wider collective and fills the gap where promising players who have only a minimal portfolio of competitive results can be brought into mainstream development programmes such as the IPDG.

Up to now, some have remained 'under the radar' so to speak, and this is a huge step forward in strengthening the future of England International selections.

The younger Development Squad members will follow on from other young players who have passed through the squad in previous years, such as the inimitable Richard Bilton who was a member of the 2020 England World Teams Championship (Openshaw Shield) squad, Euan Burrige who won the 2019 WCF Simon Carter GC World Championship plate event, and James Galpin who was runner-up in the 2019 WCF U21 GC World Championship.

It is arguable that these enthusiastic young men of talent would have progressed under their own steam to reach such heights, but the example and input of the IPDG GC lead coach, Rachel Gee, and the squad as a whole should not be overlooked.

Bilton, Burrige and Galpin have set the standards for those that wish to follow in their footsteps and emulate their achievements.

Harvey Smith and Sam Cuthbert will be joining our other 14-year-old squad member, the rapidly improving Jack Good, who won the British Open GC Championships Plate event and

the National Final of the B-Level Series competition in 2020.

They seriously need to think about setting their sights on the next U21 World Championships in New Zealand, in February 2022.

~

In my opinion there is a dire need to bring more 11- and 12-year-olds into GC to keep this momentum going and help in securing the future of England U21 International competitiveness with its obvious knock-on benefits to the England representative squads of the future, in both AC and GC.

~

This article has focused on the developing younger element of the Development Squad, but we should also recognise, notwithstanding the much reduced opportunity for play, those of more mature years who have managed highly notably achievements, such as Raouf Allim winning the 2020 Second Eight (Kate Jones Memorial Trophy).

~

And lastly, the help, encouragement and support demonstrated by the parents of younger players are key aspects in player development.

It is reflected in their sacrifices in making a not insignificant financial commitment and in giving up their time. This should not be underestimated, unrecognised or remain unapplauded.

Thank you to all you dedicated mums and dads out there – you know who you are.

~

The full 2021 IPDS Squad is:
Raouf Allim, Ron Carter, Morgan Case, Sam Cuthbert, Lorna Dewar, Noel Gill, Jack Good, Tim Jolliff, Michelle Leonard, Will Mellor, Dan Pearson, Harvey Smith, Jane Tewson, James Thomas, Aston Wade, Albie Willetts.

Lionel Tibble,
Director, International Performance
Development Group (GC)

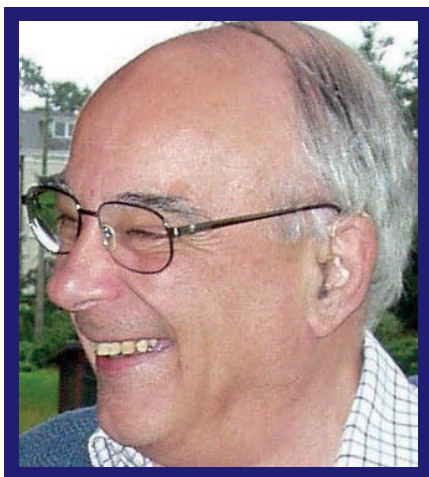
Photographs

WCF Hall of Fame inductees -

- 1 - Jenny Clarke, with the 2012 Women's AC World Championship Trophy
- 2 - Chris Hudson (1934 -2015)

New Development Squad members -

- 1 - Harvey Smith
 - 2 - Sam Cuthbert
- in action at the National Junior Weekend
(photographs by Eugene Chang)



Charity One Ball raises over £4000 for Macmillan Cancer

The final of this annual competition was held on 20 September at Surbiton, with 23 participants.

The winner was **Michael Broadway** (handicap 12, Enfield CC) who qualified through the Watford CC heat.

Players were invited to 'wear something green', the house colour of this year's charity, Macmillan Cancer Support. Michael wore a resplendent white three-piece suit with a green bow-tie.

While Michael received the engraved crystal decanter for his seven wins from eight games, his nearest rivals Colin Groves (6, Woking) and Stephen Wright (-3, High Wycombe), received runner-up goblets.

The final is always played in a great spirit, this year aided, too, by lovely weather. Surbiton put on its usual feast, and also generously donated the surplus income, after costs, to our charity fund.

The 2020 competition was both delayed and curtailed, with only 22 heats (half the usual number) and at 214, a much smaller number of players in those heats.

It is a tribute to all of our regular supporters that we still managed to raise £3,633, along with a further £563 Gift Aid, for charity.

A number of this year's heats were unusual.

Two had no players! Both Tunbridge Wells



and Bowdon were unable to go ahead with their heats, but each had a whip-round anyway, and raised impressively large contributions to the final total.

Conversely, Lym Valley held two heats: one just before lockdown and another just before the final, and High Wycombe was another club which managed to get its heat in early; as long ago as Christmas!

Finally, we were pleased to have made a first-time welcome to Carrickmines CC from Ireland, which held its heat and raised a significant amount, but because Macmillan does not operate in Ireland, they donated it to a local charity instead.

Our 2021 Charity will be The British Heart Foundation

The charity for us to support in 2021, as chosen by organisers of past heats, will be the British Heart Foundation (www.bhf.org.uk) and players are encouraged to wear something red!

The final, with free places for heat qualifiers, will be on 9 May at Surbiton, so club heats need to be played by 2 May.

Clubs who regularly run heats will be e-mailed with further details and any clubs wishing to run a heat for the first time, should please contact national organiser Kevin Carter.

These days, qualifiers for the final are about 50% AC players and 50% predominantly GC players, so One Ball is a game which appeals equally to players of both codes.

Kevin Carter
kevin@profundus.com

Let's hope we shall be back to normal next year, but with all this generosity and innovation, there is nothing too bad about the 'new normal'..

Kevin Carter, National Organiser

The Executive Board has approved a new improved scheme for the provision of financial support for Full Member clubs, following a review of the existing procedures.

The Policy

The CA policy is to develop croquet, in all its forms, through gaining more members playing in improved facilities at more locations, while encouraging a more diverse and inclusive membership.

Help will continue to be given to new clubs through the provision of initial equipment.

Grants will be awarded to clubs to finance the improvement of lawns and/or essential off-court facilities; to prevent the closure of a club or to help the re-establishment of an existing club after relocation.

Interest free loans will be widely available.

Grant or loan?

Development grants are not provided to cover ordinary running costs, including the replacement of equipment or regular lawn

New Funding Committee

maintenance.

They are intended to supplement the funds required for a development project and are limited to a maximum of 50% of the estimated cost or actual cost.

Loans are not subject to the same constraints and may be provided for broader purposes.

They will generally be unsecured and interest-free and repayable over a period of five years with the first repayment falling due on the third anniversary and the final repayment falling due on the fifth anniversary.

The Process

Reasonably generous funds have been allocated and a new process for applications and awards is in place.

A new Funding Committee will consider all applications from clubs for a grant or a

loan and applications must receive support from the Federation Development Officer.

The Funding Committee may require that the application receives the support of experts, such as the Chair of the revitalised Lawns Advisory Group.

Applications are to be made on a new standard form and accompanied by copies of various relevant documents.

Other supplementary information may be provided to support the application and useful aerial photographs will be well received.

The Development Committee

The Development Committee will thus be relieved of the burden of determining applications for funding and freed to devise and innovate.

All of the Federation Development Officers will be members and so will be able to support each other in their work.

Paul Brown
(Executive Board Member)
John Reddish
(Chairman of the Funding Committee)

Do you have a Club Handicapper appointed at your Club?

The CA Handicap Committee would like to remind all clubs that you should have an appointed Club Handicapper(s) in place.

A recent survey suggested that a minority of clubs still have not made such appointments and so, if that includes your club, we ask that you please remedy this situation at your earliest convenience.

Why are Club Handicappers so important?

Your Club Handicapper(s) will act as the primary contact for all handicap matters.

They are backed up by Handicappers at Federation level and nationally at CA Handicapper level.

Our sport functions well from club to club, and from one Federation area to the next, only because we strive to maintain a uniformity of handicapping throughout the domain.

Please help the CA to achieve this by appointing a Club Handicapper(s) at your club and by supporting him / her fully.

You might choose to appoint separate Club Handicappers for AC and GC or one individual to cover both codes.

All handicapping information sent out to Club Secretaries by the CA or Federations should be passed to the Club Handicapper.

The name and contact details of the Club Handicapper should be recorded on the Federation and CA websites (the latter by updating your own club details yourselves or by notifying the CA Office).

~



Attributes of a Club Handicapper

Ideally, your Club Handicapper will be someone who plays, manages or referees at events away from your club, because it is important that handicaps within your club are kept in step with those in the wider croquet community.

If this is not possible, you should appoint an individual who is well respected within your club and likely to be vigilant and proactive (in a supportive way).

He / she will be someone who does not tend to take "knee-jerk" decisions, but can stand back and give a considered opinion.

It is important that your members see that handicapping is taken seriously and if you are able to offer your appointed Club Handicapper(s) a place on your committee, so much the better.

Duties of a Club Handicapper

Your Club Handicapper(s) will be responsible for monitoring the handicaps of all club members and to ensure that handicap grades truly reflect the skill level of the individual players.

It is the players' own responsibility to faithfully record all competitive singles game results on their own handicap cards, and this should be monitored by your Club Handicapper.

The Automatic Handicap System will make adjustments to players' handicap grades as results are entered on their handicap cards, but the system only works if sufficient games are played in a given period, and it does not cater for certain cases, such as the 'rapid improver' or the player who plays few competitive singles games whilst their playing standard

gradually improves or declines.

It is a crucial role of the Club Handicapper to step in and make manual handicap adjustments (within the prescribed limitations of the role) where there is evidence that it is necessary to do so. – The full duties of the Club Handicapper(s) and limitations of their powers are detailed at on the CA website using this navigation: Home > Play > Handicapping > AC or GC > Managing the handicap system / Non-automatic changes to handicaps.

On-line readers can use this direct link: <https://www.croquet.org.uk/?p=games/association/handicapping/managing>

Help at Federation and CA Handicap Committee level

The CA Handicap Committee is working through the Federations to assist where we can. Building on some excellent work undertaken by the South-West Croquet Federation, who organised some Handicapping Workshops in the last two years, we had plans to deliver a similar workshop to the East Midlands Croquet Federation just as the first Covid-19 virus lockdown was announced.

We will be picking that up in the coming season, probably by Zoom webinar, and we are look to extend the offering to other Federations too if requested.

~

If you would like to correspond on any of the above, please contact your Federation Handicap Officer, or the CA Handicap Committee.

Frances Colman,
Chairman, CA Handicap Committee,
frances@luxtersfarm.com

New CA Handicapper Appointments

CA Handicapper (GC)

Mike Bilton - Richmond Pk (left & right)
Paul Francis - Bath (far right)

Frances Colman,
Chairman, Handicap Committee



Helping to understand croquet terms and jargon

Dear Editor,

For those of us mere club croquet players who cannot tell their QPO from their OQP, their -25xsp from their +12tpo, please can you explain the niceties of the jargon?

The report on the AC British Open Championship in the November Gazette was a fascinating read – but I wish I could have understood better the skill of the players and the technicalities of the peels they achieved.

Deborah James, Beverley & East Riding CC

Thank you for your letter, Deborah, and this is an often revisited topic, resulting as it does from the need to balance the occasions when brevity is needed for the flow of some reports and the occasions when fuller explanations are appropriate if space allows.

Jargon is useful because it shortcuts the need to explain a situation, skill or law / rule every time it occurs – much in the same way that football, cricket and Formula One reports don't stop mid-flow to explain off-side, LBW, or a stop-go pit penalty.

However, recognising that jargon is only any good if it can be translated when required, the CA website has useful jargon-busting pages for this purpose, and they are referenced in each Gazette issue at the bottom of the inside back cover (page 31) but I don't blame you at all for not having noticed that – there will be many readers in the same boat, I am sure.

My way of navigating this use of jargon difficulty is to edit tournament reports with a most likely reader type in mind, with more croquet jargon 'allowed' in reports from the very accomplished end of our sport and hardly any permitted at the beginner level, with the vast majority of reports sited somewhere in between.

That we have two main codes of play in our sport only complicates the situation further, and only those playing both AC and GC variants can hope to understand the

majority of all the jargon there is.

AC in particular is awash with jargon terms and pretty well all these terms require at least a basic understanding of the fabric of that game – such as what a 'break' is trying to achieve – before one can hope to grasp advanced things like the intricacies of peelings (to which the letters TP, TPO, QPO, OQP and SXP refer).

A novice AC player will soon have an appreciation of 'the break' and, in time perhaps, also get to understand the intention of peeling, but all that will likely be double-dutch to a novice GC player.

Meanwhile, the GC 'wrong ball rule' will be similarly obscure to an AC-only playing participant.

The CA website jargon glossaries are here:
(AC): [Home > Play > Technical > Jargon](#)
(GC): [Home > Play > Golf Croquet > Jargon](#)

On-line readers can use these direct links:
 (AC) <https://www.croquet.org.uk/?p=games/tech/jargon>
 (GC) <https://www.croquet.org.uk/?p=games/golf/gcJargon>

As the Python's Squadron Leader once said:
"It's perfectly ordinary banter, Squiffy. Bally Jerry pranged his kite right in the how's yer father. Hairy blighter, dicky-birdied, feathered back on his Sammy, took a waspy, flipped over on his Betty Harper's and caught his can in the Bertie." - Ed.

GC off-side lines help us

Dear Editor,

At our humble club in Newton Abbot we found novice members struggling with some of the GC off side lines which are not normally marked. So we marked some.

We've never bothered with the silly markers which I usually trip on elsewhere.

The two sets of dotted lines in the photo are the long ones from end to end (north/south), affecting hoops 4-5, 6-7, 10-11.

We're in a public park so can't leave anything removable in our absence.

Clive Sawers, Newton Abbot CCs



Lockdown Blues

Dear Editor,

Here is a tribute to your wonderful publication...

The skies are bleak
 Rain drenches down
 The club is closed
 We cannot play
 We must not play
 But through the door a welcome shaft of light
 As Issue No 388 drops on the mat
 Is seized and read
 By warming fire
 Rekindling memory of summer's games
 And showing us the young guns coming through
 Hope springs in these grey days
 And though the clouds are everywhere
 We remember times to come.

Jonathan Toye

Are farmers taking over at the CA?

Dear Editor,

While perusing the inside back cover of the November Gazette, I noticed that various CA Chairmen and Officers had addresses which included Meers Farm, Pasture Farm, Church Farm and Luxters Farm.

Is it becoming a prerequisite for higher CA office that candidates own or live on a farm?

Kevin Carter, Surbiton CC



Winter Jumper!

Dear Editor,

Reading Tony Lee's letter about back-garden jump-shot practice in the November issue (*Gazette 388*), got me thinking about a possible way to continue using jump-shots in the winter, without causing lawn damage.

Firstly the mark the position of the ball that you intend to strike and this can be done with two markers positioned away from the ball itself, using a method that I was introduced to by Australian referees at the GC World Championship in 2017.

You need a telescopic device like an old extending radio aerial (*as the photos show*) or a lockable steel tape measure would do the job equally well.

Then lift the ball, place a piece of very thin Flotex carpet under the ball and replace it in the correct position.

The Flotex needs to be large enough (mine is 16" x 36") for the striker to stand on, using their normal stance - this prevents carpet movement.

The stroke is then played and the carpet removed.

I've tested this method by attempting about 30 jumps ranging in distance from 1 to 7 yards without causing any lawn damage.

This would enable jump shots to continue and make winter GC games more realistic and meaningful.

No doubt this idea will upset traditionalists but it's not uncommon in other sports for an extra piece of equipment to be introduced on occasions – for example in snooker when using cue extensions with a rest and rugby allows the introduction of a ball holder prior to goal kicks being taken.

Richard Brooks,
Sussex County CC



Invite NHS workers for tea and croquet

Dear Editor,

Here is a dual 'Nice Thing to do' and innovative start of season recruitment suggestion.

How about your club showing its appreciation of NHS workers, by inviting staff from your nearest hospital to "Tea and Croquet"?

Different shift patterns worked by NHS workers could bring visitors to your club at various times and this surely makes croquet an ideal sport for medical workers.

"Tea" might need to be at an unusual time of day to fit in with staff free time and flexibility will be key.

If you try this idea and it works well for your club why not run another session for your local GPs?

And of course, no one should leave the club without a friendly "How to Join Us" handout!

If you try this, do please let the Gazette know, or perhaps you have a related story to tell already. . .

Klim Seabright,
CA Marketing Committee



Your editor really likes this image taken by Chris Webbley in December.

~ 'Sunset over High Wycombe CC' ~



Super staff ensured the National Cup Final could go ahead at Roehampton

Dear Editor,

Our ground staff at Roehampton do an amazing job.

Here are two photos from September when we hosted the GC Inter-Club Final.

The first was taken at 9am after 18 hours heavy rain, and the second just after 10.15am; play started at 11am.

All the work on drainage over the last few years has proved to be well worthwhile.

Pictured are our Games Manager Tristan McIlroy helping our expert groundsman Chris Hughes push the Bowdry water removal machines.

Mike Pattison, Roehampton Club

GC Inter-Club Championship & Shield

Inter-Club Championship

~ Nottingham score hat-trick win

Defending champions Nottingham conceded home advantage to Roehampton, but things weren't looking promising at 9am with all the courts under water, but a fantastic effort by the ground staff ensured that everything was perfect for the scheduled 11am start.

(See the 'before and after' photos on page, 13)

The rain stopping meant that the Roehampton team were able to show off their named team shirts and sweatshirts with which they had been provided for the match, the players from both sides received a water bottle memento from the club.

Good start for underdogs Roehampton

The first match to finish was the doubles, which was a relatively comfortable 7-5, 7-5 win for Roehampton's Harry Fisher and Mark Van Loon against James Death and Ian Burrige. After a slow start, Alain Giraud (Nottingham) came back against Tim Russell (Roehampton) to win their singles match 2-1, with a more conservative approach in games two and three being rewarded.

The last match of the morning to finish was Dan Pearson (Roehampton) against Richard Bilton (Nottingham). After consistent hooping from both, Bilton took the first game at hoop 13 but in game two, Bilton missed some clearances as Pearson began hitting his and he levelled the match.

Bilton was fortunate in game 3 as he missed a peg-high clearance which snuck through a gap between two balls to run the hoop for a 3-1 lead, after which Pearson's form dipped and he lost four of the next five hoops giving Bilton a relatively comfortable 7-2 win in the decider.

2-1 to Nottingham at lunch

The first match of the afternoon was Van Loon against Burrige, the first game of which was a hoop-running masterclass from the Dutchman.

Burrige found some consistency in game

two, and although there were times during the next two games where things could have gone either way, he ran out a relatively comfortable winner in three.

The first game between Russell and Bilton was close all the way, only one hoop between them until Bilton took a 6-4 lead and although Russell took it to hoop 13, Bilton's first-ball to one-yard position was good enough for the win.

At around 3pm, with the crowd at its peak of about 20 spectators, the weather turned rather gloomy and the floodlights were switched on as Roehampton staged a mini-comeback. Fisher took the first game against Death, and Pearson was 5-2 up to Giraud in their second, having lost the first.

Bilton seals victory

However, in the other match Bilton again took the lead late on, with a long hoop 11 after a prolonged clearing battle and although Russell again took it to the last hoop, Bilton's first ball to position prevailed for the win 7-6, 7-6 and gave Nottingham an unassailable 4-1 lead.

Giraud came back from behind against Pearson to win their second game at hoop 13, whilst Fisher gave home fans something to smile about when he completed an accomplished performance winning the second game and match against Death 7-4.

This made the final score 5-2 to Nottingham, who with this win completed a hat-trick of victories in the event.

Bowcott bows out, with thanks

John Bowcott was on hand to present the trophy and thank the club for their efforts and the players for the entertainment they had provided for the spectators.

Ian Burrige thanked the club and the Roehampton team for making it a most enjoyable day along with his fellow team members, and also thanked Euan Burrige and Ian Vincent for their participation during the earlier rounds.

He ended by thanking the CA for enabling the event to take place in this difficult year, and John Bowcott for directing the Inter-Club competitions so well for many years, as he steps down from the GCTC.

Ian Burrige

Inter-Club Shield

~ East Dorset retain the Murphy

East Dorset won this season's second-tier National GC Inter-Club Shield competition, retaining the Murphy Shield trophy they had won in 2019 at their first attempt.

The 2020 final was played at the hospitable Cheltenham CC, where they defeated Ashby 5-1 with one rubber unfinished, although the final score was perhaps a little flattering.

With the advent of coronavirus, the original entry of 24 clubs was reduced to just six willing to continue in the competition and East Dorset had an easy passage to the final with a bye in the quarter-final and a walk-over in the semis.

Ashby however, had reached the final by defeating both High Wycombe and the 2019 losing finalists Camerton & Peasedown.

East Dorset started the final strongly and by soon after lunch had established a 3-1 lead.

At that point however, overall victory remained in the balance for some time as Ashby fought back to take a 1-0 lead in each of the three remaining singles.

The decisive result came when Tony Green won against Richard Sanville at hoop 13 of the third game of their rubber in a contest which had been close throughout and could have gone either way.

With the match result settled, East Dorset rallied in the other two singles, winning one and leaving the other unfinished with long journeys home in mind.

Green and Mark Hamman actually won all four of their singles matches, doubtless drawing on their experience of having played in last season's final.

East Dorset: Michelle Leonard (3), Hannes Hamann (3), Mark Hamann (3) and Tony Green (4).

Ashby: Mick Haytack (3), Rupert Knapton (3), Martin Wroughton (4) and Richard Sanville (5).

Keith Southern



GC Selection and Team events for 2021



New for 2021

The GC tournament programme for 2021 is almost finalised and we are planning on a full, uninterrupted season. Fingers crossed!

On the following pages, you will see articles about two new events we are introducing for 2021:

The **GC Women's Open Championship** at Nottingham on 12-14 June and the new **A-Level (0+) Series**.

~

GC Third Eight

Another new event is the GC Third Eight (Suzanne Roberts Memorial). Given the increased numbers and growing strength of the players making themselves available for the GC Eights in recent years, we have decided to instigate a Third Eight from 2021.

We are also delighted that Chris Roberts has generously donated a trophy for the event in memory of his wife, Suzanne.

The inaugural Third Eight will be at Sussex County CC alongside the Second Eight, while the First Eight will be at Nottingham, and all three Eights will be held on 28-30 August 2021. Players wishing to make themselves available for the GC Eights should do so via the 'Availability' page in the 'Members' area of the website.

Availability closes on 1 July 2021 and selections will be announced by 15 July.

The GC programme is already quite packed, but we have recognised the increasing demand for high-quality, competitive tournaments and hope that these new events – alongside the others already in the calendar – will provide additional opportunities for the growing number of GC players at all levels.

Internationals Teams

The rest of the GC programme for 2021 looks much the same as previous years, although there have been some minor adjustments to take account of the cancellations in 2020.

The **England v Spain Test**, due to be held in Spain in March 2021, will now be held at Hurlingham 18-20 June.

The **GC Home Internationals** were cancelled in 2020, so the arrangements have been carried forward to 2021; the event will be hosted by Wales at Nailsea 17-18 July.

Players wishing to make themselves available for these 'selection' events should do so via the 'Availability' page in the 'Members' area of the CA website.

Inter-Counties

The GC Inter-Counties will be held at Sussex County CC (Division 1) and Cheltenham (Division 2) on 21-22 August.

Division 1 will comprise twelve teams and we are expecting eight teams for Division 2, which may include a CA Select team.

County Organisers are reminded to submit their provisional team lists on the CA website by Monday 18 January.

We are planning to swap the locations of the Divisions in 2022.

Inter-Club

The GC Inter-Club Championship and GC Murphy Inter-Club Shield will go ahead as usual and clubs are reminded to submit their entries by 8 March 2021.

The draws will be published on or before 15 March.

The teams and draw for the GC Federations Shield have been carried forward from 2020 (having been cancelled), so there is no need for new entries.

Attention all clubs:

Here's one for your high handicappers

We hope that clubs will encourage their GC players with a handicap of 8 or over to get involved in the

GC Grass Roots Competition

It is an excellent event, which starts with a preliminary round organised by clubs, followed by a National Final at Watford CC on Sunday 5 September.

It is a great way for higher handicappers to play some competitive games with players from other clubs.

More details on the event and how to submit entries can be found in the calendar entry (dated 5 September) in the Fixtures Calendar, and if you have any questions, do get in touch with the Tournament Director, Richard Bilton.

~

So, lots to look forward to and I hope you enjoy your GC tournaments in 2021, wherever you play and at whatever level.

Jonathan Powe,
Chairman, GC Tournaments Committee

Photographs (from top):

- Paul Durkin will likely target the new A-Level (0+) Series
- James Galpin will look to catch the international selectors' eyes
- John Bowcott has retired (with thanks) from directing the Inter-Clubs competitions
- Oxfordshire bringing colour to the Counties
(Images by Chris Roberts & Keith Pound)

New look GC Women's Open Championship for 2021

The GC Tournaments Committee is pleased to announce the upgrading and re-launch of the GC Women's Open Championship for 2021.

The three-day, 24 player tournament will now enjoy Championship Grade 2 status and mirror the format of the Open Championship with best-of-three matches planned throughout.

We are delighted that the committee at Nottingham CC have agreed to make their prestigious venue available for this major Womens event and, with a centre of the country location secured, it is hoped the relative ease of access for all will see the Championship attract a full and quality field in its inaugural year.

Some readers will be aware that a Women's Open had been operated by the Ripon Spa Hotel Club for a number of years, and will be saddened to learn that the hotel has closed and is no longer able to run croquet.

The GC Tournaments Committee recognises the importance of such an event and has taken it back under their wing, with Frances Colman as director and tournament manager.

In re-designating it with the enhanced the Championship Grade 2 status, the GCTC is now looking to establish the GC Women's Open as the blue riband GC event for women and is hoping all the top UK players and perhaps some from overseas will attend.

The dates for your diaries are 12-14 June, which is a Saturday - Sunday - Monday configuration, with allocation on 1 May and closing date 1 June.

Entry is by the on-line CA tournament entry system which is expected to go 'live' in very early February.

Get this GC Women's Open Championship off to a cracking start by submitting your entry early to show your support and encourage your peers.

**Frances Colman,
Director, The GC Womens Championship**

Championship Series (unrestricted)

24-25 April	Sidmouth
08-09 May	East Anglian (Colchester)
30-31 May	Cheltenham
12-13 June	Ramsgate
03-04 July	National Forest (Ashby)
10-11 July	Nottingham
17-18 July	Lancashire (Pendle & Crav.)
07-08 Aug.	Hunstanton
18-19 Sep.	FINAL (Hunstanton)

Open Series (unrestricted)

17-18 April	Cheltenham
22-23 May	Hunstanton
05-06 June	Wrest Park
12-13 June	Pendle
14-15 June	Woking
07-08 July	Ryde
17-18 July	Wiltshire (Hamptworth)
24-25 July	Dorset (East Dorset)
11-12 Sep	Sussex (Sussex County)

The big news from the family of GC Series competitions is the arrival of a new sibling for 2021.

A new tier for handicaps 0+ now sits in the centre of the Series offerings and this, together with some knock-on renaming of the competitions, is covered later in this look forward to the season ahead.

~

The line-up of **English National Singles Championship Series** (ENSC) qualifiers for 2021 is the same as we had planned for 2020. Sadly only three qualifiers were held in 2020 (National Forest, Nottingham and Lancashire) and let us hope that all eight Series tournaments are played in 2021.

Rachel Gee will be trying for a rare three Championship titles in a row, a feat that has only achieved once before, by Roy Edwards in 1995-97.

The Final, for the Ascot Cup, will be held at Hunstanton on 18-19 September.

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



The GC Open Series of unrestricted tournaments sits just below the Championship Series and for the coming year will comprise a roster with nine events, one less than 2020.

Northampton's enforced move away from their former home robs the Series of one of its more challenging venues, as anyone caught out by the prevailing slope at the old ground will testify! The GC Open Series is a new title (it was formally the A-Level Series); it now more accurately reflects its position, with an unrestricted entry.

Everything else remains the same as last season and, once again, this Series is a straight points race with no national final. If past seasons are anything to go by, we can expect the points accumulation challenge to go right to the last event of the season, the Sussex Open, before being decided.

Stuart M Smith won this Series for the second time in a row in 2020 – can he do it again, or will he have his sights set on the Championship Series this time round?

Do check the panel above and 2021 Fixtures Calendar carefully because a number of tournaments have moved dates significantly from 2020.

Photographs: Top draw and improving women players will hopefully be attracted to the new look GC Women's Open as well as the Series competitions in 2021:

Left: Rachel Gee (Champ. Series holder); Below from left: Sarah Hayes (at the GC Counties), Lorna Dewar (Champ & Open Series maybe?); Andrea Huxley will target the new A-Level (0+) Series.

(Images by Chris Roberts & Tony Thomas)



Tournaments for 2021

A-Level Series

(handicaps 0+)

24-25 April	Wrest Park
31 Apr-01 May	Phyllis Court / High Wycombe
15-16 May	Hamptworth
05-06 June	Sidmouth
19-20 June	Crake Valley
19-20 June	Woking
17-18 July	Hunstanton
24-25 July	Ashby
07-08 Aug.	Chester
14-15 Aug.	Sussex County
03-04 Sep.	Guildford & Godalming
11-12 Sep.	Pendle
25-26 Sep.	Ryde

The **GC A-Level (0+) Series** is the 'new one' for 2021, and answers the growing number of requests for a competition at this level from players who have 'outgrown' the 3+ handicap restriction of the B-Level Series, but had an insufficiently high-ranking DGrade to be allocated tournament places in the next level up.

Director Chris Roberts was heartened by the interest shown in this new Series from clubs well used to supporting other Series levels, but also found that a few less-familiar venues were also keen to be involved.

Hamptworth and Chester were in the vanguard at this level and had been operating tournaments at this 0+ level for a few years and so were obvious candidates to be included in this new Series. Also already in existence was the split-venue operation at Phyllis Court / High Wycombe along with Guildford who adjusted their long-standing similar event to comply with the 0+ structure.

Care has been taken to ensure good geographical representation, with Sidmouth, Sussex County, Hunstanton and Crake Valley (Cumbria) providing venues at all points of the compass, and Wrest Park, Woking, Pendle and Ryde on the Isle of Wight also featuring in a 13-tournament inaugural year competition, again operating as a straight-points race.



B-Level Series

(handicaps 3+)

01 May	Sussex County
03 May	Watford
04 May	Camerton & Peasedown
06 May	Ryde
15 May	Pendle
19 May	Wrest Park
22-23 May	East Dorset
27 May	Roehampton
12 June	Leighton-Linslade
16 June	Woking
17 June	Ealing
18 June	Crake Valley (New)
20 June	Colchester
26 June	Hunstanton
26-27 June	Hamptworth
03 July	Bury
08 July	Bath
14 July	Nottingham
17-18 July	Letchworth / Newport (New)
28 July	Broadwas (New)
31 Jul-01 Aug.	Phyllis Ct / Blewbury (New)
07 August	Guildford & Godalming
14 August	Ashby
17 August	Nailsea
21 August	Budleigh Salterton
21-22 Aug.	Hurlingham
04-05 Sep.	FINAL (Compton)

The **GC B-Level (3+) Series** has been expanded from 24 tournaments to 26 for 2021.

Out go Northampton, hopefully only for a while until they move and settle into a new home, but in come three four new venues.

One new tournament is only half new actually, with Phyllis Court deciding that their two smaller courts were really not enough of a challenge in the much improved standards of play now being exhibited by B-Level players, and so they have gone into partnership with Blewbury to stage their 'Smokey's Cup' as a joint split-venue operation from now on.

Crake Valley is another new name on the B-Level roster, along with a second joint split-venue enterprise hosted by Letchworth and Newport.

The Final will be held at Compton (Eastbourne), whose five-court set-up means that more than 16 players can be accommodated more easily if that number of unique qualifying event winners is exceeded.

Holder Jack Good is now too good (*I couldn't resist it*) for this Series now and so a first-time Series winner is likely in 2021 – will it be you?

C-Level Series

(handicaps 7+)

15 April	Bath (New)
27 April	Watford (New)
02 May	Sussex County
07 May	Ryde
17 May	Phyllis Court
26 May	Wrest Park
06 June	Newport (New)
10 June	Roehampton
15 June	Camerton & Peasedown
16 June	Ealing (New)
17 June	Woking
17 June	Crake Valley
26 June	Guildford & Godalming
26 June	Colchester
27 June	Hunstanton
13 July	Hurlingham
11 July	Middlesbrough
14 July	Cheltenham
15 July	Nottingham
21 July	Bury
29 July	Broadwas
13 August	Ashby
14 August	Hamptworth
22 August	Budleigh Salterton
18-19 Sep.	FINAL (Ryde)

The **GC C-Level (7+) Series** enters its fourth season with an increased roster of 24 tournaments, three more than 2020.

Out go Northampton again, but in come two newbies, Bath and Watford, to kick-off the Series in April. They are joined by other new to the Series tournaments at Newport (Essex) who make their first solo appearance in a Series competition and Ealing who also dip their toes in here, having supported the B-Level Series from its start.

All the other 2020 venues remain, but again many have changed dates for the coming year so do check carefully.

It is always likely that a Series title holder will have outgrown their level by the following year, and Duncan Catterall is a case in point.

He will doubtless be targeting the B-Level this time, so will you be the one to emulate his success in 2021?

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

Each Series has a dedicated CA website page where results will be added throughout the season. Find these pages using this navigation: Home > Compete > CA Events > ABC Series

CA Development Grant - work starts at Nottingham

Further to the news of a CA Grant Award in the September issue (*Gazette 387*), **John Davis reports on the history and progress of Nottingham CC's ambitious expansion project.**

On 4 April 2020 Nottingham Croquet Club signed a 35-year lease with the City Council.

This ended several years of discussions and negotiations and opened the door to a very ambitious project to upgrade the club's facilities. Although the timing could have been better, we decided to go ahead with the project as soon as possible.

The new lease also results in a significant rent increase but the members consider that that's a price worth paying as the club now has full access to two pavilions, five croquet lawns and three bowling greens.

The project comprises three phases:

1 - An extension to the existing bore hole fed irrigation system so that it covers the bowling greens.

2 - Levelling and re-surfacing the bowling greens; turning them through 90 degrees to create four and a half more croquet courts.

3 - Modernising the interiors of the two pavilions (the outsides cannot be altered as they are Grade 2 listed buildings).

Phases 1 and 2 have now been completed and the grass on the former bowling greens is already growing well. We just hope the

weather is kind to us!

We would like publicly to thank Nailsea Croquet Club for their counsel in our project preparations. Their recent experience of a similar lawn-levelling project was invaluable in our project planning and execution.

We would also like to thank the CA for their support with advice, encouragement and, not least, a grant of £5,000 towards phase 2. We have applied to several other grant-giving bodies, so far without success, although several applications are still under consideration. The financing requirements are significant.

The final total cost is likely to exceed £100,000. This is split roughly equally between the three phases. The first two phases, apart from the support of the CA, have been funded by the club's own funds, which have been building up in recent years in anticipation.

Phase 3 is a bit more challenging but plans are in place to allow it to happen early next year, with or without additional external funds. Of course, we could not have achieved this without significant time and effort from several club members. The lease negotiations started several years ago and a small group of members patiently persisted until success was achieved. Then other members were mobilised in the

planning and execution phase. It is amazing what skills and knowledge we have in our club and we can only encourage other clubs to "better know their members".

You will be amazed!

John Davis

Triple aPeel is a winner!

Nottingham Croquet Club's crowdfunding "Triple aPeel" campaign ended on 1 December and has raised the magnificent total of just over **£30,000** including a **£10,000** grant from Sport England, plus over **£4000** in Gift Aid.

This is well on the way to covering the cost of the work on the listed stone-built pavilions, so we have now sent out the invitations to tender and hopefully we will be able to start construction work in early February.

We are hugely grateful for the generosity of 237 supporters; some local, some from all over the world.

We learned a lot during the campaign; some things worked well, other things we could have done better. If any clubs are considering similar campaigns and would like some thoughts from an insider viewpoint, do please get in touch. We would love to welcome more of you to our forthcoming tournaments and events at Nottingham CC.

We are aiming for the refurbished and reordered pavilions to be ready by early in the 2021 season and the newly laid lawns by about August (for tournament play at least), but that depends on some factors (such as contractors and the weather) which are beyond our control.

A version of this notice with a celebratory photo of one of our juniors cartwheeling can be found here: <http://www.nottinghamcroquet.org.uk/node/1399> **Thank you to everyone.**

Rob Edlin-White

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).

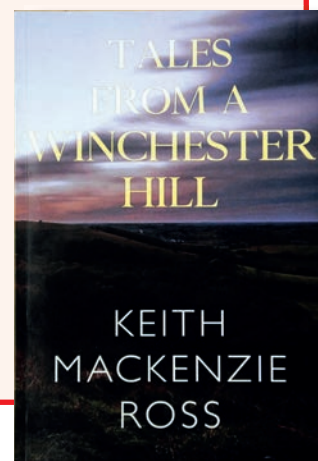
Michael Percival

07780 677943 Michael@croquetmallets.co.uk

Sinister events for Croquet lovers ...

Croquet Association member Keith Mackenzie Ross sent me an early copy of his first book "*Tales from a Winchester Hill*" which is a set of ten fictional tales spanning from 1917 to present times. The collection chronicles the adventures of some members of the fictional Binchester Croquet Club where sinister events are unfolding during a holiday in St Helena. The thing that bonds the group together is croquet. Would they, and the game of croquet, survive?

"*Tales from a Winchester Hill*" is published by Olympia Publishers
ISBN 781788305907



AC National Seniors

Budleigh Salterton CC hosted the 2020 National Seniors', albeit two months later than scheduled, in mid-September, and this was the largest AC tournament to be held in this Covid-19 year, *writes Manager Julie Horsley*

Thanks must be given to the Budleigh members who gave up their lawns for this to take place, putting the club before their needs.

Budleigh has a reputation for players returning year after year and luckily they were rewarded by the tournament being once again blessed with good weather.

Due to the Covid-19 restrictions, and the shorter evening light (than July), the tournament was not able to follow its usual format, but with staggered start times helping with well observed social distancing, the atmosphere was still very good.

But perhaps it did lack that little extra buzz of other years, when past players had met up for pre-match coffees and lunches on the terrace to enjoy renewing old friendships and the making of new ones.

Understandably, there was no catering this year but Budleigh did provide an open air bar both at lunchtime and again late afternoon which players appreciated very much. Hopefully normal service will be able to be resumed next year.

The winners

Class A - for the Trevor Williams Trophy - was divided into two blocks this year, each providing two semi-finalists: Jonathan Powe (Winterbourne Valley) v Richard Wood (Sidmouth) and Chris Williams (Glamorgan) v **Brian Fisk** (unattached). On handicap and ranking the formers were hot favourites to progress but, this being an unusual year, neither prevailed and in the final both Wood progressed to rover and 2-back and Fisk to peg and 4-back.

Wood missed the lift shot but although Fisk made it to penult, a hampered shot let Wood in again before Fisk closed the game.

Class B - for the Colin Hemming Trophy - was again divided into two blocks, producing a **Roger Mills** v Chris Donovan all-Sidmouth final, which Mills won +8.

Class C - for the de Ansorena Trophy - was won by **Mike Hedge** ahead of Nottingham club-mate Alex McIntyre.

Class D - for the Nigel Graves Trophy - was won by **Charlie Martin** (Ramsgate) with Jane Babbage (Sidmouth) the runner-up.

Class E - for the new JEH Trophy - was won by **Frances Colman** (Phyllis Court) from Philip Jones (Budleigh Salterton).

The **Handicap Singles** - was played as a



knock-out in which **Roger Mills** earned a second cup by beating Chris Roberts (Phyllis Court) in the final +16, and Charlie Martin also won again in the Plate.

The **Handicap Doubles** - was won by **Andrew Killick and Bob Thompson** (Middlesbrough and Nottingham respectively) who beat John Millen and David Buckman (Canterbury) +5.

As usual, Jim Field recorded the fastest game and the peeling prize went to Jonathan Powe. Before presenting the prizes, Peter Nelson, representing the CA, thanked everyone involved in organising the event in these difficult times.

Action photograph below: Roger Mills won two events at the Seniors and then won his class at the Challenge & Gilbey (photo Chris Roberts)

AC Challenge & Gilbey

The reduced entry this year allowed for the tournament to be arranged as two two-day events, as it was thought that this would attract more weekend players than an event which started Friday lunchtime; this proved to be the case., *writes Manager John Low.*

There were 16 entrants for the **Gilbey Goblet Handicap** event, with handicaps ranging from -1 (four players) to 18, so there were quite a few 'forests of bisques' to be seen, as four blocks of four players competed to produce semi-finalists, with consolation games for those missing out.

The Goblet was won by **Paul Castell** (Sussex, 0.5) who was undefeated throughout, including in the final against David Gillett (Sussex, 7). Clive Grimley (Sussex, 11) achieved his Bronze award.

The Challenge Cups (level play) also attracted just 16 players, so only two trophies were played for this year: the Roehampton Cup for the top eight, and the Council Cup for the bottom half

of the field.

The **A-Class** was organised as a single block of seven games, which filled the Saturday and Sunday nicely. **Eugene Chang** (Sheffield, -1.5) pretty much overran the opposition, winning six out of seven and taking home what he said was his first A-Class national win.

The **B-Class**, played in two blocks of four with semis and finals on the Sunday, was won by Liz Farrow (Sussex, 1.5), +20 victor in a determined final against **Roger Mills** (Sidmouth, 1.5).

The fastest game prize was won by Chang, and the peeling prize by Mills with a TP against John Reddish.

Thanks to Roger for providing those prizes, and it was quite fitting he took one of them home himself.





2020 Croquet Association Diplomas

CA Diplomas recognise those club members who have given outstanding service to croquet, and have been active in Club or Federation affairs over a long period. Diplomas have nothing to do with croquet prowess, and everything to do with help given to other members. This is only part one of the 2020 CA Diploma award winners.

Available space has meant having to hold over the citations for **Des Honey, Jane Hull, Lillian Holdsworth, David Hunt, Adrian Kirby, Adam Molivar, Mark Oulton, Howard Rosevear, Ian Stratford, David & Nancy Temple and Don Williamson** until the next issue. My apologies to them for the disappointment that this delay may cause. - Ed.



Martin Beacon - Nottingham CC

Martin Beacon has been a key member of Nottingham CC for many years, involving himself in a wide variety of aspects of the life of the club.

He has been our pavilion manager for several years – making sure that everything was in stock, from milk, coffee, beer and wine to washing-up liquid and toilet paper (even through the panic buying!).

He was on the organising committee and was grounds manager for both the AC Women's World Championship, which the club hosted in 2015, and the 2019 U21 GC World Championships. He was on site in the early hours, unfurling national flags, placing scoring boards, erecting marquees and fencing, washing chairs and even making emergency trips to buy large quantities of ice-cream when the weather suddenly improved.

In 2013, Martin was involved in the planning for the sinking of our own borehole, and installing the very successful water sprinkler system, and he is currently working with our project manager to extend the irrigation to some recently acquired redundant bowling greens, whilst liaising with the contractor for their re-laying.

Martin personifies croquet – well-mannered, a gentleman, an always competitive but fair AC player, friendly, keen to pass on his skills to newcomers, keeps in touch with frail or ill members and former members, and always willing to lend a hand.



Jean Cobbold – Cheam C&BC

Jean Cobbold has worked tirelessly for Cheam C&BC since its inception over eight years ago. She was part of the working party set up to consider the feasibility of founding a croquet club in the underused Cheam Bowling Club grounds.

Jean assisted with the practical and administration tasks necessary, including defining a club logo, coordinating publicity, organising newspaper articles, and the printing and distribution of flyers.

Jean arranged a taster weekend before the inaugural meeting to determine the interest in setting up a club, and her publicity efforts were well rewarded when 100 people attended and 40 signed up before the club even existed. Another 40 joined at the inaugural General Meeting in March 2012, at which Jean was formally elected as club secretary.

In this role, Jean dealt very efficiently with administrative tasks, set in motion a series of social and fundraising events, as well as finding the time for other considerable practical support to the club, including the white lining of the court boundaries.

Jean gained a coaching qualification, and helps to run public training courses to give potential members a taste of the game.

In April 2020, due to the Coronavirus virus movement restrictions, Jean rose to a new challenge and organised a virtual AGM, at which she stood down as secretary after eight years, but said she will continue to support the club wherever needed.



**Howard Bowron
Penrith & North Lakes CC**

Howard Bowron has played a central and pivotal role in helping Penrith & North Lakes CC to develop from its initial roots when croquet was started locally by members of U3A in the early 2000s.

When Howard moved to Cumbria as an established croquet player, he came across the U3A players and soon joined in and helped paint a picture of the wider aspects of the game and its rules.

In 2007 the group moved to our current location, Edenhall Tollbar, playing on two short lawns initially on a cricket pitch outfield.

The standard of grass was not great, so one of Howard's first jobs was to take charge of getting the two lawns into a better condition.

At members' request, Howard took on the role of Chairman and Secretary as he continued with his quest to improve the playing surface, a passion he continues to directly contribute to today.

One member from the early days at Edenhall, and still involved in the club, reported that "Howard has tirelessly built up the infrastructure and has always been a source of encouragement to new and existing players.

His enthusiastic nature has meant that a lot of members have stepped up to challenges they thought were beyond their capabilities, and as such established a vibrant and popular croquet club".

Howard has run various start of the season coaching sessions for all classes of members for a number of years, has been a staunch supporter of AC at all skill levels, and has been instrumental in setting up the club's short and full lawn leagues.

Howard encourages players to represent the club against other clubs, as it helps to verify the handicaps that he is involved in moderating each year.



John Evans Glamorgan LT & CC

John Evans has played croquet for a long time, starting at Stourbridge in the 1970s.

He took a break from the sport on returning to West Wales, and started playing again not long after Dyffryn CC was formed in 1986.

Our move to a new venue has entailed a lot of work for the members of Glamorgan LT&CC, and John has been at the forefront of that, from organising the initial cut of the very rough pair of lawns to the reasonable playing surface that we now have.

He has taken on the new club role of

grounds officer, organising quotes for re-laying the lawns, as well as the purchasing of a new mower and other items.

He is always keen to make the longish journey from home to the club to cut and work on the lawns.

As if this wasn't enough croquet to occupy his time, John has set up Llandoverly CC from scratch, and been a constant mentor to the new players at the club.

He also helped and advised on the setting up of Mumbles CC so, as you can see, John likes to keep busy – with croquet clubs.



John Guy – Broadwas CC

John Guy joined Broadwas Croquet Club in 2009, very quickly took to the game, and joined the committee. During the ensuing 10 years, he has progressed to be responsible for coaching, refereeing and competitive play in many CA tournaments.

He attended CA coaching courses and then set about passing on his skills and knowledge to our growing membership, and as a result Broadwas CC has won many Federation, High Handicap and specific All-England competitions.

Broadwas has a club day and 'fun Friday' when we invite potential new members to come along and have a game, where John has a key role in welcoming new members

and teaching them the basics before full-time membership.

All members, both new to the game and those from other clubs, are issued with a handicap card by John before joining the club, enabling them to play on club days and competitively.

Without John's enthusiasm for members to play well and enjoy the game, we would not be a strong and successful club of 60 members.

Besides John's role as head coach he is always available to help in many other roles within the club, such as lawn maintenance, training on the art of hoop positioning and setting, and club administration.



Christopher Hague Beckford CC

Chris Hague was already an accomplished croquet player when, one day in 2012, whilst playing tennis at Beckford, an inspiration occurred to him that the adjacent field, owned by the village hall, could provide a good croquet lawn.

He approached numerous people in and around the area who agreed to join and so Beckford CC came into being, starting with the hard work to create the playing surface.

Much work was needed, and Chris headed a team of volunteers to do it, armed initially with nothing more than spades, rakes and wheelbarrows. Chris's initiative and energy were enormous as he masterminded the project and obtained equipment and support from the CA, eventually enabling the club to begin playing.

An old concrete garage was given to the club to store its equipment but it lacked a club house. Once more Chris masterminded a difficult planning application, and then identified and arranged the delivery of a self-build wooden chalet type building which has served the club extremely well ever since.

From the beginning, Chris was chairman of the club committee, in which role he performed much of the physical and administrative work whilst also encouraging

the development of the members' playing skills.

In 2018, with the load undiminished, Chris retired as chairman and was elected club president.

Chris's dedication to the club and croquet generally has been outstanding. His drive, initiative and leadership has transformed a piece of a meadow into a vibrant and happy club and he continues to make a significant contribution to the health of Beckford CC.

The CA Shop

**Discounted prices for
CA members**

Just register an account on the shop website with the same email address you use on the CA website to unlock your members' discount.

**Standard members 2%
Premium members 10%**

Leighton-Linslade CC ~ how it all began

An article about how **Irene Davis**, now aged 97 and still actively involved, started the now thriving Leighton-Linslade Croquet Club in Bedfordshire with a large membership, clubhouse and three courts.

~

In 1991, Irene Davis aged 68, took advantage of a WI 'Course on the Game of Croquet' having only played once before and two weeks later, she achieved her 'Demonstrators Badge'.

At the time, Irene was living with her husband Peter in a Water Board Property 'Waterways' which had a large piece of land in front of it that had been a tennis court and a 9-hole putting green.

The ever-resourceful Peter set about preparing the ground for croquet, which involved removing hundreds of small stones which he would refer to as 'Half of Yarmouth Beach'.

All they had was a child's croquet set (minus the balls), so Peter found some composite balls in his Aladdin's cave and they started to practise.

Being in the middle of the country, they had to battle the rabbits and, each morning, Peter would fill the holes and flatten the lawn ready for friends and family to join them to play.

Fortunately the Water Board saw this as an opportunity for their staff to enjoy playing and they funded the erection of a wire fence which solved the rabbit problem and, with the help of a giant roller, the lawn was made relatively flat.

Irene was given a proper croquet set for her birthday and then began inviting members from the WI to take part and in the summer of 1992, they formed their first croquet team. Before long, other WI's were playing too and the following year an Open Day attracted over 80 people.

Peter made mallets which he sold for charity and, when the University of the Third Age (U3A) got involved, they were running six sessions a week.

Irene also became a member of the Wrest

Park CC and encouraged many people to take part in the sport through this opportunity.

In 1999, Irene was approached by Margaret Brown, who had enjoyed playing at Waterways, and together they approached the Council in Leighton Buzzard about a new facility. The Council were hugely helpful and identified a suitable plot of land in the local park.

In January 2000 the Council approved the project, offered to prepare the site and even offered some equipment to start with. An Inaugural meeting of the Leighton-Linslade took place on 16 March 2000 with Irene as the Chair.

Peter made the club's first six mallets (which are still in use today!), other pieces of equipment were begged and borrowed and from that date on, the Club has been actively growing and developing.

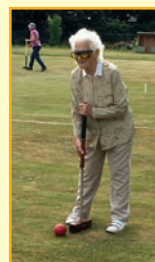
From the casual and rather naive attitude to performance of most beginners, the trend has been to seek and accept coaching and, for some players at least, to play more seriously and competitively.

The East Anglian League, Inter-Club and even National Series tournament began to figure in the Club's events programme, in addition to the internal competitions. Even 'friendly' matches, at first very informal, began to demonstrate significantly improved standards of play and challenges.

Now 97, Irene is still playing regularly, and on 22 July she celebrated another birthday at the Club with a few of her friends, just as she has enjoyed the day for the last 20 years. Following his death in 1997, the club also recognised Peter's contribution and each year Irene and her family attend an event final to present the Peter Davis Trophy (*as pictured here with winner Roger Stroud*).

So, what started as a two-week course, a small hand-made lawn and a child's croquet set has grown into a hugely successful, vibrant group of people, enjoying playing at all levels of expertise and benefitting from connections in their local community.

Janet Down



Obituary

Margaret Brown 1930 - 2020



Margaret Brown, who passed away at home on 24 September, was much involved with setting up Leighton-Linslade Croquet Club at the turn of the century.

Margaret was friendly with Irene and Peter Davis, who in 1999 introduced the game to members of the Women's Institute, together with some of their own friends, to play in the garden of their home.

Margaret and Irene decided to make some enquiries about the possibility of founding a croquet club in Leighton Buzzard, so that existing players would be able to continue enjoying the sport.

In October 1999, a telephone call to the Town Council's sport and leisure development officer quickly resulted

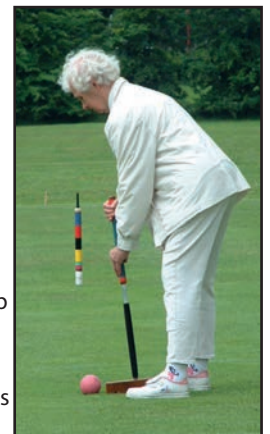
in two disused grass tennis courts being offered to provide the basis of a lawn, if a club could be formed.

Margaret guided the club for the next seven years, being at various times Chair,

Secretary and Membership Secretary, and in 2010 she penned a fine illustrated booklet covering the formation and club development during the decade. The club now has three fenced lawns and a recently refurbished clubroom in the pavilion, and 40 active members – providing a facility for all ages, and particularly for senior citizens.

Apart from her interest in croquet Margaret was much involved with many aspects of town life.

John Cundell and Ross Bagni



Obituary

Reverend Charles Townshend 1941 - 2020

Charles Townshend died in the summer of this year, leaving his family and many friends, at Budleigh Salterton Croquet Club and beyond, very saddened at his passing.

Having been involved in the world of croquet for over 50 years, his gentle manner and droll wit will have touched on many players up and down the country.

Players will be sure to remember his spell as Budleigh's Tournaments Manager and his unhurried manner as he pulled pints for them with loving care behind the bar.

Charles was born in Great Malvern in 1941 but moved to Orkney during the war with his mother to join his father who was stationed there. At 12 he moved to Ipswich School and it was the influence of his clergyman uncle living there that inspired Charles towards his own vocation.

After leaving school, Charles travelled by sea to Adelaide, Australia, for a year living with his aunt.

On his return, he read Theology at St Peter's Hall, Oxford and there developed a taste for the noble game of croquet, as well as rowing for the college.



Vocational training took him to Cambridge and he was ordained at Southwark Cathedral in 1967.

It was about this time in his life that his principles prompted him to write in protest to the then editor of The Croquet Gazette regarding something controversial that had been published.

The priesthood took him to Warlingham where he married his lifelong partner Gillian.

They had met at Southwick Croquet Club and such was his love for her that they married in August 1972, foregoing the

August Tournament that year!

A move to Old Cleeve in Somerset followed in 1975 where Charles was able to indulge in his other love of gardening, and of course, his growing family.

Further moves to Bishops Lydeard and North Currey associated with his calling followed, and he retired as the Vicar there in 2006.

Retirement saw Charles and Gill move to Colaton Raleigh to spend more time on his passion for croquet, gardening, music and literature.

He enthusiastically took on a number of the organisational roles at Budleigh Salterton CC, a club he had been a member of since 1985, and he skillfully represented the club in matches throughout the south-west.

Everyone who has attended tournaments at Budleigh or played against Charles, will remember his great sense of fun, his deep authoritative voice and his naturally supportive way, and will do so with great affection. And for players new to the game, his sage advice, quietly given, will be sorely missed.

Budleigh Salterton Croquet Club

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

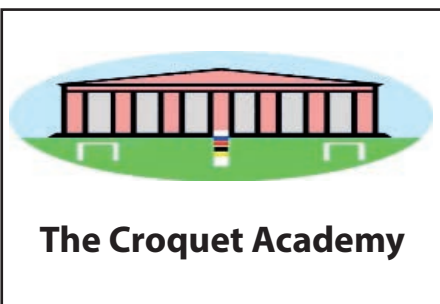
All these can put stress on the club and undermine its stability. Usually they can not simply be funded by increased membership fees. Croquet is a great game enjoyed in many ways by very different types of players and we all depend on healthy and stable clubs.

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.

The smallest contribution could make a massive difference.

Your club chairman will be happy to give you more information.



The Croquet Academy

The Croquet Academy at Southwick has launched its programme of 19 courses aimed at AC and GC players, from complete beginners to those with advanced skills. New for 2021, we offer Cliff Jones' Zoom Webinars covering an update on the new AC Laws changes, together with a return visit later in the season by Cliff for his very popular two-day course for AC Improvers, which is accompanied by his excellent course manuals.

We also offer a GC Workshop that includes use of a Swing Trainer and Video Analysis to learn where to improve.

Former World Champion Stephen Mulliner will deliver 'It's not about the mallet', for GC or AC players to learn how to get that winning mentality.

Tim King will run a 'GC Master Class' for aspiring A and B-Level tournament players and our course called 'Short Croquet AC for beginners' – one of the easiest ways to learn the AC game.

Stephen Custance-Baker, the author of the new 'Every Shot Is Tactical' book, will present a course of the same name, and other courses, to ensure that everyone from complete beginners to advanced players in both codes is well catered for.

An Academy Refresher Course at your Club?

The Croquet Academy is aware of the restrictions that the Covid-19 pandemic has placed on our sport and in particular with coaching.

Some clubs had very limited coaching in 2020; this may have been due to coaches having to shield either themselves or others, and in some cases clubs had to lockdown, resulting in some players having been starved of valuable time with coaches.

A refresher or new players course can be arranged at your club as part of our 2021 programme..

For further information on all our courses, please contact The Croquet Academy Secretary, Chrissie Merrington - courses@thecroquetacademy.com

The Croquet Academy - Southwick

Date	Course	Ideal H'cap	Course Leader	Cost*
17 March (evening)	AC Laws Update evening ZOOM webinar	Ref's & Coaches	Cliff Jones	Free
18 March (afternoon)	AC Laws Update afternoon ZOOM webinar	Ref's & Coaches	Cliff Jones	Free
7-8 April	Coach Training Course (CTC) - Club Level Coach	n/a	Janet Hoptroff	£50/£40 ^
14-15 April	Coach Qualification Course (CQC) - GC & AC Grades 1&2	n/a	Janet Hoptroff	£50/£40 ^
20 April	GC Beginners & Improvers	10+	Morgan Case	£50/£40
21 April	AC / GC Short Croquet - AC for beginners	n/a	Frances Low	£50/£40
23 April	AC 'It's all about the break'	10-16	Clive Hayton	£50/£40
27 April	GC Improve your skills	4-9	Richard Carline	£50/£40
4 May	GC Coached Games day	6-10	Richard Carline	£50/£40
5 May	AC Developing the Advanced game	9-	Chris Coull	£50/£40
11 May	Masterclass in Winning Mentality 'It's Not About The Mallet'	n/a	Stephen Mulliner	£60/£50
14 May	GC Beginners & Improvers	7+	Morgan Case	£50/£40
17 May	GC Masterclass	4-	Tim King	£60/£50
19-20 May	AC Beginners & Improvers	12+	Cliff Jones	£75/65
4 June	GC Workshop (incl. Swing Trainer & Video Analysis)	9-	Richard Carline	£50/£40
11 June	AC Supervised High-Bisque 14-point handicap tournament	14+	Frances Low	£25/£20
28 June	GC Every Shot Is Tactical (from his new book)	9-	Stephen Custance-Baker	£60/£50
19 July	AC Working Towards The Triple-Peel	5 -	Chris Coull	£50/£40
14 Sep	GC Coached Games Day	6-10	Richard Carline	£50/£40

* The costs shown are for Ordinary members / Premium members of the CA.
^ a £25 CA subsidy may be available

Full details of each course are available on the following websites:
The Croquet Association – www.croquet.org.uk > Compete > Fixtures Calendar
The Croquet Academy – www.thecroquetacademy.com

To book One-to-One/Small Group Coaching, contact Chrissie Merrington.
Academy Secretary - Chrissie Merrington - courses@thecroquetacademy.com

Recent Coaching Qualifications

Club Level Coach

Jeff Faulkner Broadwas CC

Jeff has been working when he could over the last season and has completion of all the coaching extra sessions required for his qualification.

Congratulations Jeff (photo right)

**Sarah Hayes,
Coaching Committee Chair**



High Wycombe Croquet Club

Date	Course	Ideal h'cap	Course Leader	Cost*
16 Feb	AC Laws Update Afternoon Seminar	n/a	Cliff Jones	Free
23 Feb	Introduction to Tournament Management	n/a	Chris Roberts & Frances Colman	£50/£40 ^
2 Mar	GC Practical Rules for Players Afternoon Course	n/a	Ian Shore	£30/£25
6-7 Mar	GC B-Level (3+) Improver Weekend Course	3-6	Ian Shore	£80/£70
9 Mar	Swing Clinic with the Doctor!	n/a	Raouf Allim	£25/£20
18 Mar	AC 8+ Improver Course	8-18	Raouf Allim	£50/£40
20-21 Mar	AC Refereeing Qualification Course	n/a	Jeff Dawson	£80/£70 ^
21 Mar	GC 5+ Improvers Course (at Ealing CC, open)	5-8	Ian Shore	£50/£40
23 Mar	GC C-Level (7+) Improver Course	7-12	Ian Shore	£50/£40
26 Mar	One-on-One with Cliff Jones (1 hour sessions)	n/a	Cliff Jones	£40/£35
27-28 Mar	Coaching Qualification Course (CQC)	n/a	Cliff Jones	£80/£70 ^
13 Apr	The Winning Approach - The Mental Game	n/a	Rich Waterman	£60/£50
17 Apr	Swing Clinic with the Doctor!	n/a	Raouf Allim	£25/£20
17 Apr	AC Refereeing Qualification Examination	n/a	Jeff Dawson	n/a
20 Apr	AC 8+ Improver Course	8-18	Raouf Allim	£50/£40
24-25 Apr	GC Refereeing Qualification Course	n/a	Tim King	£80/£70 ^
27 Apr	AC Perfecting Stroke Play Course	n/a	Cliff Jones	£50/£40
4 May	GC Masterclass	-3 to 3	Stephen Mulliner	£60/£50
8 May	GC First Course (for 12+)	12+	Ian Shore	£50/£40
11 May	GC C-Level (7+) Improver Course	7-12	Raouf Allim	£50/£40
* The costs shown are for Ordinary Members / Premium members of the CA. ^ a £25 CA subsidy may be available and some federations also offer support				
Full details of each course are on the CA website - www.crouquet.org.uk > Compete > Fixtures Calendar				
All bookings via CA website Fixtures Calendar (as above)				
Contact: Ian Shore – ianshore@gmail.com – 01491 718615				



Courses at High Wycombe CC "Raising your game" is our objective.

The accompanying table lists the extensive range of courses planned for 2021 at the High Wycombe CC (with one taking place at the Ealing CC).

These courses build on the experience gained in delivering a series of, very well received, small-group (to meet Covid-19 constraints) courses during 2020.

The courses are designed to appeal to widest circle of players, with visiting coaches selected for the passion they have for their subject.

The programme covers AC and GC, and a wide range of handicaps, as well the needs of coaching, refereeing and tournament management.

The upcoming changes to the AC Laws will also be covered.

Uniquely we offer one-hour 'clinic' appointments, when the time is specifically focused on analysing your stroke to guide you on how improvements could be made in consistency and effectiveness. These are in addition to the well-respected one-on-one sessions with Cliff Jones covering any aspect of the game you wish.

Places will be limited, the more so if current Covid constraints have not been lifted, so early booking is highly recommended. Booking / payment is via the Fixtures Calendar on the CA website, using the same system as entering a tournament (when that opens for entries on or about 1 Feb 2021).

Coaching Awards ~ nominations invited

The Coaching Committee will be considering all nominations at their next meeting. If you know of someone you consider worthy of either of these awards, please send their name together with a suitable citation to Sarah Hayes (details below).

Nominations close on 31 January 2021.
More information at:
<https://www.crouquet.org.uk/?p=members/docs/committees/coaching/coty>

Coach of the Year 2020

Nominations are invited for the 2020 Coach of the Year award.

We are looking for the person who is an established coach and has made a difference, is dedicated, enthusiastic and has helped players improve.

Lifetime Coaching Award

This award is for that someone really special who has made a considerable and significant contribution to coaching over a long period of time.

Sarah Hayes, Coaching Committee Chair
cacommchair@gmail.com

Neurodiversity in Coaching

I always welcome feedback from players I have coached, together with suggestions for improvement. Coaching a group can be mentally quite exacting and I sometimes forget to sit quietly afterwards and carry out a self-evaluation. What went well and what could be improved?

Roger Mills (a former Coach of the Year) is also keen on coaches having this period of self-reflection.

I was prompted to think about this because, in a non-croquet context, I have been reading a paper entitled *"Neurodiversity"* written by a man who has been training Police and Fire Officer Trainers on how to train those who drive their vehicles in an emergency.

The central remit of the paper underpins the need to understand how people learn in different ways and how to adapt the coaching/teaching/training style to those with various needs.

So I suppose the first question is how do I learn, and do I therefore fall into the trap of assuming everyone else learns in the same way?

The paper suggests that most people:

- Think in lists
- Use prompts well
- Make notes
- Learn and recite words and phrases well

It suggests that most people don't:

- Think holistically
- Think spatially*

** I don't think this is necessarily the case for a significant number of our players.*

How can a coach help?

- Talk to the student and gain an understanding of what works for them. I usually ask participants to email me prior to the coaching session and complete this sentence:

"By the end of the session/course I would like to be better at....."

This often produces clues about their preferred learning style.

- Ensure that handouts reflect a wide range of learning (pictures, lists, written word, etc.).
- Look to build understanding rather than knowledge.

~

The paper goes on to identify the best possible methods in respect of some specific areas of difficulty ...Dyslexia, Dyspraxia, Dyscalculia, Asperger's, ADHD and Tourette's. A 'normal' spread of cognitive ability is assumed in each case.

~

I think it is useful to spend some time considering coaching/training methods from other sports or professions.

Before I could no longer afford to continue training to fly powered light aircraft, I certainly found the instruction to 'think out loud' extremely helpful (so did the instructor!).

It is a good tip. I often use it in AC.

When coaching a four ball break there is often more than one possibility of achieving the same solution.

The answer to the question "where are you thinking of putting that ball?" might well be different to your own visualisation of a shot; and so your response might then be *"yes, that will work as well, I hadn't thought of that."*

Another helpful tip comes from the non-mandatory commentary in advanced driving, where the request *"So tell me your plan in this situation"* can also prove useful in croquet coaching.

I suppose this is similar to the flying tip but one has a bit more time on a croquet court!

Klim Seabright

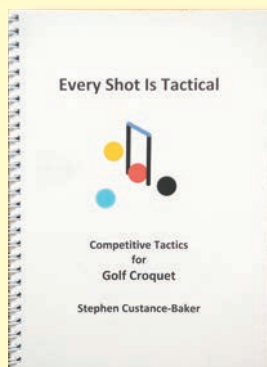
Source: IAM Roadsmart paper by Dennis McCann

Every Shot is Tactical

a new Golf Croquet book by Stephen Custance-Baker

Do you want to improve your Golf Croquet tactics?

The core principles of good tactical play are described with 140 clear diagrams.



"GC has waited for this publication for a long time.

Richard Carline,
Director of The Croquet Academy
and Championship Referee

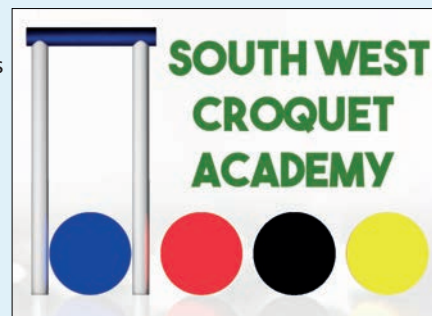
It really is excellent – very well done!
Dr Ian Harrison, Basingstoke, SCF Coaching Officer

*...by far the best coaching book I have seen.
The script is easy to understand and the illustrations
exceptionally clear.*

Robert Moss, Budleigh Salterton

Available at £8.50 + p&p from StephenCB@MyCroquet.me

Although there is great recent news regarding the roll-out of a Covid-19 vaccine, the SWCA is holding back on announcing its 2021 programme until late spring of 2021.



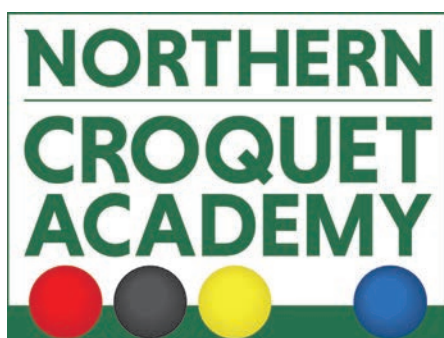
This is for several reasons: firstly, it may be some months before everyone will feel safe enough to be in close contact, and our courses are often a mix of classroom and lawn practice.

Secondly, delegates and indeed lead coaches often travel from far afield, and sometimes require overnight accommodation or refreshments which may be difficult for some.

Thirdly, SWCA are in the process of refreshing their organising team and our courses, and we want to ensure the courses on offer have a fresh approach to improving skills and knowledge.

We will retain some of the favourite courses, but don't expect those to appear until later in the year.

Prospective participants should start checking both the SWCA Facebook page and website – www.southwestcroquetacademy.co.uk – towards the end of March for updates on the 2021 SWCA programme. Details will also appear in the next available Gazette.



The fifth Northern Croquet Academy season features a number of new courses to meet demand, balanced with courses that have previously proved particularly successful and popular.

Bookings for the 2020 programme were high before lockdown put most courses on hold. Many of those that were not able to run in 2020 are included in this new programme, and demand is expected to be high again.

Stephen Mulliner, Secretary-General of the World Croquet Federation, introduces the new AC 7th Edition Laws ready for the new season, with Q&A chaired by Roger Staples, Chairman of the CA AC Laws Committee. This event includes a copy of the new laws.

Other new courses for AC players include a two-day course from Cliff Jones on perfecting strokes and breaks; 'Moves and methods' aimed at higher handicap players; an AC referee course; and 'So you think you know the laws of AC?'

Complementing these courses, James Hawkins, author of 'Complete Croquet', returns with a linked pair of days which together should help middle and lower handicap AC players develop their all-round game.

New GC courses include one for middle handicap players on 'Strokes and strategy – take your GC to the next level', while the ever-popular 'Classic GC skills and tactics' is complemented by 'GC skills and tactics in practice', giving opportunity to explore the classic GC moves in a day centred around guided games

Courses of interest to both codes include the all-important dimension

The Northern Croquet Academy - York

Dates	Course	Ideal H'cap	Course Leader	Cost *
21 Feb (am)	AC All about the new AC laws for 2021 ZOOM event (<i>book via CA website</i>)	n/a	Stephen Mulliner	£5/£5 #
6 March (am)	AC All about the new AC laws for 2021 ZOOM event (<i>book via CA website</i>)	n/a	Stephen Mulliner	£5/£5 #
13-14 Apr	AC Perfecting stroke play, perfecting the break	6-14	Cliff Jones	£70/60
15-16 Apr	AC Become a qualified AC referee	n/a	Cliff Jones	£70/60 >
15-16 Apr	AC So you think you know the AC laws?	n/a	Cliff Jones	£30/25
20 April	GC Strokes & strategy: take GC to next level	3-12	Cliff Jones	£38/33
21-22 Apr	GC/AC One-to-one with Cliff Jones	n/a	Cliff Jones	POA
24 April	AC Twelve hoops, one turn	16-	James Hawkins	£38/33
25 April	AC Control, tactics, action!	16-	James Hawkins	£38/33
4 May	GC/AC Back to basics	n/a	Derek Knight	£38/33
8-9 May	GC/AC Become a CA Club-Level coach	n/a	Roger Staples	£70/60 >
11 May	GC/AC It's all in the head: get the mindset	n/a	Derek Knight	£38/33
12 May	GC/AC Learn Short Croquet in one day	n/a	John Harris	£38/33
19 May	AC Moves and methods for higher bisquers	16-22	John Harris	£38/33
22 May	GC Classic Golf Croquet skills & tactics	10+	John Crossland	£38/33
26 May	GC Golf Croquet skills and tactics in practice	10+	John Crossland	£38/33

* The costs shown are for Ordinary members / Premium members of the CA
 > a £25 CA subsidy may be available
 # includes a copy of the new 7th Edition AC Laws

Full details of each course are on the CA website
 - www.croquet.org.uk > Compete > Fixtures Calendar

Book the Zoom event on the CA website and all others through Debbie James (*below*)

Contact: Debbie James - northerncroquetacademy@gmail.com - 07772 778232

of good mental readiness; the highly-regarded 'Back to basics' on getting core technique right; and one-to-one coaching with Cliff Jones on any aspect of technique, mindset or tactics.

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

For aspiring coaches, both AC and GC, the

Northern Academy programme includes a revised coach training course for which subsidies of £25, funded by the CA, are available for qualifying applicants.

Application levels are expected to be high this year and so early booking (now open) for all courses is advised.

To discuss a course in more detail or book, please contact the Northern Croquet Academy courses secretary Debbie James (contact details at the foot of the table)



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duncan@DuncanHectorTurfCare.co.uk

www.DuncanHectorTurfCare.co.uk

Seeding – nutrition and soil conditioning

My croquet lawn is recovering from the levelling I did in September. Poor weather delayed the seeding part of the process, so I still have some bare areas.

I seeded one area on 4 November and covered with green waste compost but the weather was autumnal and it took 16 days to germinate instead of the normal 7 or 8 days.

There are other patches to do. I have tried many ways of seeding and the compost method is always more successful than any other. Just spread the seed and cover with 8mm of Green Waste compost. This compost is unusual in that it retains moisture very well which is ideal for seed germination and afterwards breaks down in the rootzone without causing a hill.

It is composted to BSI PA100 standard and is made from household waste. I believe that all counties have their household waste composted in this way so, you should be to buy it locally.

However, it is usually quite lumpy, so I use a graded (sieved) compost which costs more but is worth it.

I can supply at £12 per bag for 6 bags (delivery included).

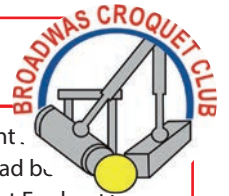
One 40 litre bag is enough to cover 5 square metres and it stores well if kept in a dry place. Soil temperature is important and the rye grass that I use needs 9 degrees or more.

Seedsman used to say that seeding could be done at any time before Christmas. That isn't what it says on the bag but I am going to try it anyway.

During the winter I have been spraying monthly with liquid fertiliser and liquid iron to kill off any fungal attacks. It seems to keep the moss away even using a weak dilution. Worms started congregating again but autumn conditioning has dispersed them.

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

Broadwas ride Covid-19 difficulties with new fifth court



Broadwas Croquet Club is tucked away in the Teme Valley on the border of Worcestershire and Herefordshire, writes **Chris Croft**.

We are a lively and competitive club and now with five full-sized courts and 55 active members.

This year, a dry Spring followed a very wet Winter, which made lawn preparation difficult, though not nearly as bad as the difficulties that the ensuing Covid-19 pandemic brought about. We could have caved in; put up the shutters and stood back until things settled down, but like other many clubs we persevered, getting the courts ready using our own skills and the expertise of a local contractor.

Having received excellent advice and guidance from the Croquet Association, we found ourselves back in business by the third week in May, with an exhaustive sanitisation regime in place, but without the use of our pavilion and toilets.

We cancelled all competitions, both

internal and external, and we also introduced a new court booking system under the eagle eye of our Club Captain and Secretary John Guy, so as to control usage and record attendances.

A side benefit of this system has been that our members are now spreading their croquet activity across a greater proportion of each week.

In January we had embarked on an ambitious membership development programme, mainly through local newsletters and Parish magazines, and this generated plenty of interest until the pandemic struck.

Rather than disappoint prospective joiners, we kept all their contact details and promised to re-connect when things improved, and the moment lockdown was lifted we welcomed 38 visitors, from whom 28 prospective members emerged to result in 18 joining as full members, under the wing of our newly appointed Members Secretary, Mary Dryden.

Meanwhile, our President, Chairman, Stuart Smith, had been formal approaches to Sport England for funding to create a new fifth court.

Sport England provided us with a generous grant, and we thank them both for the grant itself and for their support throughout what turned out to be a pretty rigorous application process.

The new court has provided a very welcome extra playing space for everyone and, new members included, have even been provided with a very well organised and successful internal league Golf Croquet competition by one of our Club Coaches, Jeff Faulkner – it has brought out the best competitive instincts in everyone.

We aim to play right through the Autumn, the elements and pandemic permitting, and to keep in close touch with each other over the Winter by enjoying our monthly Croquet Club breakfasts that proved so popular last year.

Chris Croft, Broadwas CC

Memories of William Ormerod by Peter Trimmer (Part 3)

Continued from November Gazette 388...

~

William had enjoyed cricket before learning croquet and that's why he held the mallet as he did. He started at Bristol (under the tutelage of his father, Dr G.L. Ormerod, who wrote the first edition of 'Know the Game: Croquet') and played his first match at the age of fifteen.

Fifty years later, in 2002, William's home club at Parkstone (East Dorset) held an event to celebrate William's time in croquet (to that point). I was asked to say a few words, so I wrote to some players who had known William for a long time.

Every reply was thoroughly positive about William, saying how he was constantly smiling, how he went out of his way to help people and, above all, what a great character he was. I include a couple of my favourite stories here.

~

William often declared, 'A good leave is worth an all-round break' (in his younger days, he could often get a ball round after getting an opponent to corner defensively) and his leaves were often unconventional.

Bernard Neal told me that in Australia in the 50's, William had grown somewhat bored with the cross-peg leave (similar to the diagonal spread) and, on one occasion

when an opponent had stopped watching to go to the toilet, William cross-pegged his own balls and left the opponent joined up – simply for the fun of seeing his opponent return and play the wrong ball.

~

Another story came from Bob Bailey, who had played William in the club championship. Bob had got fired up for the match and was playing really well and it had looked very much like he was going to win.

Then William's beeper sounded repeatedly and, after a phone call, William returned to say that he was very sorry, but he had to nip up the road to sign a death certificate; he shouldn't be gone more than a few minutes.

So Bob sat down and waited. Twenty minutes went by; half an hour, an hour and a half... finally William returned more than two hours later, "I'm so sorry about how long that took, Bob. They had already started the paperwork, but I discovered that the lady was still alive, so I had to do a lot more paperwork!" (Unlike the lady, Bob didn't recover.)

After we toasted his "50 years in croquet", William gave a speech without notes, recounting some of his memories. He rolled effortlessly from describing one character to another from when he had started playing;

with each he described some physical aspect about them, and then an amusing or touching aspect, such as a lady who had ended up in a mental ward, constantly repeating, "I'm red, you're yellow!"

His stories often involved some small misfortune leading to amusement.

He told us of a wedding at a manor house, where the vicar had turned up early and curiosity had led him to try on the head-gear from a suit of armour. The vicar had then been unable to remove it and, ended up having to perform the wedding service whilst still wearing it.

William also took great delight telling the story of a funeral where a lady left her very flowery hat at the door of the church and then saw it a few minutes later, being carried out on top of the coffin and lowered into the grave, feeling unable to say anything. The stories were never at the expense of others – the focus was the amusement of their unusual situations, or the fascination about the human condition – and his memory for details (names and so forth, which I'm sadly unable to recreate here), brought them to life. His enthusiasm was infectious.

To be continued...

William Ormerod (1937 - 2020) was a world renowned GB international croquet player.



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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.

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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).

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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:

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