



CROQUET

GAZETTE

Issue 392 | September 2021

DEBUTANT
WADE
WINS THE
GC BRITISH
OPEN



TAYLOR IS THE
CHARITY ONE
BALL CHAMPION

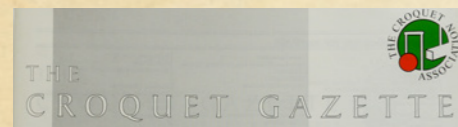
SURBITON WIN
DELAYED AC
INTER-CLUB



FROM OUR FILES

RESEARCHED BY
FRANCES COLMAN

10 years ago - 2011



Golf Croquet Handicapping – The CA Handicap Committee was re-formed last year under the chairmanship of Nigel Graves... all existing procedures and the supporting documentation were reviewed. It was agreed that the coverage for GC needed very urgent attention, and that handicappers must be appointed specifically for GC.

The Bestinvest WCF Golf Croquet World Championships are almost upon us... and don't forget there is the Under-21 World Championship at Hunstanton too.

Charity One-Ball – Congratulations to Kevin Carter and everyone who took part in the [finals of the] Charity One-Ball event at Winchester this year. Over £2,600 was raised for the cancer charity by 360 players, and judging from the photos I've seen, not only did everyone enjoy themselves, but perhaps pink should be the new white (from Gail Curry's Editorial).

Letchworth CC – Entering the CA Fixtures Book for the first time with a total of five tournaments for 2011, Letchworth Croquet Club has now 'come of age'. Formed in 1987 and having moved from its original venue, the new club site has two excellent level lawns which are a pleasure to play on, and a clubhouse courtesy of the tennis club. The first tournament was a May weekend AC two-day event which attracted players from Colchester, East Dorset, Northampton, Nottingham, Woodall Spa and local members, and the eight competitors each play three games a day under the genial management of Duncan Hector. First was Clive Goode, second Patricia Duke-Cox and third John Lonsdale. The second tournament was a midweek golf croquet two-day event, and the winner, by a good margin, was Mike Huxley, from Peter Ross and Ian Mantel.

Betty Prichard (a full-page obituary was carried) – Betty Prichard, a Vice-President of the Croquet Association, contributed greatly to the development of croquet in the 1960s and '70s: she was a handicapper, tournament manager and examining referee. She also edited the Gazette for a time.

50 years ago - 1971



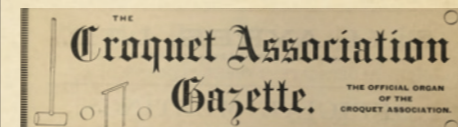
The Croquet Gazette – Mr. P. D. Hallett was appointed Editor of the Gazette and Mr. K.F. Wylie Assistant Editor.

Inter-Counties – This year's Counties week was memorable on two counts. After travelling up to 200 miles each year for the past twelve years the popular Devon team, who had so often nearly finished in first place, at last reached the top, albeit sharing the honour with Middlesex. Both Counties won four out of their five matches and both had the same number of games. It was a happy Bill Perry who took the handsome cup back to Budleigh on the Friday evening. The other feature of note was the entry for the first time of a team from the Midlands. Derek Caporn is to be congratulated on his enterprise in raising his team.

The next Test Series – Mr. Solomon said that the next Series in the United Kingdom would probably be played in 1974. It was not yet known how many members each team would contain, and therefore how many courts and how many days would be required for each Test Match... The President remarked that he hoped that some members of the two visiting teams would stay on to play in our Open Championships. Mrs. Carlisle suggested that if it was hoped to turn these into a World Championships we ought to approach other countries where croquet is played, such as South Africa. In this connection the Secretary reported that the President of the Rondebosch Club and her husband had already entered for this year's Opens (extract from AGM minutes).

Golf Croquet Variant – Dear Sir, Our members were very interested to read of the "Cuddlesdon Golf" as it closely resembles the game of "Four-Stroke Croquet" which we have played in the Ipswich Club for about seven years. From this we encouraged the game of Golf Croquet, with the tactics of placing balls as well as roqueting and hoop running, and it was quickly learned and enjoyed. E.I. Wood, Ipswich

100 years ago - 1921



What happened to the Croquet Championship? – Dear Sir, I looked through the 24 pages of The Observer with great care this morning, but failed to find any result of the Croquet Championship. There are columns of cricket, tennis, golf, long paragraphs about Henley racing, club golf, club cricket, school cricket, motor cycling, bowls, etc. but not a single line about the Croquet Championship! Has the public interest in the game fallen so low, or what is the reason for it? Fortunately for me, I met an interested spectator of the finals during the morning, and heard all the details, but I think it very hard on certain distinguished players that not even the bare results are recorded in the Sunday papers. There must surely be plenty of people about the country wondering what happened to the Croquet Championship. Yours truly, R.C.J. Beaton, Northwood, Middlesex

Retiring on the peg - Dear Sir, So far as it goes, I appreciate the logic of Mr. Creed Meredith's argument. Take, however, the case of A, whom we will assume to be the best player in the event. In the First round he knocks out B. In the second round he retires to C on the peg. Is justice still done? Surely it would be fairer on A's part either to retire at the post in his first round, or play out this and any subsequent round to a finish. Yours faithfully, "B".

C.A. Association Fee – All players competing in any tournaments on the C.A. Calendar shall pay a fee of 1s. to the C.A. for each advertised event in which they enter, and local Secretaries are requested to collect the same, also to announce it in their programmes.

Limit of Handicap – At a meeting of the Council of the C.A., held on April 7th, it was resolved that the limit of handicap (Reg.12) be increased from 12 to 14 bisques.



The Croquet Association
Issue 392 | September 2021



Front cover:
New croquet star Aston Wade with the GC British Open trophy

PHOTOGRAPH
Stephen Custance-Baker

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CORRECTION

George Land spotted that on page 17 of the May issue 391 in the 'South West' column, the YouTube address for Dave Kibble's GC rules presentation was missing a "w" off the end. The correct link is: <https://youtu.be/2dV11-d2xFw>

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WELCOME

Crikey - talk about a roller-coaster of a season - it's all been happnin'! First we had no croquet, then croquet with restrictions, postponements and cancellations, followed at last, by near normality. THEN, an 18-year-old debutant, who few even knew, broke the twenty year duopoly of Bamford and Mulliner, to win the GC British Open! - Now that is not normality whichever way you look at it. Huge congratulations to new star Aston Wade for turning the GC establishment on its head and who else was going to adorn the front page of this Gazette issue after that? This issue does however, come with an apology from me, for its later than advertised arrival, due in part to some family matters that took away my planned production window as well as my appearance at that GC Open Championship.

The content reflects this too, with the change in brief to become a more 'sporty' publication, now beginning to work its way through to the production. More about the actual playing of the game is the aim and this issue brings you the best of the action from mostly May and June, with the next issue (already in gestation) set for a quick turnaround to catch up with all that has happened since. So far this season I've visited Blewbury, Budleigh, Cheltenham, East Dorset, High Wycombe, Hurlingham, Nailsea, Nottingham, Ryde, Surbiton, Tyneside and Watford and experienced happy welcomes at each one. It has been great to have been able to welcome new visitors to my primary club, Phyllis Court (Henley) too, thanks to the GC Federations Shield delivering long distance travellers all the way from Maldon (Essex) and Croquet Durham. Oh, how we all love our croquet!

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CALL FOR 'MOST IMPROVED PLAYER' AWARDS NOMINATIONS

Nominations are invited for the CA's four annual Most Improved Player Awards. The number of awards is increased from three in previous seasons, with the introduction of the Colman Trophy for GC which now has parity with an AC award for both sexes. The new bespoke trophy has been commissioned and is being donated to the CA by Frances Colman, the Chairman of the Handicap committee, who are the award making body. An article about the design and production of this unique trophy will be carried in the next Gazette issue. The four CA awards are made in the categories below. These awards are open only to Individual Members of the CA. Eligibility will be restricted to players

who have membership of a CA member club, and who are playing predominantly within the CA's domain for the period under consideration. **Nominations should be made by Clubs or Federations and sent to the CA Office by 31 October.** The nomination should provide detailed information about the candidate's improvement during the season. For the full details, see the CA Awards webpage (search for 'Most Improved Player') or visit: <https://www.croquet.org.uk/?p=tournament/caCalendar&CalendarInformationID=10>.

Frances Colman, Chairman,
CA Handicap Committee

CATEGORIES:

- The Apps Memorial Bowl for the most improved male AC player
- The Steel Memorial Bowl for the most improved female AC player
- The Spiers Trophy for the most improved male GC player
- The Colman Trophy for the most improved female GC player



CHAIRMAN OF THE CA COUNCIL

During the last two months Council has concentrated its efforts on the question of the legal status of the Croquet Association.

For many years the CA, which is currently an Unincorporated Association, has discussed whether it should adopt a structure that limits its liability.

Several papers on the subject have examined the advantages and disadvantages of moving to a limited liability structure. Having studied the papers, Council are of the view that the CA should incorporate to limit the liability of its volunteers and members.

It has also considered whether it should seek to register as a charity, given that "the advancement of amateur sport" is one of the charitable purposes defined by the Charities Act.

In January 2021, Council authorised the CA to take up an offer from Brabners LLP for pro-bono advice about changing the CA's legal status.

Their report has been received and examined by our Honorary Secretary and Treasurer who have summarised the report and presented it to Council at their 5 May meeting. The importance of this move cannot be understated and as such it was decided to re-convene the meeting later in the month to consider the report in more detail.

The discussion was led by Samir Patel, the Vice Chairman of Council and centred around a proposal to transition to a Charitable Incorporated Organisation under the Association Model constitution.

A view was expressed that more evidence was needed from other national governing bodies that have gone down that route

before a final recommendation was made.

The meeting then went on to discuss the membership structure, the consultation process and a proposed timetable for transition.

Council appointed a group to come up with a road map to move the issue forward with 1 January 2023 being considered as a target date for implementation of the new structure subject to consultation and agreement being obtained from the membership.

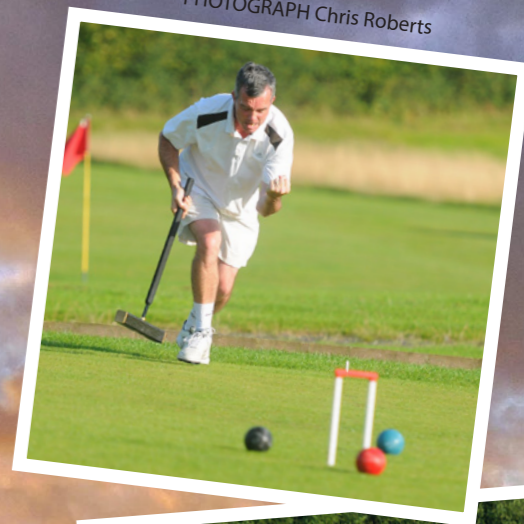
The other subject under active review is that of Adult Safeguarding.

An interim report was received by Council and it is planned that a final report will be presented to Council for policy approval with a view to adoption this autumn.

Jonathan Isaacs, Chairman of Council



PHOTOGRAPH Ray Hall



PHOTOGRAPH Chris Roberts



PHOTOGRAPH Stephen Custance-Baker

JAMES DEATH JOINS CA OFFICE TEAM



PHOTOGRAPH Samir Patel

James Death has joined the team at the CA Office to help with the administration. He was previously part of a management team in the gaming industry.

James has a wealth of knowledge of croquet, having played for over 30 years, and is known in croquet circles worldwide.

He is an England international, current Men's Champion and a former Open Champion. We wish him all the best in his new role within our friendly team at the office.

Mark Suter, CA Manager

SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR 2022

Subscriptions for both individual members and member clubs will be unchanged in 2022, and remain at the 2021 levels.

The definition of clubs entitled to the Discount Rate has been slightly modified.

It is believed that a few more clubs will

benefit from the slightly broader revised definition, which is, "clubs that have either a playing area significantly less than two full-sized lawns or significant external restrictions on their usage".

Going forwards it was decided to refer to the rates as the "Normal" rate and the "Discount" rate.

Ian Burridge, Hon. Treasurer

Individual Members' Subscriptions

Category	With Paper Gazette		Paperless	
	Full	Direct Debit	Full	Direct Debit
Premium	£43.50	£38	£36.50	£31
Supporter	£23.50	£18	£16.50	£11
Overseas or EU	£48.50	£43	£41.50	£36
Young Person	£15	£15	£8	£8

Club Subscriptions

As before, only primary club members need be counted when calculating the amount due

	Adult per-capita rate		Young persons' per-capita rate
Discount (previously Small Clubs)	£9		£5
Normal (previously Large Clubs)	£14		£5
New clubs (with a minimum of £60 throughout)	Year 1: Fixed at £60	Year 2: Capped at £90	Year 3: Capped at £120
Affiliate clubs	£45		
School and University clubs	£30		

PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION FOR 2022 CALENDAR

The CA Marketing Committee has many ideas. Some are original. Others are borrowed from elsewhere. Here is one of the latter.

Croquet Calendar for 2022

The Croquet Calendar is primarily a photographic competition, but it should have the effect of bringing the joys of croquet to a wider audience. The judges will select the best twelve images submitted.

These will demonstrate the inventiveness, imagination and skill of the creator and will probably not be pictures of the club chairman presenting the trophy to the winner of the annual handicap competition! The impressive images will form the photographic parts of the new Croquet Calendar and the successful photographers will be properly acknowledged and will become justly famous!

The best of the twelve selected pictures will

not only be used as the cover of the calendar but will also win its creator the title of "Croquet Photographer of the Year" and an as yet undecided prize.

CA Shop sale and a Charity angle

When assembled, the calendar will be sold by the CA Shop and other selected outlets. For the implausibly low price of £10, purchasers will acquire a wonderful colourful gift to present to the croquet-obsessed friends or relatives of their choice, on a date (also of their choice) in December 2021. The net proceeds of sale of this almost-unique publication will be divided equally between the CA and the national charity selected for support by the organisers of the annual Charity One-Ball competition.

Submitting your photo entries

We know that there are many resourceful, aspiring paparazzi and daguerreotypists in the croquet community. A beautiful photograph is timeless – so you don't have to

take one especially for this competition. One from your collection would be wholly acceptable and there is no limit on the number of entries that you may submit. Please submit your croquet-related photographic image(s) of publishable quality (i.e. with lots of pixels) to Chris Roberts, who is, of course, the Editor of the Croquet Gazette and, in his capacity as a renowned professional sports photographer, will be Chairman of the Panel of Distinguished Judges.

The closing date is not yet close and you have plenty of time. Any image submitted on or before Sunday 19 September 2021 will be entered into the competition, which is open to any individual member of the CA. Send your photographs to: editor@croquet.org.uk with the subject line 'Croquet Photo Competition'.

Eugene Chang, Marketing and Publishing Team

PHOTOGRAPH Eugene Chang

The 2021 Charity One Ball competition was far less affected by the pandemic than last year and we had 36 heats around the country and 454 players took part in them. Consequently, 42 players came to the final, on a summery day at Surbiton, enjoying its superb lawns, fabulous food and famous hospitality.

The Final Tournament

The Final tournament was run as a Swiss and the players were thankfully tolerant of the manager's occasional slip-ups - having in the field four Richards, four Johns, two Colins and two Anthonys caused some confusion. Perhaps next year I should put the clock back a few decades and refer to everybody as Mr Andrews, Mrs Brown, etc!

14 make 'the cut'

At lunchtime we had a 'cut': putting the fourteen players with no more than one loss into one section, to compete for the main prizes, and keeping the remainder in a different section to play for a 'Best of the Rest' prize. Incredibly, this year's top section was all-male which was unusual, as in the past we have seen several female players doing well, and in recent years three women have won the final.

Diverse quartet reach the semis

In the afternoon, I set about whittling down the fourteen who had made the 'cut' and in due course I was down to four, all on 6 wins from seven games. The four were very different in their profiles: Peter Dowd (Compton) is a top-flight GC player (ranked 19 in the UK), playing off -3. He hits the ball at a million miles an hour, with formidable accuracy. Colin Groves (Woking) is a well-rounded AC player with good

TAYLOR IS THE CHARITY ONE BALL CHAMPION

'touch'. He again played above his 6 handicap on this visit to the OB Final (he was runner-up last year). Simon Kewley (Lym Valley) is very new to croquet and plays off the maximum 20 One-Ball handicap. He clearly has a natural flair for the game and used his forest of bisques to good effect. Joel Taylor (High Wycombe) is a top-flight player in both AC (ranked 31 in the UK) and in GC (UK no. 25) but had to play off a One-Ball handicap of -5.

Close semis action

In the first semi-final between Dowd and Groves, it came down to the former's last stroke. He had completed rover (hoop 12) but then had to hit back through the hoop in an attempt to hit either the peg or Groves's ball, lurking a yard from it. He missed both and Groves went through to the final. The second semi-final was a fascinating battle in which Kewley had 8.5 bisques, which is massive in a game of One Ball with only twelve hoops to make. So Taylor's plan was to hit in and take a break round to the peg. Although he didn't achieve a finishing break, Taylor did hit-in several times and made two or three shorter breaks to put the game beyond doubt.

THE FINAL - Taylor's accuracy wins it

In the final Taylor found Groves a canny opponent and the game developed into a tactical battle, but Groves' four bisques were not quite enough to counter Taylor's accuracy. Joel Taylor won the traditional engraved crystal decanter and Colin Groves a pair of runner-up goblets.

The best of the rest

Meanwhile, in the rest of the field, we had three players unbeaten after lunch: John Rowley (Camerton & Peasedown), Richard Andrews (Hurlingham) and Richard Jelly (Bath). In the next round Rowley lost and so the battle between the two Richards became the 'best of the rest' final and a close one it turned out to be, with both players for the peg, it was Richard Andrews who hit first to earn a crystal goblet. The manager's prize for the best break was interesting. Mark Ormerod (Dulwich) completed two eleven-hoop breaks and in one of them contrived to still lose the game. This is what can happen when you are playing off -6. It was heartening that many of those with no pretensions to the prizes kept returning to the manager's desk to seek another game, just for the love of playing. Some notched up ten or eleven during the day.

£7,658 raised for The British Heart Foundation

This year's charity, chosen by a vote among the heat organisers was the British Heart Foundation. Again this year, several records were broken, foremost among these was the £7,658 (including Gift Aid) raised for the charity. This increased the total raised in all Charity One-Balls to over £54,000. Budleigh broke the previous record for the number of participants in their heat (56!) and, with £710, also but briefly held the record for the most money raised in one heat. However, a few days later Watford surpassed that with a magnificent £1050. While these are dizzying numbers, this competition is equally important to small, one or two-lawn clubs up and down the country, who have a seasonal pipe-opener with about eight players and send us a £50 cheque and a player in the final. Not least, The One Ball brings together AC and GC players. The Charity One-Ball Championship is and will remain an early-season fun event, open to all.

Kevin Carter,
Charity One-Ball organiser

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN

Children's Croquet Birthday Parties

Have you thought of organising birthday parties for children aged 8 -13 at your club? At Caversham CC, at the request of parents, we have held parties for their children. This is one way of getting children interested in croquet.

On the birthday, a few of our members give basic instruction on holding the mallet, hitting the ball and playing simple GC games.

We adopt a mini tournament style whereby winners play winners and losers play losers. This is all good friendly fun.

One time, a girl in the losing team chanted "we are the losers of the losers" and she chanted as loudly as the winners!

All the children had obviously had a great day learning croquet and these were fun days for children, parents and club members alike.

At least one parent was expected to remain throughout the session and other parents/

grandparents were encouraged to stay and watch the fun too; consequently there was no need to have DBS checks for club members.

The parties are very easy to organise; we offered party food, including homemade birthday cake and soft drinks.

Even with our small premises this was possible using a gazebo, decorated with balloons and bunting, which also provided shade and protection from the odd rain shower.

As well as being enjoyable, the birthday parties also gave a small income to the club. We are hoping that some of the adults who attend our birthday parties may wish to try croquet for themselves, so there is a possibility of expanding our membership into the bargain.

I highly recommend organising birthday parties for children aged 8 -13 at your club.

Carol Jamieson,
Caversham CC

CA Safeguarding Officer's statement: "Children's Croquet Parties"

Children's Croquet Parties are either managed events run by the Club, which WILL need a currently cleared DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) individual if the majority of participants are children.

Or, if a group of parents are running the event, that they become responsible by effectively leasing the premises for their event, subject to the Club's risk assessments and Codes of Conduct applying.

An "incident causing concern" at such an event would normally be recognised, reported, recorded, responded to, and referred on through the Club's Safeguarding Officer or Chairman.

Dr. Ron Carter, CA Safeguarding Officer

NEW GC SELECTORS & POLICY

New GC Selectors confirmed

Following a long and illustrious period of service on the Croquet Association GC Selection Committee, Pierre Beaudry and Tim King stepped down earlier this year. Thank you both for all your past efforts. After some debate regarding who best to invite as replacements, it was a pleasure to announce that Rachel Gee and Stephen Custance-Baker had both accepted invitations to join the committee and have since been fully involved. The committee line-up is now: Lionel Tibble (Chairman), Stephen Custance-Baker, Rachel Gee, J-P Moberly, Stephen Mulliner, Jonathan Powe and Chris Roberts.

Recent changes to the selection policy

The Openshaw Shield is the trophy for Tier 1 of the Golf Croquet World Team Championship which was inaugurated in 2012. Egypt beat New Zealand in the first final but New Zealand turned the tables on Egypt in the 2016 and 2020 finals. England achieved a respectable third place on all three occasions, which leads to the question of how we can improve our chances in 2024 and beyond. The most notable feature of the 2020 finalists was the youth of their teams, with an average age of well under 30. The England GC Selectors have therefore decided as a matter of policy to actively encourage young players who have the potential to represent England in the Openshaw Shield to make this their goal. An important step on the way is to take part in other representative team events such as the GC Home Internationals, the England v Spain Test Match and matches planned to be held against other continental European teams.

This new approach has been implemented in the latest edition of the CA Selection Policy published in March 2021. Selection for the Openshaw Shield is required by paragraph 8.1.1(a) to be "the team most likely to win the event", or, in other words, the strongest possible team.

In contrast, selection for other England teams is required by paragraph 8.1.2(b) to be simply "a team that is likely to win the event". This flexibility is designed to permit the GC Selectors to include a wider range of players with particular, but not exclusive, emphasis on young players.

A consequence of this increased flexibility is that an established player, who is currently stronger than several development candidates, may not be selected for a particular representative team event for which they have made themselves available.

To mitigate the disappointment, the chairman of the GC Selectors will aim to contact before the selection date any established player who may be affected.

The GC Selectors will also strive to be fair to an established player omitted from one event to make way for a development candidate by not omitting them from another event for the same reason. Playing for the England team is a great experience and the GC Selectors hope that the new policy will allow many promising players to be given the chance to find out for themselves and thereby cement their ambition and enthusiasm for the game.

Lionel Tibble,
Chairman GC Selectors

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE CA

NOTICE OF AGM

The Annual General Meeting of the Croquet Association will take place by Zoom on Saturday 16 October 2021, commencing at 10am.

The agenda will be published as a news item on the CA website, no later than 1st September.

Dr. Ian Vincent, Honorary Secretary



Updated your lawn care equipment

NEW FUNDING COMMITTEE AT YOUR SERVICE



A new clubhouse?



Improve your courts or create a new one

The new CA Funding Committee is now up and walking! A more rapid perambulation would obviously be implausible for such a senior group. The Committee has responsibility for: (1) proposing to the Executive Board, for their approval, a budget for (a) development grants and (b) loans, accompanied by a strategy for the disbursement of such funds; (2) making development grants to existing Member Clubs or to new facilities where the club is likely to become a Member Club, of up to £10,000 (with an effective maximum of £5,000 unless the application is truly exceptional); (3) making interest free loans, on favourable repayment terms, to Member Clubs for any purpose (within reason); (4) the administration of a new Young Person's Sponsorship Scheme; and (5) the management of a new Bursary Scheme for aspiring young players.

The Funding Committee

The members of the Committee are: John Reddish (Norwich): Chairman, Ian Burridge (Nottingham): Vice Chairman and the Treasurer of the CA, Sarah Andrew (Llanfairfechan) Secretary, Paul Francis (Bath): the Chairman of the Development Committee, George Noble (Surbiton) Senior Member and ad hoc Lawns Adviser. They trust that you will be impressed by their geographical distribution, if not by their expertise and experience! They are keen to receive applications. They have already dealt

with two and they have a third "under active consideration". As you may know, in the Civil Service, "under consideration" allegedly means "we have lost the file" and "under active consideration" usually means "we have lost the file but we are looking for it". Not so in the case of the Funding Committee! They had no less than two Zoom meetings in late March and the relevant papers were to hand.

Grants and loans for your club?

The annual budgets have been set: £30,000 for development grants and starter kits; £50,000 for loans; £2,000 for bursaries. If you think that your club might benefit from a development grant or a loan, have a look at the guidance documents on the CA website and consult your Federation Development Officer listed here:

Local Federation Development Officers

North:	Roger Staples (Middlesbro')
North West:	David Cornes (Crake Valley)
Yorkshire:	Derek Knight (Beverley)
East Midlands:	Mick Haytack (Ashby)
West Midlands:	Brian Shorney (Eardisley)
East Anglia:	Jonathan Toye (Downham)
Southern:	Peter Allan (Harwell)
South West:	Paul Francis (Bath)
South East:	Ian Cobbold (Cheam)

The CA is keen to fund you

The Committee is keen to offer more loans than have typically been made in the past, not least because they have the potential to

PLEASE APPLY FOR GRANTS, LOANS AND BURSARIES



Start-up kits or extra mallets for projects

provide a better return than any available commercial investment. Development grants are not available for maintenance of lawns and other facilities but loans are. Provided that the investment will probably, in time, have the effect of increasing the membership of the club (and therefore increasing the revenue of the CA) and that the recipient club has a reasonable prospect of being able to repay the money, the Committee will give favourable consideration to an application.

Examples of Interest-free loans

Examples of interest-free loans offered in recent years include: £950 towards the cost of further playing equipment to cope with sudden increase in membership; £5,000 to cover the cost of lawn maintenance and to relieve a current inability to afford the cost of restoring the courts to prime condition and £4,800 to cover the whole cost of the acquisition of a replacement mower.

A digest of most of the decisions relating to grants and loans from 2003 to date will be available on CA website Funding page. Visit: Home > Members > Documents > Committees > Funding. There are links to Development Grants and Bursaries. Online readers: <https://www.croquet.org.uk/?p=members/docs/committees/funding>.

John Reddish,
Chairman of the Funding Committee

The croquet section of the Eardisley Tennis and Croquet Club was formed nine years ago, and after a slow start the croquet membership grew to over forty at the time of applying for a CA Grant. We had a court which, although very level, was short of full size by about five yards. We share a clubhouse with the tennis section, which means that we have two changing rooms, toilet facilities and a fully functioning kitchen, and we also have small but adequate huts for our playing equipment and mower. The Club runs several internal competitions for both GC and AC, and as members of the West Midlands Federation (WMF) we participate in their leagues for both codes. Some of our members enter CA calendar tournaments, but as yet we have not entered any national inter-club team competitions.

"Double-Up" Project

Our "Double Up" project had two clear aims. Firstly to enlarge our present court to full size, and secondly to provide an additional full-sized court; this will enable us to host federation matches and some tournaments. All other clubs who play in the WMF Leagues have two or more courts, and this fuelled our desire to expand our facilities. Additionally, our membership of more than forty meant that, despite running three club afternoons each week and double-banking on half-sized courts, these sessions were very busy, with members having long sit-outs between games.

We were fortunate to have Brian Shorney, Chairman of the WMF and past Chairman of the CA, as a member of the Club and, with his Development Officer hat on, he provided us with a lot of useful advice and encouragement to undertake the project. We also did research on the CA website on lawn construction and seeding.

An innovative fundraising idea

Fundraising during the pandemic was challenging, so to encourage donations we sold named plots on the new lawn, and members who contributed will have their name displayed on a wall-mounted grid in the clubhouse, which will be surrounded by photographs of the construction work as a commemorative piece. This idea proved very popular, and raised over £2,000. The second idea was simply to place buckets



"DOUBLE-UP" PROJECT AT EARDISLEY PROVIDES A SECOND COURT

HELPED BY A £5,000 GRANT FROM THE CA - YOUR CLUB COULD DO THIS!

in both the equipment shed and the clubhouse, into which croquet and tennis members alike were encouraged to 'lighten their pockets' of loose change – every little helps!

Maximum grant of £5,000 from the CA

Fortunately several of our members came forward with very generous donations, and together with the maximum grant of £5,000 from the CA we were able to cover the projected costs, and move forward with the project. We did pursue grants from Sport England and the Co-Op but, not surprisingly, in a pandemic year we were unsuccessful. The project has taken just over 18 months to complete; it started with purchasing the land and applying for 'change of use' from agricultural to outdoor sport and leisure activity, with associated planning checks. Once given the green light for this, we moved forward to apply for grants and to undertake fundraising. At the same time we costed out the groundworks, seed, fertiliser and fencing requirements.

Starting the works

With funding secured, we started the groundwork in autumn 2020, which involved removing the topsoil, levelling the subsoil and establishing a drainage system. Club members reduced the costs by working with the chosen local contractor, but just as we were about to return and level the topsoil, the weather turned and, on advice, work was suspended until the spring. We were extremely lucky with the weather in April, and resumed the groundwork, with the topsoil returned, laser-levelled and power-harrowed to provide an excellent seedbed. Fertiliser was applied, grass seed was spun on and then raked in by hand by club members! Finally the area was rolled with a heavy, powered roller, and again the weather was in

our favour, and the rain came right on cue. Now, at the end of May, we are looking at a good germination of grass seed showing as a green fuzz which is almost ready for its first, light cut, and a new boundary fence has also been erected by volunteer workers.

Timely arrival of our new court

Our "Double-Up" project is very timely, for as the Covid-19 restrictions recede our club has seen a spike in croquet interest and 14 new members have joined since the start of the season, which is a record for our small club! Two courts will mean we can give all our members a vastly better experience, and we can now look forward to hosting events and inviting coaches to use our facilities to serve the needs of clubs in the West Midlands and the Welsh Borders. We would like to thank the CA for its financial support and encouragement with this project, and we have no doubt that it will help grow the sport both locally and regionally.

Tony Johnston, Eardisley T&CC



'Ladies' only events questioned by Ealing quintet

Dear Editor,
Isn't time for croquet to give up using the term 'Ladies' for events – or indeed, having designated events for women?
We have no idea how widespread the practice is, but a 'Ladies' Day' has been held in the South East Federation this year, and 'The Ladies' Sixes' – also known as the 'The Women's Sixes' – are listed on the CA Fixtures Calendar.
The use of 'Ladies' or 'Women's' for events, without having 'Gentlemen's' or 'Men's' equivalents, smacks of a culture that bestows a special privilege by allowing women to take part in a male world – be it a Pall Mall club, a racing event, or indeed a

croquet tournament.
We can reasonably say "it's not like that now" about croquet, because it mostly isn't, and ours is one of the few sports in which men and women compete on equal terms, but such language does convey that attitude.
How are we going to attract younger members if we persist in using it?
If we really do want to hold an event that is restricted to one or other sex (why?), we could do worse than follow the example of the Orange Prize for fiction, and give it a neutral name.
Jennian Geddes, Bridget Goodman, Lindy Jordan, Jane Powell, Ruth Sisley, Ealing CC

I know "Why Scarborough?"... and this of early GC

Dear Editor,
John Harris asks "Why Scarborough?" (Letters, Gazette 391). This alternative game was the invention of a croquet playing, retired journalist, Brian Priestley of the Sumner Croquet Club in Christchurch New Zealand.
He introduced it in the 1980/90s when he was coaching beginners and people new to croquet. Before moving to New Zealand from England, he lived at some stage in Scarborough. As an introduction game it worked very well, as each turn started with a dolly roquet.

John Prince, New Zealand

Dear Editor,
The From our Files column of 2011 in the last issue (Gazette 391), mentions Golf Croquet Origins:- Croquet New Zealand included Golf Croquet Rules in its Annual and the earliest copy I have is 1957, but it was played prior to then. 12 and 18-point games were covered with ties, resolved by contesting hoop 3, and balls were played in sequence from "B" Baulk to start a game. Ashley Heenan told me that when he was a musical student studying in London in the late 1940s, he played Golf Croquet at Roehampton late in the evening.

John Prince, New Zealand

Make AC easier for beginners and allow repositioning the croquet shot balls

Dear Editor,
Jonathan Isaacs makes an interesting point in his Chairman's comments on page 3 of the May issue (Gazette 391).
"...[he] questions whether we are making the introduction of AC to new players too difficult.
We need to reflect the needs of today's lifestyle, which suggests shorter, quicker games by promoting Short Croquet, One-Ball and 14-point games."
I have another suggestion: The reason why beginners find it difficult to pick up and maintain breaks is (a) they don't see the need for breaks – they find it difficult enough to focus on the next hoop, and (b) their croquet shots are not accurate enough to maintain breaks (which causes (a)).

The solution is to allow them to move the two balls following a croquet shot to where they think they should have landed. This teaches them quickly how a break works, and enables them to realise the importance of the croquet shot – and its accuracy.
When practising they should reposition the croquet-shot balls as often as they like, but in a (friendly) game you could give "croquet bisques" which allow them to reposition the balls throughout one turn – so with practice a break could be maintained. They might need to use a normal bisque to set things up – e.g. if they shot and missed. So their bisques could be used either as normal, or as croquet bisques.

Keith Ross, Villembits, France



Carrot stick?

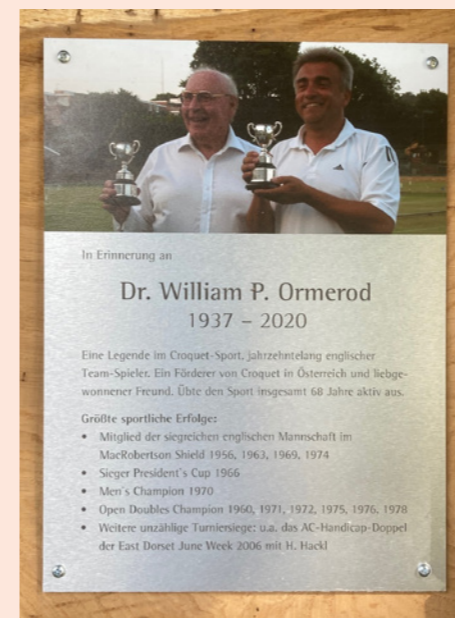
Dear Editor,
We recently decided to reposition our hoops because the court was getting quite worn. When I asked one of our new members to get there early and fill in the old carrot holes, he clearly got the wrong end of the stick!

Roger Edwards, Craig y Don CC



Er . . . is that a Wallaby?

Dear Editor,
Here is a photo of Croquet Durham's Tony McCann playing during lockdown at Backworth GCC. At first we thought it was a dog off the leash, bouncing across the cricket pitch towards the golf course. Then we were aware of a lot of people in the grounds searching about.



William Ormerod remembered with affection in Austria

Dear Editor,
Almost 20 years ago I had the pleasure of meeting William Ormerod.
I invited him to play in Austria; fortunately he accepted, and I then played some tournaments in England, staying with him.
He was one of the most remarkable persons I have ever met... what a great character!
He was a great supporter of croquet in Austria and, to mark the first anniversary of his death, we fixed a memorial plaque to our club house.
In fact William was a personality who you will never forget; but this memorial plaque shall remind us often of this perfect gentlemen and master of tactics in croquet.



The base of the plaque is made of solid oak, untreated, in its natural shape.
The plaque itself is made of brushed aluminium; quite traditional and high quality, which we think befits William.

All the very best from Austria.
Heinz Hackl, Chairman, Croquet Club, Sportunion Wolkersdorf, Austria

Software aids competition organisation for Penrith

Dear Editor,
Club competitions are an excellent way of encouraging competitive play and keeping members handicaps updated. However, our experience of putting entrants names into a block with 'play by' dates and posting this on the club notice board has not been successful. Too often dates slip and competitions never get finished. Far better to publish a schedule of matches, on predetermined dates and

lawns, with the onus on entrants to re-arrange any inconvenient dates. The problem is that doing this manually, across several competitions (AC, GC, Short, etc) demands a lot of the competition organiser.
This season we're using online software (playpass.com) which makes the task much easier, and which other clubs might like to evaluate for themselves. This is how it works: The competition organiser creates the schedule of matches using the parameters available on "playpass" such as format, available days, lawns and time available for each game. Entrants can then view the published schedule online, and transfer their

own games onto our lawn booking system - we use TeamUp, which is free. After each match entrants input their score on playpass.com, which automatically updates league tables for each competition.
In summary, the software creates competition schedules in seconds which can be edited as necessary, then published online to entrants who thereafter do the subsequent tasks of booking lawns, reporting scores and monitoring how the competition is progressing, all online. If you know a better system, please let me know.

Howard Bowron, Penrith & North Lakes CC

A low scoring record?

Dear Editor,
During a golf croquet match between Auckland and Durham on Sat 3 July, within the Croquet North Summer Tournament, Eugene Brady played Peter Tymms in a 45 minute timed game at Chester-le-Street, Durham's venue. They spent 28 minutes on the first hoop and the game was finally decided with a score at 2:1. I wonder: Has anyone spent more time on the first hoop?

Has any game been decided on a lower score? It should be noted that the competitors are experienced players and that there was some very good defensive play coupled with unusual ball placements.

Peter Tymms, Croquet Durham

Ed's Geography lesson

Dear Editor,
It was lovely to see a couple of pics of Crake Valley CC in the May issue (Gazette 391), a club where I've enjoyed many games.

However, I was somewhat startled to read the caption to the photo on page 7 - the caption writer (that would be me - Ed) needs to check his/her geography, as Crake Valley CC is almost as far from 'the heart of Cumbria as it is possible to get, without falling into Morecambe Bay!

Peter MacGowan, Woking CC

PHOTOGRAPH Samir Patel . The splendid Beddow Cup and Inter-Club Shield, in front of the beautiful rolling Oxfordshire countryside of Blewbury CC.



SURBITON WIN DELAYED 2020 AC INTER-CLUB FINAL

Surbiton won the delayed 2020 AC Inter-Club Championship Final, defeating Bristol 7 -1 at Blewbury CC in Oxfordshire, which is roughly equidistant between the two clubs. In October 2020 the traditional finals venue at Surbiton was washed out by heavy rain, and this long-awaited final was eventually rescheduled for 24 April 2021. For many of the players this was a first visit to the club, and they were universally impressed; finding fast lawns, well-set hoops, a picturesque backdrop and friendly hosts, all of which made for an excellent venue, with fine weather completing the picture. The final was played as best-of-nine: two singles for each player, with a doubles match to conclude should a tie-break be needed. In the morning games, the top pairs were much quicker to blow away the off-season cobwebs, with Surbiton duo Samir Patel and

Stephen Mulliner completing triples against Pete Trimmer and David Goacher respectively. For the bottom pairs, early errors ensured more interactive games. Sam Murray overcame Richard Smith, before Ed Duckworth pegged out Nick Parish to leave himself peg and 4-back against Parish on 4-back alone with his own balls in corners 2 and 4. Parish duly hit the ball in corner 2 from the lift, rolled off 4-back, and finished with a two-ball break. Surbiton, therefore, took a 4-0 lead into lunch, although that had not looked likely earlier on. In the afternoon, Mulliner was the victim of a double-peel and peg-out from Trimmer, but he hit a long shot and finished, securing a fifth successive title for Surbiton. Murray and Parish completed wins against Duckworth and Smith, leaving the players to watch a finish between Patel and Goacher. With Patel's shooting form deserting him,

Goacher was eventually able to limp home and secure a point for Bristol. Surbiton, therefore, retained the historic Beddow Cup, first competed for as the forerunner to the President's Cup in 1901. It had been repaired since last season thanks to the generosity of Ian Bond and Stephen Mulliner, who were duly thanked. The members of Blewbury were also thanked for providing a splendid setting for the match. Results digest:
Samir Patel beat Pete Trimmer +26tp
Stephen Mulliner beat David Goacher +17tp
Sam Murray beat Richard M Smith +13
Nick Parish beat Ed Duckworth +5
Stephen Mulliner beat Pete Trimmer +10
Sam Murray beat Ed Duckworth +17
Nick Parish beat Richard M Smith +16
Samir Patel lost to David Goacher -18

| **Sam Murray**



PHOTOGRAPH Samir Patel

FISHER KING OF THE COLES

Harry Fisher won the (Grade 2) Coles Championship at Cheltenham played over three days in early May. Rain developed by the third day - but none of this bothered Fisher who got past Ed Duckworth with a TPO and TP the quarter-final and he produced two more TPs in his 3-1 semi-final win over Duncan Reeve. He met Mark Avery in the final, who had recorded two TPs against Jim Blenkinsop in his opening match, another in a 2-1 win over Peter Trimmer in the quarters, and then an untypical 'no-letters' 3-0 win over Christian Carter in his semi. The final was seemingly all Fisher, who accounted for Avery with a 26TP and 24TP show.

| **Sarah Hayes**

THE PEELS

A rescheduled 2021 Peels Memorial Tournament got under way on 20th May at Nottingham CC. After the 2020 event being cancelled due to the pandemic, this year's Peels were held with restrictions in place, and further club restrictions meant that there were only five courts available, due to the 'bowling green' courts being seeded in the autumn. This was the first CA Tournament to be held at Nottingham since both of the refurbished West and East pavilions had reopened. The tournament was plagued by numerous withdrawals in the weeks prior to the event, and even two withdrawals on the opening morning, before a ball had been hit; nevertheless,

visitors were welcomed from Downham, Eardisley, Kington Langley and as far afield as Edinburgh. Eleven couples contested the mixed doubles knockout, in which Roger & Debbie Watson beat Ian Vincent & Diana Plant +10 on time. Seven women contested the Women's Singles, and in an all-Nottingham final Cathy Turski beat Phillipine Hallam +2 on time. Fourteen contested the Men's Singles, which Roger Watson also won, beating Alex McIntyre +26. Silver Merit Awards were attained by Mike Hedge and Roger Watson, and after winning two of the fabulous Peels trophies, it was no surprise when the Tournament Handicapper, Ian Vincent cut Watson's handicap to 4.

| **Bob Thompson**



In the fashion of the times, Men's Singles winner Roger Watson (right) gets an elbow bump from runner-up Alex McIntyre

THE AC NATIONAL VETERANS

The National Veterans (over 65) Championship tournament started on Monday 21 June; the summer solstice and longest day, and a long day it certainly was for the competitors. In a preliminary round, of the main Doubles X & Y knockout the Tournament Director, Roger Mills, and the Tournament Manager Chris Donovan lost by 6 points to 4! However, as the rain greeted the players and continued throughout the day, it has to be said that not having to play again was an acceptable result.

Eight pairs then battled on playing two-hour 22 point games and ended up very wet playing on unplayable lawns. Jane Babbage (Budleigh) and Richard Williamson (Bristol) triumphed over Avril Rangoni-Machiavelli (Blewbury), and Alan Cottle in 'X' final and won the Sussex Trugs, while David Buckman and John Millen (both Canterbury) beat Erica Malaiperuman (Nailsea) and Jonathan Wolfe (Taunton Deane) in 'Y' final for Gilbert Spoons. The weather turned on Tuesday morning and for the rest of the week the conditions were almost ideal that persisted into the evening. Budleigh's superb lawns, maintained by Richard Quelch, gave little excuse for balls going off line.

The Handicap Singles were played in two blocks of six with a play-off on Thursday morning between David Buckman (Canterbury, 7) and Andre Machell (Watford, 6) which the former won convincingly 26 - 7 and took home the Meredith Trophy. Thursday afternoon saw the start of the Class play, but health problems and pre-event injuries bedevilled this event with three withdrawals. With one pre-start withdrawal, for which the manager was able to call in a friend to cover and two more withdrawals during the course of play of the handicap block, the manager is now really au fait with Tournament Regulations for incomplete blocks! Thankfully the correct result was

Chris Donovan in action
PHOTOGRAPH Chris Roberts



easily determined. Prize giving was 15 minutes late at 4.15pm but tea and cake were gently consumed as was an 'Otter' or two (Otter Ale is the highly recommended local brew - Ed). Glass-based prizes were offered for the most triple peels, a player's first triple peel and the fastest game but surprisingly there were no triple peels at all and the Tournament Manager presented himself with a bottle of Malbec for the fastest game at 1 hour 4 minutes. Best in **A Block** of 8 players (with handicaps between -1.5 to 1.5) was Paul Castell (Sussex County) won 6 out of 7 games and carried off the Rothwell Challenge Cup and winning the A Block also made him the highest placed aged over 75, so he also took the Alan Pidcock Trophy.

Once again there was a large entry of B Level handicappers but not enough time for two blocks to play off and the handicap block had to be taken into consideration to ensure it was tenable. Thus in a tight **B Block** (handicaps 2 to 3), the Tournament Manager, Chris Donovan, won 5 out of 6 games for the Felixstowe Cup.

In the **C Block** (handicaps 4 to 6), David Marcus (Sussex County), won 6 out of 7 games, a bottle of wine and a 'memento', a black enamel coated croquet figure made from nuts and bolts [Manager's note to self; must approach the CA for another trophy]. The **D Block** was won convincingly, despite the withdrawals by Kevin Wright (Auchincruive), visiting Budleigh for the first time and he took home the Strickland Cup. All the prizes were presented by Peter Nelson (Sidmouth) who is a South-West constituency elected Council Member. He emphasised the warm welcome received by all and the huge effort put in by John O'Gorman, the Budleigh Club chairman.

John is a novice Tournament Secretary and had also been setting hoops, putting out the balls and 'ball-wash buckets', taking food orders, and generally ensuring all went smoothly. Both Peter Nelson and Paul Castell noted the quality of the lawns and thanks were given to all the background workers without whom no tournament would function.

| **Chris Donovan, Manager**

MIDDLESEX WIN THE AC INTER-COUNTIES

	Division 1	Matches		Game
		Won	Lost	Wins
1	Middlesex	5	2	14
2	Surrey	5	2	14
3	Hertfordshire	5	2	14
4	Essex	5	2	13
5	Sussex	3	4	12
6	Glamorgan	3	4	7
7	Nottinghamshire	2	5	8
8	Suffolk	0	7	2

* Middlesex beat Surrey and Hertfordshire. Surrey beat Hertfordshire.

	Division 2	Matches		Game
		Won	Lost	Wins
1	Berkshire	5	2	14
2	Dorset	5	2	13
3	Hampshire	4	3	11
4	Yorkshire	4	3	10
5	Wiltshire	3	4	11
6	Kent	3	4	10
7	Shropshire	3	4	10
8	Warwickshire	1	6	5

* Kent beat Shropshire.

Middlesex won the AC Inter County Championship for the first time since 1980 and the 27th all time. Berkshire won the second division. Due to the pandemic, only 16 of the usual 22 counties competed so the event was run as two divisions of eight teams with no promotion/relegation. Teams were also reduced from six to four, each match had two singles and a doubles. The First Division ended in a four-way tie between Middlesex, Surrey, Hertfordshire and Essex, all on five match wins. Essex had won one game fewer than the others and since Middlesex had beaten both Surrey and Hertfordshire, they were deemed the winners. In the second division Berkshire and Dorset both had five match wins, but Berkshire were deemed winners with 14 game wins, compared with Dorset's 13.

Chris Williams

CONFESSIONS OF AN INTER-COUNTIES VIRGIN

It is always an honour to represent your county is, I am sure, the adage. Thus when contacted by my county of birth (Suffolk) in the form of Phil Eardley to check-out availability for the 2021 AC inter-counties, I jumped at the chance to join as an erstwhile number six/reserve.

As the event drew ever nearer, changes were afoot with teams reduced to four and for the first time the introduction of singles games. As time progressed more and more team members withdrew and I was elevated to player number two in the team. Undaunted by this prospect I arranged for team shirts to test out the quality of product from a company we were considering for England shirts.

And so the first day of the Tournament, Saturday 29 May, arrived and I duly set-out to join my team mates, our shirts in my car, sat nav engaged and an hour to spare according to the Google travel times. The journey was going well from Peterborough and over the Dartford Crossing with almost half an hour extra in hand but then the... roadworks and stationary traffic.

By the time the first games were meant to start, I was stationary less than five miles from Compton (Eastbourne). An hour later, I arrived feeling somewhat anxious at letting down the team.

My opponent Richard Smith (-2) had been told to start and my balls were deemed on court and he was running hoops. Gracefully he agreed to restart and we still finished ahead of schedule with Richard winning +24, but at least I had out-performed the deemed balls!

This was my first visit to Compton and I was struck by the wonderful surrounds and the



Suffolk team: David Wicks, Albie Willet, Phil Eardley and Paul Hetherington

vista of cricketers in play, and the lawns seemed good too because I had hit-in well but just wasted my opportunities.

Next up came my best chance handicap-wise against Paul Castell (a mere -0.5). This time I managed just the one hoop before going over to cheer on my colleagues, though there was little to cheer after all; our combined handicaps were more than 20 higher than most teams and more than ten higher than all but one other team. Day one ended with Suffolk managing one win from six games and myself a paltry three hoops.

We piled into two cars and headed to our B&B croquet hosts in Worthing, chez Marcus. It was gone 9pm by the time we set out for dinner so we went to the nearby Indian. There were only two other tables in use but despite this the service was slow and the highlight for hilarity of the meal undoubtedly the spinach paneer side-dish which had been made with cheddar rather than paneer (apparently to get paneer you had to ask for paneer because apparently the regulars prefer the cheddar - can that really be true of Worthing residents?).

Day two started well with a full English

breakfast and the full team kitted out in our Suffolk pink shirts. We bundled into one car and headed to Southwick. Again great lawns and also a great effort to provide food for all despite the restrictions and the nearby Co-op was a major beneficiary of the bar being closed, having sold out of beer by lunchtime on the Sunday. Southwick also provided a rare opportunity to meet in person with a few other members of the Executive Board.

I played two doubles and a singles game against Eugene Chang, Chairman of Marketing, who duly won +22, although I had started well and even held the lead for perhaps half an hour.

Both doubles were also resoundingly lost though I did at least get my ball round to 4-back playing with David Wicks (7) our number four.

Although Albie Willet and I hit-in well, we made little progress with the tight hoops in our doubles game, but at least we were pleased to share a court with Robert Fulford as he completed a sextuple.

...continued on page 29



ENGLAND WIN THE AC HOME INTERNATIONALS

England won the AC Home Internationals and a 2021 International Challenge event in glorious sunshine at East Dorset LTCC on the second weekend in June. With Ireland unable to send a team for the AC Home Internationals this year due to Covid-19 restrictions, the remaining home nations, together with a team of under-25s led by Ireland's Jane Morrison called 'The Bombardiers', competed for the 2021 International Challenge. The results of the matches between Scotland, England, and Wales decided the Home Internationals title this year and with Covid-19 having ravaged the croquet scene for over a year, this was the first international event since the AC World Championships in February 2020.

England v Scotland

The lawns showed some variability in pace, whilst initially firm hoops relented as matches wore on.

The England-Scotland match saw the top pair of Samir Patel and Duncan Reeve exchanging triple peels, with the last of these by Patel in a losing cause.

The second pair of Maugham and Murray was a scrappier affair, but with Murray taking that 2-0, Scotland had a scent of victory against the Auld Enemy.

However England's strength in depth (their no. 4 Mark Suter has a handicap of -2.5) proved too much, and the last three saw off

their Scottish opponents without conceding a game.

Wales v Bombardiers

Wales narrowly overcame the Bombardiers, with creditable wins for Callum Johnson and Aston Wade over their Welsh counterparts Chris Williams and Tudor Jenkins respectively, but with wins from top two players for Ian Burrige and Angharrad Walters, the match was decided by a tense 2-1 win for Rich Waterman of Wales over Jane Morrison, the Bombardiers' Irish captain.

England v Bombardiers

Wales v Scotland

England made lighter work in their test against the Bombardiers, dropping just a single game, albeit with two matches not completed, whilst just enough results in the Scotland versus Wales clash were reached to give the latter victory.

Scotland v Bombardiers

England v Wales

The final round of matches saw a hard-fought victory for Scotland over the Bombardiers, whilst England sealed victory for both events with their top four all scoring match wins against Wales.

The weather, hospitality, and creditable performances from the U25 players in the Bombardiers team ensured a memorable return for international croquet.

East Dorset LTCC and Samir Patel, as manager

England
David Maugham (captain)
Dominic Nunn
Nick Parish
Samir Patel
Mark Suter

Wales
Ian Burrige (captain)
Tudor Jenkins
Angharrad Walters
Rich Waterman
Chris Williams

Scotland
Alastair Burn-Murdoch
Chris Coull
Sam Murray
Duncan Reeve (captain)
David Warhurst

The Bombardiers
James Galpin
Daniel Gott
Callum Johnson
Jane Morrison (captain)
Aston Wade

of the event, were duly thanked for their hard work in ensuring a successful weekend.

Sam Murray

PHOTOGRAPHS Samir Patel



Aston Wade



Nick Parish



Chris Coull



Rich Waterman

DEBUTANT WADE WINS



Sussex County CC again played host to the GC Open and provided courts in the now-expected excellent condition despite having heavy rainfall in the preceding days. The pandemic was no doubt to blame for the fact that the field was three short of the normal 32.

8 players under 30

However, on the plus side, there were no fewer than eight aged under 30 with Aston Wade and Euan Burrridge still in their teens. The players were divided into four all-play-all blocks with the top four qualifying for the knock-out stage. Reg Bamford had missed the 2020 event owing to quarantine restrictions and was back to regain the title that he and Stephen Mulliner had kept to themselves for 20 years despite the best efforts of John-Paul Moberly and others to end the duopoly.



Block play

Block A was headed by Bamford and Euan Burrridge. Burrridge took the middle game in their block match and was otherwise undefeated, playing in his usual high-powered style which sometimes led to breaks in play to retrieve lost balls! Bamford and Burrridge were first and second qualifiers for the knock-out. Jonathan Claxton, a Dulwich member, took up GC in September 2019 and qualified for the knock-out comfortably with an impressive four wins from his six matches, including a 2-0 win against Lionel Tibble. The latter was the only other player to take a game off Bamford and he became the fourth qualifier. John-Paul Moberly, the England captain, looked to be in impressive form in Block B which he won undefeated, dropping just one game to Richard Bilton. Bilton survived tough battles with Tim Jolliff and Morgan Case and finished second with 4/5 (Robert Clark sadly had had to withdraw with a painful back). Tim Jolliff was a clear third with 3/5 and a play-off led to Andrew Hobbs getting the other qualifying spot. Block C was won by an undefeated Ian Burrridge with Rachel Gee in second place. Stuart M Smith had displayed great giant-killing skills in the 2020 block stage but had a tougher time this year yet qualified comfortably behind Roehampton's Tim Russell who won four tight matches for third place. 18-year-old Aston Wade stole the show in Block D with six impressive wins, with straight hitting, good medium-range hooping and

sensible tactics. He calmly recovered from 4-6 and 5-6 down in his games against Stephen Mulliner, who does not often fail to convert such leads. Mulliner also lost to Steve Leonard in three games but ended up with 4/6 and in second place with better net games than either Leonard or Ryan Cabble. The latter was making a welcome return to the GC Opens and showing much improved form; he was fourth qualifier behind Leonard.

Semi-surprise as Ian Burrridge exits early

The knock-out stage, First round, produced only one semi-surprise in the defeat of an in-form Ian Burrridge by the ever-determined Leonard 7-4, 4-7, 7-4. However, Mulliner and Euan Burrridge had to battle over three games to get past Jonathan Claxton and Tim Russell, the Burrridge v Russell encounter being a full-value 7-6, 6-7, 7-6 result. The other ties went as expected with Bamford, Bilton, Wade, Gee and Moberly all progressing to the quarter-finals in straight games.

Bilton and Wade cause major upsets in the quarters

Life became more interesting in the quarter-finals. When at his best Bilton is a match for anyone and he accounted for Bamford 7-5, 7-5 with a blizzard of five-yard hoops. This was the first shock result. Wade is a very well-mannered young man but Gee might be forgiven for wondering as she was despatched 7-5, 7-0, and this was certainly another shock result. Moberly and Euan Burrridge traded high-speed clearances but the England captain

THE GC BRITISH OPEN!



always had the edge and won 7-5, 7-3. Mulliner and Leonard were the last to finish with Mulliner grinding out a 7-5, 5-7, 7-2 victory.

Moberly finally ends the Mulliner / Bamford duopoly

Moberly started his semi-final against Mulliner in awesome shooting form and swiftly won the first game 7-4. Mulliner changed styles to respond to the barrage with some success and a precision block from the east boundary at hoop 11, when at 5-5, enabled him to take the second game 7-6. Moberly profited from a failed block attempt at hoop 5 in game 3 and went on to lead 6-4. Mulliner took on a boundary shot at hoop 11 and ran it in fine style to just short of the peg to get back to 6-5, but he just missed the seven yarder at hoop 12 and Moberly was through to his fourth final in five years. The Bamford / Mulliner hegemony was finally over!

Wade continues his impressive run

In the other semi-final, Wade continued to

impress by taking the first game against Bilton by a comfortable 7-3. However, Bilton responded by taking a tight second game 7-6 and it was all to play for in the third. Nonetheless, Aston continued his calm and accurate game and took the third 7-4. It was already an extraordinary performance by someone who, albeit with some earlier AC experience, had played his first ranked GC event in August 2020.

THE FINAL

John-Paul Moberly v Aston Wade

If there were any bookies at Southwick, they would have been offering short odds on Moberly – given his experience, temperament and firepower – being fifth time lucky and finally getting his name on the Open trophy. However, the opponent always has a say! Game 1 began with Moberly winning the toss and playing Blue to four feet dead in front of hoop 1 but Wade promptly middled the 21-yard clearance. Game on! Moberly built a 5-3 lead but was pulled back to 5-5 and, after Wade nailed the

clearance at hoop 11 with his Yellow ending four yards north of hoop 12, Moberly missed the half-court return and found himself 6-5 down. Wade went for the 7-5 win with Yellow but glued it to the east upright. With Moberly in good jumping position, Wade's next stroke with Yellow was a very mature play away, leaving the hoop for Blue but ensuring that Yellow could play to 13. Moberly duly took hoop 12 but, after Wade had played Red to four yards north of hoop 13, missed twice and Wade ran 13 cleanly to lead 1-0. Moberly responded by dominating game 2 almost from start to finish, reaching 5-1 and taking the game 7-3.

What now? Wade quickly led 2-0 but Moberly ran hoop 3 with Blue for 2-1 and stopped three yards north of hoop 4. The response from Wade was to run hoop 4 from 22 yards! 3-1 to Wade. The next two hoops were shared (4-2) and hoop 7 became a battleground, with four rotations before it was resolved by successive boundary attempts – with Moberly failing and Wade succeeding, for a 5-2 lead. Moberly took hoop 8 for 5-3 but Wade always had the upper hand at hoop 9 and eventually ran it smoothly from the boundary for 6-3 and one hand on the trophy, perhaps? But others have failed to convert from this position, so what would he do? The answer was simple. Moberly played Blue to 4 yards south of 10; Wade then took on a 15-yard hoop with Red – and ran it, barely touching a wire, for game, match and title!

This was an extraordinarily mature and impressive performance by a young player in his first Open Championship playing one of the best players in the world.
Stephen Mulliner

Wade's rate of improvement has been simply phenomenal, with his grade rising from 1,650 to 2,358 in less than a year and one can only wonder what might lie ahead. With Wade and Euan Burrridge improving so fast, England's prospects for the next Golf Croquet World Team Championship now look distinctly hopeful. The Bowl event was played as a block of six followed by a final in which Lionel Tibble came from behind to defeat Tim Jolliff 5-7, 7-6, 7-5. Richard Brooks won the Plate final with a 7-3, 2-7, 7-3 victory over Robin Wootton. Southwick's welcome and catering was as good as the courts and warmly acknowledged by the players and spectators.

Stephen Mulliner

Clockwise: Stephen Mulliner passing on the Open trophy to the new champion Aston Wade; Open Champion Aston Wade; Lining one up - J-P Moberly. PHOTOGRAPHS Stephen Custance-Baker and Chris Roberts.



GEE WINS RE-STYLED GC WOMEN'S OPEN CHAMPIONSHIP

PHOTOGRAPH, Mother & Daughter, Judith Rowe & Rachel Gee; Below Rachel Gee

Rachel Gee won the inauguration event of the newly-styled Golf Croquet Women's Open Championship, now awarded the high Grade 2 Championship status by the CA. She started as red-hot favourite, of course, and didn't disappoint, running through the three-day tournament without dropping a game, to further extend her already remarkable unbeaten record of 30 ranking games coming into this Championship. Some late withdrawals taxed the management's skill in sticking to the stated aim of replicating the British Open Championship as far as possible, with a full 'best of three games' format throughout, whilst a quality field, which included Scotland international Lorna Dewar and former MacRobertson Shield (AC World Team Championship) player Debbie Lines, remained impressive for this inaugural event. Multiple revisions of the playing format were planned as the participation numbers fluctuated (with a disappointing 10 withdrawals in total) and finally a 'two blocks of seven players' arrangement ('Red' and 'Blue' blocks) for the reduced field of 14 was scheduled, with 'X' games provided for those with long sit-outs that unpredictable 'best of threes' inevitably produce.

The Blocks, Day 1

The first round of the block games pitted Gee (Ashby, handicap -4) versus her mother Judith Rowe (Ashby, 7), and although Gee,



the former Women's World Champion, took that unusual challenge easily in her stride, the four hoops that Judith did score had the distinction of being the most that her daughter conceded during the whole tournament!

Celeste Gee (Ealing, 8) succumbed to an existing ankle injury after one match and her withdrawal reduced the Red block to six but did little to move things along as the early two-game matches gave way to a string of matches that went to a third game decider. It seemed that Michelle Leonard (Winterborne Valley, 3) was involved in most of these while Rowe had the longest waits on a tough opening day that saw four rounds completed, but not until 19.15. Sophie McGlen (Nottingham, 2) had the shot of the day that really must be recorded at this point for the sake of the feat, made all the more remarkable because it was achieved in only her seventh ever GC match. She scored hoop 5 with a jump (not an overused skill in her more familiar AC career), managed somehow to miss the centre peg (which was correctly positioned – it was checked) and also ran hoop 6! Sophie had only entered this Championship thanks to a lucky conversation at the Mary Rose Final (where she was pictured in a bobble hat for the front page of the last Gazette), and a hasty AC to GC learning exercise at Phyllis Court with Frances Colman and Chris Roberts three weeks before this tournament had revealed that this very straight hitter could go far in this as yet unfamiliar game.

The Blocks Day 2 – Clear winners but a scramble for the other qualifying places
Cathy Turski (Nottingham, 4) was another

injury drop-out on the morning of day 2, by the end of which it was clear that the Day 1 whip-cracking by manager Colman had been a wise move, when both blocks needed play-offs to determine one third- and two fourth-placed qualifiers for the championship knock-out on Day 3.

Gee qualified with ease from the Blue block, undefeated, along with Leonard, who did it the hard way by going to a deciding game in three matches, while Andrea Huxley (Guildford, 1), Ann Brookes (Colchester, 1) and surprise package Lynne Percy (Roehampton, 2) had to play off for the remaining two places. The Red block was rather more straightforward, with Dewar (unattached, -1) mirroring Gee's undefeated show, topping the table to qualify, along with Lines (unattached, -1) and Glynis Davies (Northampton, 3) both on three match wins.

Davies had done well to beat the seedings to finish in second place on net hoops and Jane Pringle (Auckland, 1) was unfortunate to go into the play-off for the fourth qualifying place after recording an upset win over Lines.

The play-offs

The Red block play-off pitted McGlen against Pringle, and just like their deciding block game it went to the 13th hoop, with the former looking for a repeat of the earlier result, and she achieved it after a degree of interactive drama.

Meanwhile, the Blue block had three players chasing two places and Percy sneaked past Brookes 7-6 to claim the first one, before

Brookes then had to beat Huxley twice, 7-4, 7-4, to claim the other. Huxley had carried an injury all tournament and deserves much praise for soldiering on to this point before understandably calling it a day.

The Plate Final – Manning v Rowe

A full 'best of three games' match was very well contested between the only other players left standing, Marian Manning and Judith Rowe, who had both grown in confidence as the tournament had progressed.

Rowe took the first game 7-3 while Manning reversed that score line in game 2 to set up a deciding game after lunch; this Rowe took 7-5, winning the Plate and a deserved handicap reduction to 6.

Quarter and semi-finals

Gee brushed aside McGlen 7-1, 7-3 but Leonard took three games (of course) to defeat Davies 6-7, 7-6, 7-5. Davies had had a super tournament, as did Leonard, with the latter reducing her handicap from 3 to 2.

Dewar survived a real scare when she dropped her first game to Brookes and went to hoop 13 in the second game before recovering to get home 5-7, 7-6, 7-5.

The shock result was in the Percy v Lines tie however when the former scored a terrific 7-1 first game to establish a momentum and then followed that with a close 7-6 win.

Percy took this confidence into her semi with Gee, was cock-a-hoop to have got that

far and enjoyed the experience for playing Gee, despite the 7-4, 7-2 score lines. Dewar recovered from her tough quarter and despatched the understandably tired Leonard 7-4, 7-3.

THE FINAL

Rachel Gee v Lorna Dewar

The remaining players chose not to pursue the bowl event (for positions 5 to 8) beyond its semi-final stage nor to play the 3rd/4th play-off match, but instead settled back to watch the Championship Final which, thanks to Dewar's qualification, now had an international flavour.

Dewar contested most of the hoops but was let down by her scoring strokes, which was a shame given that she had looked so assured throughout the tournament.

On the other hand, Gee was machine-like and she punished Dewar's errors savagely on her way to a 7-2, 7-2 victory.

The presentations were of course a 'Family Affair', with the silverware, a brand-new Cup and Plate, going to daughter and mother respectively, and proceedings ended with a plea from Director/Manager Frances Colman and winner Rachel Gee to make this tournament grow by 'selling it' to all competitive women players.

Director Frances Colman reports from Nottingham CC

PHOTOGRAPHS Chris Roberts



Lorna Dewar



Debbie Lines



Sophie McGlen refereed by Frances Colman



Andrea Huxley

THE GC CHAMPIONSHIP SERIES

The English National Singles Championship (ENSC, for the Ascot Cup) sits at the top of a hierarchy of season-long GC competitions that group together certain tournaments of a similar grade. This year, two of the early ENSC tournaments, at Sidmouth and Colchester, had to be cancelled but with the late addition of the Dorset GC Open there are seven qualifying tournaments in this year's ENSC Series. The Final will be held at Hunstanton

on 18-19 September and all the qualifying tournaments in the ENSC Series are open 'Championships' and attract strong fields. The winners and runners-up of each event qualify for the Final directly, whilst losing semi-finalists are placed in a 'pot' from which they are called up in ranking order to fill vacancies in the Final. The first two tournaments were held at Cheltenham (30-31 May) and Ramsgate (12-13 June); won by Rachel Gee and Tobi Savage

respectively, with Richard Bilton and Robert Fulford claiming runner-up. The remaining qualifying tournaments are

- The National Forest GC Champ (Ashby CC)
- The Nottingham GC Championship
- The Lancashire International Open GC Championship (Pendle & Craven CC)
- The Dorset Open GC Champs (E.Dorset CC)
- The Hunstanton GC Championship.

Reports will be in the next issue.

| Jonathan Powe, Director ENSC

GEE WINS CHELTENHAM CHAMPIONSHIP

Rachel Gee won the Cheltenham Championship tournament in early June, without dropping a single game! Once again, this tournament was fully subscribed, with 32 eager players able to make the best of an enjoyable weekend. Despite the large field, Manager Ivor Brand was only able to take eight through to knock-out stage, due to the requirement of the regulations to have multi-game matches

in Championship knock-outs which made the scheduling of more than three rounds ('best of three' games) unworkable in the time available. With four blocks of 8, just the top 2 to qualify, slip-ups were going to be costly. Unfortunately for the manager, he was one of those that finished in a third place and so missed out of the main knock-out.

Dealing with a large field
Two late withdrawals were replaced with reserves and four

blocks were reseeded. The format was to put together players finishing in block positions 3 and 4 into another block for positions 9-16 and so on down the blocks. Therefore, it was important to keep the numbers in the blocks even so as to avoid any byes. Unfortunately, another player dropped out on the day before and David Magee stepped in to play the morning before returning to catering duties, then young Harvey Smith, who was having some coaching at the club, had been recruited! All sorted if Raouf Allim hadn't had to retire back to Oxfordshire with a recurrence of his bad back, mid-morning, but young Sam Cuthbert, also having coaching, played the remaining games.

Day 1 - Blocks

Rachel Gee swept all aside in block A, where young Eleanor Ross from New Zealand was a good runner-up. Block B saw Ian Burrigge also progress undefeated, with Steve Leonard runner-up ahead of Richard Brand on net points. Richard Bilton turned the undefeated trick in block C to qualify along with young Jack Good, and, in block D, Lionel Tibble marched through as winner but the runner-up spot was taken by Richard Brooks from Simon Carter by a single net point!

Day 2 - Quarter and Semi-finals

The second day saw the top four seeded players left all progress to the semi-finals, albeit with a couple of scares when Good and Leonard each took a game off Burrigge and Bilton respectively, while Gee and Tibble got past Brooks and Ross in straight games. The vanquished quarter finalists played out a tight 'Bowl' block

in which everyone took games off each other, finally resulting in Ross winning the block on net points from Leonard. Gee was on a roll by now and she beat Tibble 7-5, 7-5 in the first semi-final to earn a rest before the final, while the other semi, an all-Nottingham affair between Bilton and Burrigge, went to a deciding third game, with Bilton eventually prevailing 7-3, 5-7, 7-4.

Final

An expectant gallery of fellow players gathered to watch a display of hard hitting and smooth hoop running give Gee the first game 7-4, whilst, on an adjacent court, Burrigge secured a deserved third place podium finish with a tight 7-6 win over Tibble. The second game of the final saw Bilton start strongly to establish a 2-0 lead, only to be pegged back to 3-3 by Gee. At this point, bad luck struck for Bilton when he had a ball set up at hoop 7, only to cut-rush Gee's ball (heading for M5 motorway!) into the hoop jaws, giving her that hoop and the next. Richard Bilton scored hoop 9 for 5-4 to set up another critical point in the game that saw Gee taking more time than usual to make a decision to clear Bilton to the middle of the north boundary or take on hoop 10 from 7 yards. Eventually, she backed herself with the hoop shot, scored – and the trophy loomed at 6-4 up. Bilton took hoop 11 at his normal pace and finished on the south boundary! Gee then played a near perfect wired ball down to 12 leaving only half a ball available for Bilton to shoot at. He hit the hoop leg and Gee scored for 7-5 and the Championship.

| Jonathan Powe



TOBI SAVAGE RETAINS THE RAMSGATE CHAMPIONSHIP

Tobi Savage retained his Ramsgate Open Championship title in glorious weather over the weekend of 12-13 June. He beat a tough field that included five England internationals, two of whom, Stephen Mulliner and Robert Fulford, are former AC World Champions. Savage won all his block games, dropped only one in the Championship knock-out, and won the final against Fulford in straight games. The first day was scheduled for the block stage, and resulted in Euan Burrigge topping Block 1, ahead of Mulliner, Lionel Tibble and Tony Butcher, who also progressed to the knock-out phase. In Block 2, Savage was top with Fulford, Charlie Martin and Andrew Hobbs (South Africa) also qualifying. With a fairly early finish of the blocks and in perfect conditions, it was agreed to start the knock-out that evening.

'Epic' Charlie Martin eliminates Stephen Mulliner

There was an epic quarter-finals performance from local "lad" Charlie Martin, who is ranked 200 places lower than UK number 2, Mulliner, yet he beat the former AC World Champion in two straight games, 7-5, 7-5. The other quarters went comfortably the way of the top seeds; Burrigge beat Hobbs 7-5, 7-2, Fulford beat Tibble 7-3, 7-4 and Savage ended Butcher's run 7-3, 7-2. The second day provided a double round-robin block for the losing quarter-finalists and Plate event for those that had missed the cut for the main knock-out.

- continued on page 29

THE GC OPEN SERIES

The Budleigh Salterton Open Series tournament was won by **Stuart M Smith** (Sidmouth), pictured, in mid-May, beating rising star Aston Wade (Hamptworth) 2-1 in truly awful weather on Sunday. Despite the horizontal rain and biting wind, it was a high-quality final in which Smith was in the back seat for much of the first game but recovered from 3-6 to win at hoop 13. Wade took the second game 7-3, with a strong display of hoop-running from distance and confident clearances, but it was Smith who held his nerve in the final game, winning 7-5. Third position went to Chris Roberts (Phyllis Court) who beat Steve Leonard (Winterborne Valley) 7-3, 7-5 in their best-of-three play-off, and Colin Britt (Camerton & Peasedown) won the Plate (and three bottles of local ale) with a run of six straight wins. Budleigh's courts were in fabulous condition with great hospitality. Particular thanks are due to John O'Gorman for all his help over the 2 days.

| Jonathan Powe

semi-finals were both strongly contested by the best players on view as Archer beat Bell and Roberts overcame Russell in three long games. In the Final, Archer took the first game against Roberts 7-3, the latter still feeling the effects of his semi-final tussle. In the second game, although Roberts rallied and led for a while, Archer won game, and title, at the 12th hoop. The Plate was keenly fought out over five rounds of games with Tony Butcher (Southend) beating Chris Heath (Guildford) in the play-off.

| Richard Keighley

Sadly the **Pendle Open**, the northern most outpost of the Open Series, was not well supported and this left organiser Paul Rigge no choice but to cancel the mid-June tournament.

However, down south, the mid-week **Woking Open Series** tournament just two days later was at its full 16-player complement and was managed superbly by Bernard Jones. This popular and longstanding fixture in the GC calendar was played as an all-play-all format with a hefty eight-game schedule on the Monday. We were blessed with hot, sunny weather which contrasted with the 2019 event which was rained off. Richard Brooks led the charge, beating **Simon Carter** to emerge as the leader at the end of day one with the latter chasing his tail. As is often the case, the event was not decided until the penultimate round, where Brooks faltered and Carter edged ahead to win the tournament for the second time, exactly a decade after his first. Richard Brooks was runner up. Thanks were given to Bernard and the catering team for a thoroughly enjoyable event.

| Simon Carter



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Michael Percival
07780 677943
michael@croquetmallets.co.uk

RESULTS REPORTING FOR THE RANKINGS

The 2021 Tournament Regulations now include in the duties of a Tournament Manager (M1(h)) a requirement for the results of a tournament to be submitted as soon as possible after the event in the correct order and in the required layout and format. CA website describes the best format for sending in results (note the AC & GC formats are different) and who to send them to. For Rankings page visit: Home > Compete > Reporting Results. Online readers: <https://www.croquet.org.uk/?p=tournament/reporting>

In particular it should be noted that

1. CroquetScores.com will automatically format results in the preferred manner and it is preferred if Managers use it. It also means that progress of the tournament can be viewed by anyone not present at the event.
2. GC results must be sent in a specific format in an Excel spreadsheet, whereas the AC results preferred format is plain text.
3. AC and GC level-play games in the CA's domain should be sent to: results@croquet.org.uk for inclusion in the rankings. Results from outside the domain should be sent to: acresults@worldcroquet.org or: gcresults@worldcroquet.org

News style tournament reports should be sent to: news@croquet.org.uk as before. The end recipients of the 'results' and 'news' email addresses are different, so, the correct one should always be used to guarantee that the right people get the right message. Please don't rely on results within a news email getting to the Ranking Officers. In conclusion For Results, visit: results@croquet.org.uk For News reports and photos, visit: news@croquet.org.uk.

Chris Williams,
National Rankings Officer (AC)
Richard Bilton,
National Rankings Officer (GC)



Maggie Crossland (Sheffield) lines up a peel at the Yorkshire SC tournament in May

THE BIG SHORT CROQUET WEEKEND

The 18-19 September is The Big Weekend for Short Croquet (SC). While the National SC Inter-Club Competition finals will be taking place at Bowdon CC, the Viking Challenge, the longest-established SC event in the Fixtures Calendar, will be at York CC. A full house of 24 players is expected, so whether or not your club is in the national finals, this is the weekend to put in your diary.

Federations representatives

As other Federations are finalising which club will represent them in the National SC Inter-Club final, Bowdon already know they will be on home turf flying the flag for the North-West. The East Midlands Federation, which is keen to develop SC as part of its plans for revitalising AC, has handicapping of recent SC converts underway, and has encouraged as wide an entry as possible for a SC knockout at Nottingham in early July. The Yorkshire Federation went for a SC day tournament as a decider and York narrowly beat Beverley & East Riding to earn the national final place. SC is also alive and well in the South and South-West. Blewbury's first one-day SC tournament in May was fully subscribed featuring ten players with a wide range of handicaps from two Federations and four clubs. A similar tournament in August filled-up.

How to turn one court into two

Any full-sized court can easily do double duty by setting it up with both full AC and SC half court hoop positions, plus the addition of a white line or string down the middle. In practice the extra holes have no impact on play of the other game and of course half courts double court capacity for well-used facilities. Starting with a full size court of 35 yards by 28 yards, fix marker pegs (or perhaps bisque sticks) along the short North and South boundaries using these measurements: 15' 24' 42' 60' 69'

Then measure down between the north and south marker pegs using these measurements and keeping hoops parallel to the tape measure, push a hoop or centre peg into each location just deep enough to stand up: On line a: measure 12', 40'6", 64'6" and 93' for two corner hoops on each SC lawn. On line b: measure 26'3" and 78'9" for each SC hoop 5. On line c: measure 26'3" and 78'9" for the two SC centre pegs. On line d: measure 26'3" and 78'9" for each SC hoop 6. On line e: measure 12', 40'6", 64'6" and 93' for the four remaining SC corner hoops. Set the hoops firmly as usual – job done! This one-off the procedure takes little more than an hour and provides two half-size courts for SC, whilst also giving the option for doubling a clubs capacity for AC and GC.

John Harris, York CC
PHOTOGRAPH John Harris.

SUNSET ON NEEN FOR A YEAR THE NENE/NENE CHALLENGE



PHOTOGRAPHS The South-West News Service



Peterborough and Northampton Croquet Clubs faced off in the grudge match of the year for naming rights for the River Nene. Peterborough and Northampton have always had a friendly rivalry both sitting on the river Nene but both pronouncing it differently - Northampton 'Nen' or Peterborough 'Neen'. How better to settle such controversy than in the gladiatorial arena of sport. Northampton ran out worthy winners seven games to two, although in fact Peterborough scored 55% of the total hoops run on the day and had the satisfaction of seeing success in the battle of the captains. As a result Northampton took home the trophy, a picture of the sun setting over the Nene, and for one year at least it will be sunset on the name Neen.

Paul Hetherington, Peterborough Club Secretary said. *"This local challenge was a great way to celebrate a new season of croquet and a chance to forge new friendships along the river."* Paul Chard, Northampton Club Chairman responded. *"Our team pulled out all the stops to win the match and then the two teams mingled in friendly competition. It was a great day with fine weather."*

But the biggest winner on the day was croquet with great publicity for the game with the story featured in Times, Telegraph, Mail and Sun, on Radios 4 and 2 and even on national TV via Have I Got News for You. There was of course also a lot of local media coverage for the match and certainly Peterborough CC has benefited from a surge of new members eager to win back the river's name and a new found purpose for the Golf Croquet players who have entered as a team in the local league.

Paul Hetherington, Peterborough CC

CROQUET THANKS NHS AND



It has been an odd year for recruitment. Some clubs have been almost inundated with people wanting to 'social distance' on a croquet court, whilst other clubs have had their usual recruitment pattern frozen. Readers may recall that in the February issue, I mentioned joining in with National Heritage Days which is not only going to publicise croquet locally but will also feature in the National Trusts UK brochure. Perhaps some croquet clubs, with an interesting history, have now approached their Heritage Open Days organisation as a result, I do hope so.

FRONT LINE CARE WORKERS

A day of thanks for medical staff
For some ideas I thought why not organise a day of thanks for NHS and other front line workers. Most croquet clubs are ideal venues for a spot of relaxing "R & R" for hard working medical staff. So off I set with an invitation to visit my club, Cheltenham CC, at the end of June and our committee was also persuaded to invest in a 'thank you' flag and banner. Penetrating the inner workings of the health service can be a maze like experience but eventually I found my

way to the NHS Fundraising Team, the head of which informed me that it was a delightful idea which was likely to be well received. She promised that our invitation poster will be displayed on every ward in the two main Gloucestershire hospitals and also she will send the invitation around on their internal e-newsletter. The idea is beginning to take off and I have already been asked about Paramedics, Fire Fighters and Care Workers.

Paramedics, Fire Fighters and Care Workers
Most of us have been "jabbed" at our Fire Station

and they took some posters, and I dropped some off at my GP practice too. I did not want to neglect the mental health side of things and, fortunately, we have a retired consultant psychiatrist among our membership who is taking some posters too. Club members are currently being recruited to provide refreshments, car parking and croquet an insider tells me that medics will devour cake at every opportunity! I am sure that we will also take the opportunity to sneak in our pamphlet on beginners coaching at some point.

Klim Seabright, Cheltenham CC

OBITUARIES

REX HALE 1929 - 2021



In the late 1990s and early 2000s the Stony Stratford Croquet Club survived thanks to Rex Hale and a small group of other croquet enthusiasts. With limited resources, facilities and finances it was no easy job to ensure the clubs survival and subsequent growth. Around 2005, the Club offered a coaching course through the Milton Keynes Adult Education Programme and it was Rex who ran it with novices in their 50s/60s learning a new game. It is a reflection on Rex's teaching, inspiration and enthusiasm that three of those who joined the club through that experience, went on to be part of the team, with Rex, that won the EACF Handicap League in 2011. These three are still longstanding members of the Club committee and, along with many other more recent members, owe their love of the game to Rex's influence. Rex played in many EACF regional competitions and was well known for his very strong Solomon Grip and casting before he played his stroke. He enjoyed both GC and AC, and was always happy to pass on tips to people new to both games. Rex was Club Treasurer for many years and a very active club member, but had recently been unable to play for a while. In his 90s he had moved to a retirement home less than two hundred yards from the Club and he was regularly seen during the summer months arriving on his mobility scooter. You could tell that he was itching to join in and play, wanting a chance to demonstrate those silky skills. Rex was made a Life Member of the Club in 2019 in recognition of all the things he had done for the Club over the years.

Roy Healey, on behalf of
Stony Stratford Croquet Club

JOLYON KAY 1930 - 2021

Croquet said goodbye to one of its most endearing globetrotters when Jolyon Kay died on 27 January 2021. He is buried in the cemetery alongside Blewbury Croquet Club, his passion since he founded it in 1992. He was at school at Charterhouse and then graduated with honours in chemical engineering from St John's College, Cambridge. Shirley, his wife of 64 years, was a modern languages student at the same time. Jolyon spent a decade in the UK chemical engineering industry. In 1958, he started working at the Harwell Atomic Energy Research Establishment a job that introduced him to neighbouring Blewbury. The Kays bought Treble House, the first of five homes they owned in the village, and settled down to raise their four children. With his colleague, the late Mike Duck, he established the Harwell Croquet Club. In the early 1960s, he joined the Foreign Office. His first assignment was at MECAS (Middle East Centre for Arab Studies) in Lebanon where he learned Arabic and studied regional affairs. One of his early postings in a 30-year 'striped trouser' career was Economic Counsellor in Saudi Arabia (1974-1977). He enjoyed the variety of his new life: a visit to the King one day, helping a British tourist with a lost passport the next, prepping a businessman for a big contract, telling him who and how much he'd need to bribe to win it. Wherever he went, the genial diplomat with the mallet established impromptu croquet courts: colleagues and locals loved the games he devised in Jeddah, Casablanca and Dubai. In England for summer breaks, he revisited Blewbury, competing in croquet tournaments until he became 'one of the better players in the region'.



Why not a club of his own? Once committed, Jolyon was not a man to be denied. From small beginnings in 1993, when he announced his project in the Blewbury Bulletin, to the grand opening of two expertly laid courts and a clubhouse on Tickers Folly Field on 31 May, 2003, he worked tirelessly to raise funds and sustain momentum. By using professionals to pitch to Sport England, Blewbury CC received £42,000 under the Capital Grant Scheme, the largest award to any croquet organisation in recognition of a start-up's value to the community. 'Not bad for a Victorian pastime with a somewhat crusty image', he mused. With Blewbury CC up and running, and after time as Chairman of the Southern Croquet Federation, Jolyon served as Coaching Officer, using his Grade 1 coaching qualification to run courses for club members and juniors; he took a turn on the CA Council from 2001-2006, serving as Southern Regional Representative, and as Chairman of the CA International Committee from 2003-2004. In 2003, the year Blewbury's newly built courts were opened with John Solomon in attendance, Jolyon was awarded the CA Diploma for outstanding services to croquet. Over the last 30 years, he spent much of his time in Anogyra near Limassol in Cyprus. Shirley was a Middle Eastern archaeologist and a prolific writer: the latest of 16 books, Olives and Lemons, analysed the changes in the village over those decades. In September, Jolyon enjoyed his 90th birthday celebrations with his wife and their granddaughter, Saffron, but returned to Blewbury after Shirley was buried under Cypriot skies two months later. Perhaps remembering his production of T.S.Eliot's Murder in the Cathedral for the Blewbury Players in St Michael's Church, he rented the house across the road. On warmer December days, the nonagenarian sat outside at noon, mulled wine in hand, to catch up with old friends. Now, in the words of his daughter, Gigi, 'we are all pleased to think of him buried beside the Blewbury Croquet Club, smiling benignly whenever he sees the residents enjoying the club into which he put so much love and passion and energy'.

Minty Clinch
PHOTOGRAPH Blewbury Chairman Bernardine Shirley-Smith, WFC President Tony Hall OBE, Jolyon Kay, at Blewbury in 2002, all hoping the new grass will grow.



After more than a year of lockdown restrictions, High Wycombe Croquet Club, picked up their mallets and staged a 24-hour Midsummer Madness Croquet Marathon in aid of a local charity. Starting at noon on Saturday 19 June, players kept the balls rolling and mallets swinging until noon on Sunday. With minimal light and glow necklaces strapped to each hoop, they played through the night, with the challenging task of keeping track of

their balls "The bad news was that no one else had a clue where the black ball was, so we couldn't hit it away," exclaimed a red ball player at 2am! There was also a serious side to the fun though, explained High Wycombe Chairman, Richard Peperell (he of the loud jacket):

We asked each player to seek sponsorship to raise funds and hope to exceed £3,500. Half the money will go to club funds, which lost out



during last year, and the other half is being donated to a Buckinghamshire charity for homeless people, the Wycombe Homeless Connection. In that way, we have been able to support that charity's great work, celebrate a great sport that is accessible to young and old, and have some really good fun.

It was a particular pleasure to welcome the President of the Croquet Association, Quiller Barrett (picture above with the blue scarf), to start the event, playing the first session in traditional whites. It was then left to members to battle away in less formal attire, including one member, James Gammon, wearing a jacket bedecked with fairy lights for night play! 179 hoops were scored over the 24 hours and the blue ran the most!

Mark Higgins, organiser, High Wycombe CC
PHOTOGRAPHS Phillip Laybourne

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.

RECENT COACHING QUALIFICATIONS

There are people out there who have been busy working towards either putting a foot onto the coaching ladder or upgrading to become qualified coaches. Well done to all and many happy coaching years ahead!

GOLF CROQUET - Grade 1

Derek Blow Nottingham CC
Mike Huxley Guildford & God. CC
Cathy Turski Nottingham CC

ASSOCIATION CROQUET - Grade 1

Viv Staley Nottingham CC

Club Level Coaches

Rhona Foster Cornwall CC
David Enticknap Bristol CC
Gill Hindshaw Moreton in Marsh CC
Martin Kerly Nailsea CC
Gordon MacRae Moreton in Marsh CC
Tim Lacy-Hubert Kington Langley CC
Peter Allan (below) Blewbury & Harwell CC

Please keep an eye open for Coaches Training Courses (CTC) and Coaches Qualification Courses (CQC) courses being held and please get in touch if there are any questions you might have.

**Sarah Hayes, Chair,
CA Coaching Committee**



Peter Allan



PHOTOGRAPH Back row; Lionel Tibble, Aston Wade, Sam Cuthbert, Edward and William Holman, Roger Holwerda. Front row; Eugene Chang, Jack Good, Ellie Ross, Harvey Smith, Dan Gott.

Are you under 25 and a keen player? Perhaps you're a parent or grandparent with a younger player in the family? Are you actively involved in club coaching with a younger player or players? If so, please consider registering for U25 Summer Improvers Course

at Wrest Park CC during August 2022. The schedule includes a full programme covering AC and GC skills development, from basic skills to advanced tactics, suitable and of interest for all standards of play. Please contact me directly (details below) to register for a place. Entry is free, whites are optional, and bring your own lunch.

The accompanying photograph shows last years intake. Some of the names will now be familiar to you through their achievements over the last twelve months, and having featured regularly in the Gazette.

Lionel Tibble
anglion@btinternet.com

NOMINATIONS ARE INVITED FOR COACH OF THE YEAR 2021 & THE LIFETIME COACHING AWARD

Coach of the Year 2021

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

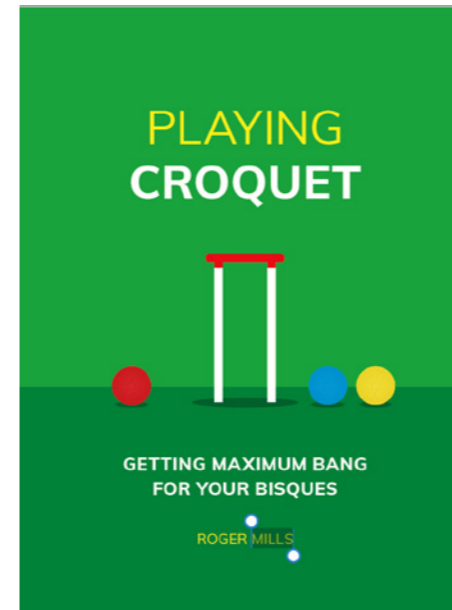
The Lifetime Coaching Award

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

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. Nominations close on 31 October 2021.

**Sarah Hayes, Chair
CA Coaching Committee**
cacommchair@gmail.com



A NEW COACHING BOOK BY ROGER MILLS

Playing Croquet – **Getting Maximum Bang for your Bisques** is a highly readable, great addition to the canon. It helps the novice and experienced player alike, by providing them with insight through an easy-to-follow method for analysing the lawn, and deciding upon a successful line of play. The method not only tells you whether to invest bisques to build a break, but how many bisques it will cost. If you know that playing a four-ball break is a good thing, but don't always see how to set one up, then read this book to bridge that gap. This is for players who can play good strokes much of the time, but aren't quite sure what to do, and for the coaches who work with them. It will help you to win many more games, and bring down your handicap to where you deserve.

This is an easy read that uses a refreshing style to break down complex ideas into a clearly explained method for deciding how to set up a four-ball break from any position, as well as when to keep your powder dry and avoid wasting bisques. By following Roger's method you'll be amazed at how easy it becomes, and you'll be convinced of why you should be planning a break each time it's your turn. This book helps you learn how to think, by reducing the analysis and planning process into a few easy-to-follow rules. Roger urges using exactly the same method to keep a break going when things don't work out as planned, minimising the number of bisques you'll need to get both balls round to the peg, and yourself into the bar with your cash in hand.

Getting Maximum Bang for your Bisques is packed with examples to get you thinking, all accompanied with coaching notes so you're never left alone scratching your head.

MERIT AWARDS

ASSOCIATION CROQUET

Gold

Lorna Dewar at the Scottish Masters

Silver

Peter Allan Harwell CC at High Wycombe h/cap
Mike Hedge Nottingham CC at Peels Memorial
Roger Watson Nottingham CC at Peels Memorial
Chris Weedon Hamptworth CC at Budleigh June weekend

Bronze

Fiona Crompton York CC at Heart of Yorkshire
Cathie Dance York CC at Heart of Yorkshire
John Harris York CC at Heart of Yorkshire
Sarah Hebron York CC at Heart of Yorkshire
David Hudson York CC at Heart of Yorkshire
Jim Gillespie York CC at Heart of Yorkshire
Noel Harris Eynsham CC at Wrest Park May

GOLF CROQUET

Gold

Paul Gunn Wingrave CC at Wrest Park A-Level (0+) Series
Louise Smith Sidmouth CC at Sidmouth A-Level (0+) Series
Aston Wade Hamptworth CC at Sidmouth A-Level (0+) Series

Silver

Tony Elliott Ealing CC at Ealing B-Level (3+) Series
David Cornes Crake Valley CC at East Dorset B-Level (3+) Series
Keith Toovey High Wycombe CC at Wrest Park B-Level (3+) Series
Glynis Davies Northampton CC at Watford B-Level (3+) Series
Charles Sale Ealing CC at Cammerton & P. B-Level (3+) Series
John Richardson Newport CC at Leighton Linlade B-Level (3+) Series
Mark Buckley Leicester CC at Hunstanton B-Level (3+) Series

Bronze

Kevin Connolly Watford CC at Watford C-level (7+) Series
Carol Jamieson Caversham CC at Wrest Park C-Level (7+) Series
Naomi Whitehead Cheltenham CC at Phyllis Court C-Level (7+) Series
Catherine Shore High Wycombe CC at Ealing C-Level (7+) Series
Sue Nicholas Cheam CC at Guildford & G. C-Level (7+) Series
Frank Sharps Crake Valley CC at Hunstanton CC C-Level (7+) Series

Nearly 150 impressively clear diagrams give the book great visual appeal. After reading this book, you'll wonder why it all seemed so difficult!

Covered too are how to start a game, and how to finish a turn with a good leave. Roger shows you what you need to aim for at the end of your turn when it's going well. The comprehensive glossary makes it easy to reference the terms used, and Roger's voice and infectious enthusiasm shine through – he succeeds in his ambition to make reading the book feel like a personal coaching course. As the last page says: "Do the rules work? Yes: everything has been tried and tested!"

Dave Kibble

Right: Roger Mills introduces his new book which is available from the CA Shop

Welcome

A warm welcome!

Coaching is my passion, some would say my obsession. For me it is a never ending search for new and better ways to coach croquet and help players improve and increase their enjoyment of the game. As I have been writing this book, I have always been thinking about you, the reader, the player or the coach. And now you are here! So, a big thank you for your interest in this book. I hope you will enjoy reading the book, learning about this new approach to using bisques, and have fun with the exercises and improving your game or your coaching.





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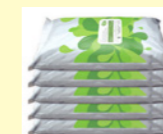
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Croquet Player
Turf Specialist



Leather jacket harvesting - typo and update

In the last issue, I said Ryde CC were harvesting 20 leather jackets each time they applied sheeting. That was wrong by a factor of ten - it was 200 and later reports suggest up to 400 each time! More recently I have learnt of other successes on golf courses using the same sheeting method.

Can you top-dress in the summer?

It is possible to lightly top-dress problem areas during the playing season. To fill a dip you can apply a light dressing of sand of around 2mm. If you are mowing at 5mm, the top dressing won't smother it. A week or so later you can apply another 2mm and so on. This way you can cure localised dips quite easily without disrupting play and seeding isn't usually necessary. For this purpose, I use round grained sand from a local quarry which costs £10 for 250kg and mix in some finely graded seeding compost to provide some organic content (available in my shop if you can't get it locally).

Why use liquid fertiliser?

The liquid Biofeed fertilisers that I supply contain humic acid, seaweed can be added as an option, free of charge. Humic acid is derived from humus and, along with the seaweed, promotes active soil biology, helping thatch breakdown and healthy growth. If you are using a growth regulator, it is best to have the Biofeed without Sea Weed. Liquid fertiliser enters the plant mainly through the leaf and any that misses the leaf will be washed into the root zone where it is absorbed by the roots. This means that the fertiliser enters the plant quickly and has the advantage that there are no granules left on the surface. The lawn can be used as soon as dry, usually within an hour.

| Duncan Hector

CONFESSIONS OF AN INTER-COUNTIES VIRGIN

...continued from page 14

For that evening's meal we went into Southwick to a great little Italian restaurant for an infinitely more enjoyable experience than the previous night's Indian. At this stage we had played and lost five matches out of five with Phil Eardley winning our only games, but morale remained high and we definitely had the best team strip! Bank Holiday Monday arrived, as yet another scorching hot sunny day and this time we travelled in two cars, firstly to face Nottingham and thence Glamorgan, the only other two teams who could yet deprive us of the wooden spoon. I was playing doubles with Phil against Dave Gunn and James Death and we lost because I twice clanged easy hoops after good hit-ins and finally Phil failed hoop one after getting peel, number one of an attempted sextuple on Death's ball. This coupled, with the rest of the team also losing, condemned Suffolk to last place and the final round saw a further 0-3 whitewash - Chris Williams beat me +25 after I failed hoop one on at least five occasions. In fact, I barely made more hoops than the points lost to my index across the weekend - or pints sunk for that matter! But it was a lot of fun getting out and mixing with other players roasting in the

sun. The journey back was much quicker and enabled me to bring my partner's son home from Brighton University for the summer. Would I play again? Yes definitely - it was fun and felt special Will I be invited again? - I suspect the jury is out but it is probably unlikely.

| Paul Hetherington



Tobi Savage

RAMSGATE GC OPEN

...continued from page 21

Savage is savage in the Final

When the semi-finals did get under way, both went to three games, with Savage ending Martin's dreams 7-0, 4-7, 7-2 and Fulford winning against Burridge 6-7, 7-5, 7-3, which a great result for Rob who had not played a ranking GC game since the world Championship of mid-2019. However, Savage was unmerciful in the Final, triumphing over Fulford in straight games 7-2, 7-3, and he deservedly retained the Ramsgate GC Open trophy.

Round-up

Martin was placed third, on a walk-over, and Mulliner was undefeated in the 5th-8th block. Duncan Catterall (handicap 4) is very promising young player from High Wycombe and Dulwich, and earlier he caught the eye playing in his first major tournament; he won the Plate event here, adding to the National C-Level (7+) Series title that he won last year. Well done to him and to Charlie Martin for their individual successes in this tournament. Hopefully their achievements will inspire younger players to enter challenging events and more senior players to never give up.

| Trevor Longman

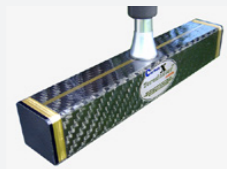
UK & WORLD RANKINGS

- THIS IS A SNAPSHOT AS OF 1 AUGUST (UP OR DOWN IS SINCE LAST GAZETTE PUBLICATION)

up or down	UK	World	GC	up or down	UK	World	AC
+	1	1	Reg Bamford	=	1	23	Robert Fulford
-	2	7	John-Paul Moberly	+	2	6	Jonathan Kirby
-	3	10	Tobi Savage	+	3	10	Jamie Burch
=	4	14	Rachel Gee	=	4	11	Samir Patel
+	5	17	Robert Fulford	-	5	12	Stephen Mulliner
+	6	20	Ian Burrige	+	6	13	James Death
-	7	34	Stephen Mulliner	+	7	14	Mark Avery
-	8	31	James Death	-	8	15	Harry Fisher
-	9	39	Will Gee	=	9	16	Christian Carter
-	10	42	Euan Burrige	+	10	18	Alain Giraud

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CA WEBSITE

www.croquet.org.uk

is a fabulous resource for croquet information covering membership, news, laws & rules, coaching, who is who, and tournament details, complete with an online entry system.

Croquet jargon

The 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:

(AC): Home > Play > Technical > Jargon
(GC): Home > Play > Golf Croquet > Jargon

For online readers, direct links:

(AC) www.croquet.org.uk/?p=games/tech/jargon
(GC) www.croquet.org.uk/?p=games/golf/gcJargon

PUBLICATION DETAILS

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

Copy should reach the Editor before the 20th of the month before publication is due. However if you have something that you think the Editor may be willing to expand this deadline for please contact him direct.

Email contributions, including tournament reports should be sent direct to the Editor, or copied to the Editor if they are being posted to the Nottingham List. Digital images are preferred, but photographic prints

may also be acceptable.

Please send digital jpeg or tiff format files. Please accompany all images with a description of the subject.

If you require any material to be returned, please enclose a SAE.

Queries regarding the delivery of the Gazette to members should be directed to the Manager of the Croquet Association and not to the Editor.

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