



CROQUET

GAZETTE

Issue 393 | November 2021



BAMFORD WIN
RECORD 12TH AT
AC OPEN CHAMPS

ENGLAND
WIN GC HOME
INTERNATIONALS

MULLINER WINS
ASCOT CUP

AVERY WINS THE
PRESIDENT'S CUP



FROM OUR FILES

RESEARCHED BY
FRANCES COLMAN

10 years ago - 2011



Recruitment of competitive players

You will have read in the last Gazette that the CA aims to target its recruitment strategy at the more competitive type of player in the future. There are various reasons for the approach. Clubs find it relatively easy to recruit the type of member who joins the club for a social get together both on and off the lawn, but is not very interested in competitions and does not normally want to play away from his or her own club. Whilst this type of member provides a lot of support to the club, both financially as well as helping to run social activities, the lack of competitive players could lead to isolation of the club which is not good for the future of croquet. *Barry Keen (from his Chairman's Column)*

USA beat GB to retain Solomon trophy

After three days' play and with the overnight score standing at 8-4 to the USA, on the final day there were a possible six second round singles rubbers to play, two pegged down singles and one doubles to finish. USA won two of the second round singles and a resumed singles for an unassailable 11-6 lead and so retained the Solomon Trophy they had first won in 2009.

GB: Ian BurrIDGE, Tony Le Moignan, Ian Lines David Maugham, Stephen Mulliner (c), Samir Patel.

USA: Jim Bast, Doug Grimsley, Danny Huneycutt (c), Chris Patmore, Ben Rothman, Jeff Soo.

England win the Home Internationals

England completed a run of eleven consecutive victories at the 32nd Home Internationals, at Heaton Park. Each player played a best-of-three against each equivalent player in the other teams *England (3 match wins): Marcus Evans, Dave Kibble, David Maugham (c), Ian Lines, Samir Patel.*

Ireland (2): Ed Cunningham, Patsy Fitzgerald, Andrew Johnston, Kieran Murphy, Simon Williams.

Scotland (1): James Hoppood, David Magee, Campbell Morrison, Martin Murray, Martin Stephenson.

Wales (0): Ian BurrIDGE, John Evans, Garry McElwain, David Walters, Chris Williams.

50 years ago - 1971



The Open Championships

The 81st Singles Championship (there were no Doubles of any sort until 1899) attracted what is believed to be the largest entry since World War II, and one of exceptionally high quality. Almost everyone who ought to have entered had done so, and a very happy feature of the event was the return of players who we had not seen for several years - John Bolton, David O'Connor, Douglas Strachan and most notably Humphrey Hicks who had won the title twice before the last War and four times after it - almost recreating post-war croquet. So large an entry brings its own problems however, and not only were the 'prairie' courts brought into play but some competitors on the early days had to be banished to a pair of 'sleepy' courts at Roehampton.

(Semi-finals: Keith Wylie beat Roger Bray, and Nigel Aspinall beat Bernard Neal) And so we come to Finals day and one of the most spell-binding performances that can ever have been witnessed at this stage in any Championship. Aspinall got only one chance from Wylie in the first game, when he missed a long rush. But Wylie in the second game reached the summit of his perfection with a 'delayed sextuple' of such brilliance as to set the seal of finnis coronat opus on the event. One does not often hear shouts of applause from spectators of our serene and subdued game, but these were evoked on this occasion. A very great player had brought off a very difficult thing and we were uplifted by his achievement, unique, it is said, and in an English tournament.

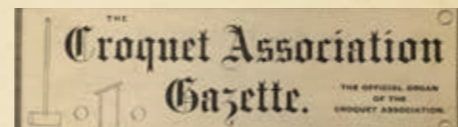
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The Challenge and Gilbey

The Roehampton Cup open event was in the doldrums, Miss Warwick and Mrs Rotherham were both unwell and we were all saddened at the retirement of Col. Beamish.

It seemed likely that B.G.Perry would have no difficulty in retaining the cup, until John Cooper, marching around with mallet on shoulder, suddenly found that Perry had lost his roquet form and took advantage of some very un-Perry like lapses to rob him of the cup.

100 years ago - 1921



Winchester

One hundred and fifty-eight entries, glorious weather, perfect lawns and good management - what more can anyone ask for at a croquet tournament? And it was this pleasant combination that was in store for visitors to Winchester, which, but for the compulsory tribute of club members, would have been a record meeting. The laws are on high grounds and the great heat was tempered by a soothing breeze, whilst at teatime a perambulating "blue china" was most refreshing, but played the "Dickens" with the thirst. A "Weir", too, rippling in the sunshine, had a most cheering effect, and was the one "bright spot" midst the solemn players. A "Brook" also ran within the grounds - fit for a "King."

Of the four principal lawns it may be truthfully said that for excellence of surface they yield not even to the best at Roehampton, and all the competitors who were fortunate enough to play on these were loud in their praises.

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Appeal for swift result reporting

We are asked to make a very special appeal. Owing to the new Postal Regulations it is more than ever imperative that score sheets, blue forms, etc., be posted as early as possible on Saturdays. Unless this is complied with, the elaborate machinery, of which such things form a vital part, is likely to be thrown completely out of gear.

Why stay the winter in England...?

...when you can play Croquet at Menton where there are beautiful grass courts. Club Medals, December to April, Club Championship in February, Open Tournament on March 23rd. Write to the Secretary, Menton Lawn Tennis and Croquet Club, Menton, France (A.M).

Registration of Assumed Names

All Assumed Names must be registered with the Secretary.

The Annual Registration Fee is 5s. The following assumed name has been registered
Ben C.Apps, "I.M.Keen"



The Croquet Association
Issue 393 | November 2021



Front cover:
Mark Avery in action on his way to winning the AC President's Cup at Budleigh Salterton
PHOTOGRAPH
Samir Patel

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WELCOME



This issue is packed to the gunnels with tournament reports, reflecting the Gazette's migration into a primarily 'Sports' magazine with its focus now firmly on the playing side of the sport. Such has been the improvement in and timely report writing from tournaments that some hard choices have had to be made with this issue, and the coverage of some big finals and finales has had to be held over until December in order to have the space to do them justice. So, sorry if it's you that has to wait for your time in the spotlight.

I was very proud to make my international debut for Wales this year, and here I am at Nailsea in my red Welsh shirt.

Well, that's it folks! This is my last issue as Editor. I've had a wonderful past eight and a half years putting my stamp on 48 of the 51 Gazettes that have borne my name. Those years have been so exciting, full of highs and lows, drama and action, and I've seen croquet advance forward in popularity so much. The most pleasing of these advances for me has been establishment of the five-tiered Series of golf croquet tournaments that now provide a player development pathway from beginner to the top. Now - a little sadly, nevertheless - it's time to let someone else take over the reins of the Gazette. The magazine is evolving, and I think this is an excellent thing. I wish whoever takes over the very best of success.

| Chris Roberts

Chris Roberts took over as Editor of The Gazette in April 2013, producing a very impressive 48 issues. He has brought the magazine forward from its days as the official mouthpiece of the CA to a magazine that is more reflective of croquet at all levels. His photography, in particular, has enlivened and brought a professionalism to many articles. Chris is taking a break while The Gazette goes through its next

transformational change to become a sports magazine that will be attractive to all croquet players and be enticing to potential advertisers and sponsors. An editorial team will be working with the publishers to produce the next issues. We wish Chris well and thank him very much for all his hard work keeping us informed and entertained over the last 8½ years. Have a good winter Chris!

**| Beatrice McGlen
Chairman of Executive Board**



CHAIRMAN OF THE CA COUNCIL

After over 20 years involvement with the CA, the time has come for me to retire.

My report to the AGM covers the actions of Council in the last twelve months and in this column I would like to spend a short time reflecting on the changes that have been or are being implemented within the CA, whether they are working and will work in the future. The first question is whether the new structure is working better than the previous one?

My answer would be, in some ways yes. However because of Covid dominating our actions over the last two years, it really is too early to make a definitive judgement. Having a Council half the size of its predecessor has certainly helped to make meetings more effective. Conducting a

meeting with up to 32 members using Zoom would have been extremely demanding and the current number of up to 16 attendees has made it more manageable.

Confining Council's role to matters of top-line policy, strategy and scrutiny, the Executive Board's main role being one of implementation is starting to become established.

Going forward, I am optimistic that the CA's performance will be enhanced and the policies and strategies developed will be successfully implemented.

Wherever you turn to these days you hear a similar message concerning volunteering.

Statements like "we can't get volunteers on our committees", "it's the same old

people having to sit on the committee". If we are to succeed as a volunteering organisation, we need a more diverse spread of volunteers taking our sport forward. One of our biggest tasks is to make croquet a more diverse sport, appealing to a broader range of age and people of different ethnic and social backgrounds. Although we are a minority sport, we are growing. Broadening our appeal base will help this continue.

I wish my successors good fortune and give a special vote of thanks to all members of Council and the various CA Committees who have helped to steer us through a difficult period for the sport and our country.

Jonathan Isaacs, Chairman of Council

HOW WELCOMING IS YOUR CLUB?

During last winter almost 60 of our members took part in an exercise to discover how we can make croquet more inclusive and, consequently, more diverse.

As the report they produced explained: "Inclusivity is about making everyone feel valued and included. Diversity means recognising, valuing and embracing peoples' differences including their background, ethnicity, gender, age, ability, disability, skills and experiences."

Or to put the question they tackled another way:

"How can we be more welcoming to groups and communities that are not currently well represented?"

Working in sub-groups the participants looked at a wide range of areas, for example, race, religion, background, income, disability, long-term health, age, gender and juniors. They went on to identify the main barriers within each of these faced by people who may consider coming into our sport, and to come up with suggestions for how to overcome them. As you might expect, they had to tackle wide-ranging and complex problems, and found that long-term solutions are required, along with a few quick fixes.

Their report was presented to Council earlier this year. It contains a series of recommendations for members, clubs and federations to help us reach out to new sectors of society, along with a wealth of ideas, and information on how to achieve this. It also recognises that the opportunities for clubs to reach out to new communities will vary according to their circumstances and location.

Watch the CA's webinar

In May this was explained to our members through a webinar, which is available to watch again.

In it we heard from Graeme Kerr of Hove Beach Croquet Club, who showed how successfully they have engaged with local groups of less-abled people, and from Paul Francis, Chair of the Development Committee, who set out the opportunities to engage with young players.

We also heard from two such young players, Ellie Ross and Aston Wade, who described their own experiences (congratulations of course to Aston who subsequently won the GC Open Championship).

Ferzana Shan, artist, poet, and self-confessed croquet fanatic from Nottingham Club, set out clear and simple steps to identify and engage local communities, and finally Council member Samir Patel succinctly summed up why we must engage

more broadly: "More People, More Croquet, More Places"

Samir explained that the benefits of so doing go well beyond simple recruitment, and include improving our image and marketing potential. "This", he said "requires active change, with some changes relatively easy to make". An implementation group has been established to drive forward the actions that the report identified for the Croquet Association, and to help members, clubs and federations with their own actions.

Can you help?

That group would like to establish a network of members across the federations who have experience in, or simply an interest in, helping our sport to be more welcoming.

If this is you, please contact Paul Brown at: p_h_brown@icloud.com After logging on, members can find 'Improving Inclusivity and Diversity in Croquet February 2021' in Reports section at Members' Documents: <https://www.croquet.org.uk/?p=members/docs>

The recording of the webinar can be found at: www.youtube.com/watch?v=jnQw6LWoJAg

Paul Brown, Development Director CA Executive Board

CA/BHF NATIONAL CROQUET WEEK RAISES OVER £4,400 FOR THE BRITISH HEART FOUNDATION



This year the CA partnered with the British Heart Foundation (BHF) in their 60th anniversary year, to run a themed BHF National Croquet Week between Saturday 24 July and Sunday 1 August, a week that included their anniversary on Wednesday 28 July.

Croquet clubs were invited to host fundraising croquet events during the nine days as they wished, with the BHF providing pre-event support, including red balloons, banners, poster and press release templates, and several virtual introductory / briefing sessions.

The 14 participating clubs ran a wide variety of fundraising events between them, including a 24-hour sponsored continuous Croquet Marathon, a Crazy Croquet obstacle course, and various 'Donate and Play' sessions. Some clubs utilised the fundraising angle to generate additional press coverage, some attracted new members, whilst others initiated actions to have Automatic External Defibrillators

installed at their clubs – a potential future life-saving action which the BHF were able to advise on.

The total amount raised across all participating clubs was above £4,400. The BHF were delighted with the collective efforts of all participating clubs and were grateful to the CA for nominating them as our preferred charity this year.

We express our sincere thanks to Vicki Carswell, BHF Fundraising Manager, and her team, for all their incredible support and enthusiasm in our first year of partnering with a nationally renowned charity.

Eugene Chang

PHOTOGRAPHS Debbie James' photographs are from Beverley & East Riding CC's big event in the walled garden of Sledmere House which raised £250 to help fund the next 60 years of pioneering research into heart disease.

WINTER INDOOR CROQUET

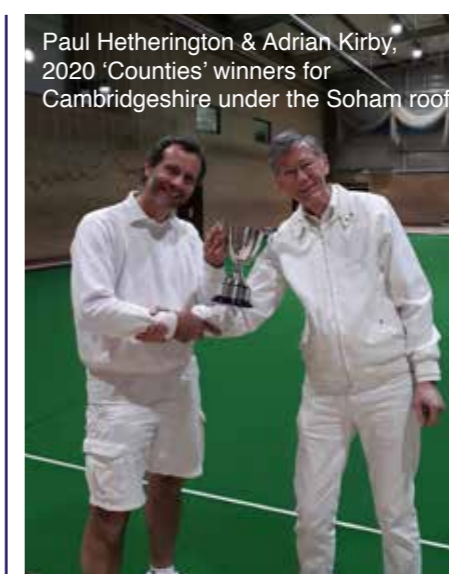
Have you ever wondered where all the croquet players go in the winter?

Well obviously a few hardy souls brave it right through ice and blizzard on courts that are kept open all year round, and some jet off to warmer climes to swing mallets in southern sun, although such travel is far from easy in these times of Covid insecurity.

Many resort to indoor pursuits such as bridge, or of course there is the computer croquet game.

But 'those in the know' travel once a month to the indoor sessions in Soham hosted by the East Anglian Croquet Federation, for two days of speed doubles on a three-quarter sized indoor carpet. All matches are played on time clocks, like chess, with each team having just 24 minutes for their role in a half game of Association Croquet.

The handicapping system in use reduces the number of bisques involved, but adds in mandatory peels, and for really low handicap players even time loss.



Paul Hetherington & Adrian Kirby, 2020 'Counties' winners for Cambridgeshire under the Soham roof

The playing surface is true but extremely fast, first-timers generally go off regularly on croquet strokes! It is a great test of touch play and accurate positioning, as the hoops are more challenging from distance or angles. Ideally, each day there are eight teams playing five games each to determine the winner.

With play starting around 0900 and

finishing by 1900, indoor croquet promises a fun day out testing your croquet skills in a warm sports centre with a friendly and supportive crowd to watch.

Each session costs £20 per head to cover the venue hire, and there is reasonable accommodation close by.

If you are interested in taking part in the 2021/2 winter programme please contact Paul Hetherington.

Sat 13 Nov	Inter-Counties
Sun 14 Nov	MLP Mallets
Sat 1 Dec	Rose Bowl
Sun 19 Dec	The Soham Trophy
Sat 15 Jan	Belgian Cup *
Sun 16 Jan	The Soham Trophy
Sat 12 Feb	The Martins Trophy **
Sun 13 Feb	Albert Lawrence Trophy
Sat 12 Mar	The Cornelius Cup
Sun 13 Mar	The Millennium Cup

All are Normal Speed Doubles, except: *Alternate Shot Doubles **Progressive Doubles.

Paul Hetherington
paulhether65@outlook.com



WORLD CROQUET FEDERATION

Stephen Mulliner retired as Secretary-General of the WCF on 31 August 2021. During his tenure, the WCF has taken responsibility for managing the AC Laws, GC Rules and the Rankings, as well as holding many successful championships. Stephen has worked tirelessly to support croquet, and will be missed by his colleagues on the Management Committee, and all the Members he has supported so efficiently. He was presented with a gift by his colleagues on the Management Committee in recognition of his eight years of service. Stephen is replaced by Debbie Lines, who took over from 1st September 2021, after shadowing Stephen as his Deputy for the past twelve months. We wish Stephen all the best with his future endeavours, and hope to see him at many croquet events over the coming years.

Debbie Lines, Secretary-General, WCF
secretarygeneral@worldcroquet.org



Debbie Lines at the GC Womens Open

The World Croquet Federation was founded in 1989, with the objective of promoting world championships and developing croquet around the world. The WCF is a members' organisation, comprising national associations that are recognised by the WCF as having control of the sport in their own countries. Our Championship Schedule is busy, we run both singles and team events at both GC and AC, including Open events, Women's events, Under 21 and Over 50s.

The WCF coordinates and oversees the governance of our sport
It ensures that the tools needed to regulate and keep the game consistent worldwide are in place and regularly reviewed. Various WCF committees work with croquet enthusiasts and experts to help keep the sport running smoothly, and these include:
- updates of the AC Laws, GC Rules and the Refereeing Regulations;
- ensuring that Ranking Officers are in place to manage the input and update of

the AC and GC Ranking Systems;
- coordinating the development of croquet around the globe.

Developing croquet is one of our highest priorities
Quarterly newsletters provide updates on the work we are doing. These are on our website: worldcroquet.org/mainnews
YouTube Channel
Launched in November 2020 our YouTube Channel showcases some of the best videos of top class and international croquet: youtube.com/c/WorldCroquet
The playlists will take you straight to videos created by WCF Members and international croquet players.
Facebook for up to the minute information: facebook.com/WorldCroquet/

The WCF is always looking for people to help on its committees and working groups. If you have some time and would like to be more involved, please get in touch by email at: secretarygeneral@worldcroquet.org

Ian Burridge – President, WCF



ENGLAND WIN GC HOME INTERNATIONALS



England won the fourth edition of the Golf Croquet Home Internationals in mid-July when it was the turn of Wales to host the tournament. Without a four-court venue in Wales, the event was held at Nailsea CC and the club provided excellent playing conditions, with firm hoops and courts which sped up noticeably over the course of the hot weekend – there was even a Welsh flag flying from the flagpole!

Ireland was unfortunately absent due to Covid-19 so a format was devised with the Test Matches between the three remaining teams interleaved throughout the weekend, with each contest ultimately being a 'best of nine' matches (three 'best of 2' doubles and six 'best of 3' singles).

England v Scotland
England got off to the worst possible start against Scotland, with captain Stuart M Smith and Steve Leonard losing their opening doubles match to Lorna Dewar



and Stephen Wright. But this loss which was quickly avenged by Euan Burridge and James Galpin against the same pair. Martin Murray picked up a win for Scotland in the singles against Leonard, but otherwise it was relatively plain sailing for the English and finally they ran out 7-2 winners.

Wales v Scotland
The Welsh team had been depleted by the late withdrawal of Angharrad Walters; she was replaced by Mike Parry, who partnered Chris Roberts in the doubles. The pair ran Martin Murray and Rosemary Saunders Robertson close in the opening doubles with Scotland, before losing 6-7, 6-7. The match was relatively in the balance throughout and came down to Wales needing to win one of the last two matches of the weekend to secure the victory. Sarah Melvin achieved this in three games against Saunders Robertson and when Roberts also beat Dewar the Welsh had a rather flattering 6.5 to 2.5 victory.



Wales v England
Wales managed to share both the opening doubles matches against England, however, although Wales had their chances, relatively comfortable 2-0 victories for Galpin over Roberts and Smith over Melvin gave England a 3-1 overnight lead.

Victories for Ian Burridge against Galpin and Euan Burridge, to maintain his unbeaten singles record in the event, was not enough for Wales, as England won all the other remaining matches, to secure a 6-3 victory.

PHOTOGRAPHS Placings and teams as positioned: **England** (2 wins): Euan Burridge, Steve Leonard, James Galpin, Stuart M Smith (c). **Wales** (1 win): Ian Burridge (c) Sarah Melvin, Chris Roberts, Mike Parry. **Scotland** (0 wins): Stephen Wright, Lorna Dewar, Rosemary Saunders-Robertson, Martin Murray (c).

Ian Burridge

CA BURSARIES

Sam Cuthbert at Cheltenham's AC classes in June



Ellie Ross at the GC Inter-Counties Division 2 at Cheltenham



The CA Bursary Scheme is intended to provide financial assistance for aspiring AC and GC players, with the potential to play at international level, who do not have the means to meet the costs of acquiring the necessary advanced skills and experience. It is now administered by the Funding Committee.

Preference is given to applicants who are under 25, but older players may also apply.

Preference also goes to applicants who satisfy the Committee that they

reasonably require financial support (financial disclosure is not required).

A Bursary is a grant to a successful applicant rather than reimbursement of a proportion of the expenses actually incurred by him or her.

A budget figure of £2,000 was established by the Executive Board in 2020.

Since the launch of the new scheme in February 2021 awards amounting in total to £2,000, have been made to:

- Morgan Case (Sussex County)
- Sam Cuthbert (Cheltenham)
- Jack Good (Bury)
- Will Mellor (Bowdon)
- Ellie Ross (Edgbaston)
- Aston Wade (Hamptworth)

The Committee was, and remains confident, that the recipients have and will continue to put the money to good use.

John Reddish
Chairman of the Funding Committee

NOTTS ARE GC COUNTY CHAMPS

Nottinghamshire swept all before them in Division 1 of the GC Inter-County Championship at Southwick on 21-22 August, winning 11/11 matches and dropping only four of their 33 games over the course of the weekend. Notts were always going to be strong favourites with four -4 players (Ian Burridge, Rachel Gee, Will Gee and James Death) but it was an impressive performance nonetheless. The Yorkshire & Durham team (Richard M Smith, Robert Wilkinson, Callum Johnson, Daniel Gott and Stuart Smith) gave them a good run for their money and so the Notts v Y&D clash on Sunday morning became a crucial match for both teams. Notts claimed the honours 2-1, but the situation at the top of the table may have looked rather different had Daniel Gott taken hoop 13 in his game against Ian Burridge – ‘small margins’. In the end, Y&D came second overall with 9/11 match wins, followed closely by Sussex 8/11, Northamptonshire (7/11) and Essex (6/11). At the bottom of the table, five teams – Dorset, Kent, Hampshire, Glamorgan and Somerset – battled to avoid relegation. Once the dust had settled (which included awarding two games to Glamorgan due to Surrey fielding two players in the final round who had not played the correct ratio of singles/



Nottinghamshire's Rachel Gee

doubles games), it was Kent and Somerset who sat in the bottom two places and will therefore join Division 2 in 2022. Sussex County CC and their team of helpers were warmly thanked by Ian Burridge for the tight hoops, the quality of their lawns and their excellent hospitality. Next year, the Divisions will switch locations for a two-year stint. Division 1 will be held at Cheltenham and Sussex will host Division 2.

| Jonathan Powe

PHOTOGRAPHS Chris Roberts



CA Select team



Hertfordshire: John Taylor, Simon Hathrell, Nick Archer and John Noble with Frances Colman (CA)

Meanwhile, Division 2 was again under the management of Ivor Brand at Cheltenham: I will explain myself firstly with reference to last year's final positions and the disappointment of the lack of promotion due to Covid-19 reasons. Fortunately, this year, despite three teams having equal wins, it was the same two counties, Hertfordshire and Oxfordshire, that finished top of the 'counties' pile and qualified for promotion, albeit they could only be separated on who beat whom – phew! However, at this point I must explain my second point of justice, which was that the CA Select Team (my tip for winning

by the way) actually finished at the top of the Division 2 table this year and were recognised as deserved winners, despite not being able to be promoted as they were not a 'county' as the tournament conditions dictate. Congratulations to Mike Bilton who led his team of experience (Charles Sale & David Cornes) and youth (Jack Good & Ellie Ross) to victory. I look forward to seeing most of you again next year at sunny Southwick, where at least Oxfordshire will not be able to keep me from the pub by playing on till 8pm on the Saturday!

| Ivor Brand

MULLINER

Stephen Mulliner won the English National Singles Championship and lifted the Ascot Cup for what was surprisingly only the fourth time in his long and illustrious career. He first won it as long ago as 1991, but then only twice since, in 2012 and 2014, so by his standards this victory was long overdue.

Manager Louise Smith takes up the story:

Hunstanton Croquet Club were the 2021 hosts of the English National Singles Championship which was contested by players from qualifying events held around the country.

All competitors received a warm and hospitable welcome, and as ever the Hunstanton courts were in excellent condition, set and maintained by dedicated club volunteers.

Complimentary tea and cake were provided each day, as well as the generous provision of Hunstanton Croquet Club etched glass coasters for both the Bowl and Plate winners.

For day one, the format consisted of four blocks of four players in ranked order with Rachel Gee, Stephen Mulliner, Ian Burridge, and Aston Wade the top seeds in their respective blocks, with 'best of three' matches to play.

Defending Champion Gee gets off to a good start

Gee started well, winning her first match against Ellie Ross 2-0, but she met second-seed Richard Bilton in the second round, and lost that match also in straight games.

Gee went on to beat Les Heard, again with a 2-0 victory, to earn a place in the Quarter Finals.

Bilton gained a second win against Heard, with Ross also gaining two match wins, at the expense of Bilton and Heard, however it was Bilton who joined Gee in reaching the knock-out with a two net games advantage over Ross.

The trend continued with the top two seeds from each of the remaining blocks, B, C and D, all qualifying for the knock-out stages.

Block C produced Ian Burridge and Jack Good, and from block D came Aston Wade and Stuart M Smith, all these four reaching the next stage with two match wins each, a feat also achieved by Lionel Tibble from block B, where Stephen Mulliner qualified with a full house of three match wins, giving a taster of things to come.

Quarter-Finals

Re-seeding under the MGBS (Modified

WINS ASCOT CUP

THE ENGLISH NATIONAL SINGLES CHAMPIONSHIP



Plate and Bowl

Meanwhile, the Plate blocks had also produced semi-finalists for that event in Steve Leonard, Callum Johnson, Raouf Allim and Ellie Ross; the latter won all her three plate block games 7-4.

Ross then beat Leonard 10-8 and Raouf got past Johnson by the same score to set up the plate final but, sadly, due to a pre-existing condition, Allim had to concede, leaving unbeaten Ross as the Plate winner.

The Bowl for defeated main event quarter-finalists was settled by a straight two-game match victory for Bilton, 7-4 and 7-3, over Tibble.

Championship semis

The main event semi-finals got underway with the two youngest players in the tournament, Good and Wade, contesting for a place in the Final.

In two very closely fought games, Good's powerful hoop running gave him the edge over Wade with a win 7-5, 7-6.

The other semi pitted Burridge against Mulliner and it went to hoop 13 of a deciding game, and that was taken calmly by Mulliner after a missed clearance attempt, to give a win 7-2, 5-7, 7-6.

Grade Based Seeding) system gave rise to some interesting selections for the quarter-finals, with three of the four matches containing players who were under 25.

Defending Champion Gee beat Good 7-5 in their first game but Good came back to take the second 4-7, and then he earned a place in the semi-finals in a 13th hoop decider.

Wade's games against Tibble followed a similar pattern with Wade losing the first game 6-7 but coming back to win 7-2 and 7-6.

Bilton faced Mulliner and a hard fought first game for both players ensued, and culminated in a superb boundary jump score by Bilton through hoop 13. However, this one-game advantage was short-lived and Mulliner come back strongly, winning 7-3 and 7-4 to take the match.

The games in the remaining quarter-final between Burridge v Stuart M Smith had very different changes of fortunes. Smith missed his chance with his first ball up to hoop 13 and was punished by Burridge, who scored from the boundary.

In game 2, Burridge found himself 1-5 behind, but remained focused, and fought back with some excellent long-distance hoop running before sending his winning shot through hoop 12 from close to hoop 11 for the match.

THE FINAL

Jack Good v Stephen Mulliner

The Final was set to be an interesting match between Good, one of croquet's youngest rising stars, and the croquet icon that is Mulliner.

The latter's experience certainly came to the fore in game one and, with a calm but deadly approach, he quickly took a four-hoop lead and soon converted it into a 7-1 win.

However, the youthful Good fought back in the second game, and he managed a double hoop run with one powerful stroke, straight through hoops 7 and 8!

But this wasn't enough to bring him back into contention, as Mulliner closed out the match 7-4.

This was a well-deserved victory for Mulliner who added another English National Singles Championship (Ascot Cup) to his impressive catalogue of Championship titles.

Jack Good's performance over the weekend lifted his World Ranking sufficiently to overtake that of Blake Fields to become the top ranked U18 player in the World – a fantastic achievement.

| Louise Smith, Manager



Jack Good



English National Singles Championship 2021 (back) Tony Butcher, Raouf Allim, Tim King, Stuart M Smith, Lionel Tibble, Andrew Hobbs, Callum Johnson, Aston Wade, Les Heard, Ian Burridge (front) Steve Leonard, Richard Bilton, Ellie Ross, Stephen Mulliner, Rachel Gee, Jack Good

'Women and Men players compete on level terms...'

I would not describe myself as an ardent feminist - rather, an independent woman. Nevertheless I have to totally agree with the Ealing Quintet (Gazette 392)! To me, one of the joys of discovering croquet was that it is neither age nor gender relevant. Having awards for 'The most improved male/female AC/GC players of the year' suggests that there is a need to differentiate. Why not simply have, 'The most improved AC/GC players of the year'? We compete on a level playing field. Why put up unnecessary artifices? Clearly, there are a few, long standing tournaments, where gender is specified; Veterans are also identified, which in some respects is a bit of a joke, given the

demographic of the majority of players! Perhaps it is time to revise the requirements for acceptance into these tournaments. I dare say it might be pushing boundaries too far, but how would transgender players be classified? On a slightly different theme, why 'reward' first time winners of the A, B and C-Level GC Series tournaments with Merit Awards? Surely winning a tournament, usually publicly acknowledged, is reward enough?

I remain a happy participant who stands and falls on her own merits tournament-wise.

Hilary Bird
Guildford and Godalming CC

In response to the letter from the 'Ealing quintet' (Gazette 392), I can say that 'Ladies' events exist for us to escape from men for the day! What else? These days are very enjoyable, convivial, and are still supported by many of us, and not all oldies either! Of course, croquet is unique in that men and women play on equal terms. We all know that. So, why deprive us of a social day out with like-minded company and really good, competitive croquet? I did notice several Ealing ladies at the SECF (South East Croquet Federation) GC day at Southwick. Did you enjoy the day? Would a mixed event have been any better? Get over it and join in!

Frances Low, Sussex County CC

*...Is that actually true?
Or would we just
like it to be true?*

As a male player who hits balls harder than most, I am hardly the best qualified to comment on the accuracy of the beloved 'men and women compete on a level playing field' statement.

On very fast courts this is undoubtedly more likely to be true than when competing on some soggy long-grassed meadow, the like of which one comes across fairly frequently.

In the latter case, I do think that I have an undesirable and undeserved advantage over my female opponents (generally), particularly with big AC split-roll strokes to two far off destinations.

I will be very interested to hear from women players of all skill levels (please include your handicap grade) on this subject.

Do you think that the 'women and men compete on a level playing field' statement is actually true, or is it that we all (men and women alike) would like it to be true?

One is guaranteed a quick game against Jim Filed though! Here he is (right) on a charge in South Africa.
PHOTOGRAPH Chris Roberts

Most AC games finish in under two hours, claims Kevin

In the September issue (Gazette 392), Peter Tymms told of a game of GC where 28 minutes was spent running one hoop. I thought GC was a fast game and its proponents complain that "AC takes three hours"? In fact most games of AC are finished in under two hours, during which time we run between 24 and 48 hoops. But then that's break play for you.

Kevin Carter
Surbiton CC

...I think you are inhabiting rarefied company if 'most' of the AC games you see are completed inside two hours, Kevin.

'Most' of the AC games that I see reported, especially at internal club and federation level, go well beyond that, very frequently to a time limit (usually 3 hours), and have to be brought to a conclusion by its expiry. However, I am not sure that there is much to be gained by comparing apples and pears, when (to my mind at least) both AC and GC are equally good games enjoyed by their (small 'c') champions and most of the top players who play both.



Early allocations please & plea to low handicappers

I would like to raise two points:
1. Concerning entering CA Fixture Calendar Tournaments - the fixtures list is officially released towards the end of February and is then open for entries to be made. Why in some instances do we then have to wait until August to find out whether our entries have been accepted? Surely if the allocation date was made 6-8 weeks after release of the fixture list, there would be several advantages.
a) Personal calendars could be organised.
b) Accommodation (where necessary) could be booked in advance, at a great financial saving.
c) Travel plans could be made, again with a possible financial saving.
The closing date for entries could still be left open to a later date for tournament that still have spaces, but for those players that are prepared to plan ahead, things can be organised well in advance.

...Thank you for your letter Steve and taking your points in turn:

1. The purpose of later allocation dates is to allow those tournaments wishing to attract the strongest fields to do so. Whilst early allocation dates do indeed favour those with lives that are uncomplicated by employment, family and education factors, not everyone is able to commit to a fully planned croquet programme by the middle of May.

These days, nearly all accommodation is bookable on a 'no-penalty for cancellation' basis, and so by having a degree of flexibility in one's plans (with possible alternative tournaments to attend 'up one's sleeve'), the allocation date system allows everyone to enter at times that suits the individual.

2. The reason why lower handicap players don't play as many handicap games as those with higher handicaps is because, by and large, handicap play is not as enjoyable as playing level with players of a similar ability.

Nearly everyone I know (of all ability standards at both AC and GC), prefer level play over handicap, and the latter

2. There seems to be a great reluctance for lower-handicapped players to play in handicap tournaments. This seems to be largely due to both the existing and new experimental 'Advantage GC' system not dealing with the players who Handicaps have not kept up with their ability. The main problem is the reluctance of many players to play games which are likely to have a negative effect on their handicaps. Would the answer be to rule that handicap games do not affect your handicap card?

If a handicap system is operating correctly then everyone is supposedly playing at the same level without advantage, but this is very seldom the case.

Steve Hayns
Ryde CC

is generally seen as a no more than a 'convenient vehicle' to allow those of different abilities to play competitively against each other on occasion. The extra turns employed in current AC and GC handicap play rules distort the fabric of both games to an extent and (for me at least) are no more than a 'necessary evil'.

The experimental 'Advantage GC' that gives the weaker play a 'head start' on the scoreboard (rather than extra turns) to provide an even chance of winning for those with different abilities, whilst retaining an otherwise level-play game, is most welcome for that code and the report of the WCF's official trial held this year by the Southern Croquet Federation is eagerly awaited.

As to your reported instances of players 'protecting their handicap status' by avoiding (handicap or level play) games they might lose, I do not recognise this sad practice being particularly prevalent. I do accept there are a few players who probably do this, but choosing not to play for this reason is rather silly, defeats the purpose of the sport and we all know that such players are only kidding themselves about their status anyway!



A warm post-lockdown welcome awaits you at the Algarve Croquet Club

Now that lockdowns are easing throughout Europe, the Algarve Croquet Club in Portugal would like to extend a warm welcome to players who feel like a trip to warm sunny Portugal. Our new home is at Benamor Golf Club near the extremely beautiful and historic Portuguese town of Tavira. The town is rightly famed for its exquisite 18th century architecture, its 37 churches, myriad of hotels,

restaurants and bistros, and its beautiful setting on the banks of the river Gilao, 17 miles from Faro airport. We have one lawn at the moment, with two more due to be laid in the spring.

William Weber
Chairman
Algarve Croquet Club
vilareal1961@gmail.com



Croquet North



In Croquet North (CN), our GC League was split into North and South divisions of four teams each, augmented by a second team from **Alnmouth** in the North, and a guest appearance by **Ripon**, crossing the border from Yorkshire in the South. We only have two clubs who play AC, and **York** normally also cross the border to play in our League, along with two teams each from the **Tyneside** and **Middlesbrough** clubs. York are not competing this year, which chimed with a general reluctance from the other two clubs to travel. Tyneside and Middlesbrough therefore played off internally, and the two winning teams met for the title at the end of the year. In addition we have the East Pennine League, where we are again supplemented by **York**, and also by **Pendle & Craven**. Again, travel over such comparatively long distances in the company of three teammates in the confines of a car proved less than enticing, so we had to find the CN representatives in next year's Secretary's Shield through a one-off match between our two AC-playing clubs, with **Middlesbrough** winning the honour. So, we had a full programme of league matches in GC but not in AC, whilst conversely there were no Federation Championships this year in GC, but a full programme in AC. We were able to hold the Turner Goblet GC though, which did give our GC players a taste of tournament play for the year. CA tournaments were largely immune from disruption, albeit by virtue of some astute rescheduling, although the **Tyneside** Advanced tournament was unable to find an acceptable alternative date. A new item on the calendar was an AC tournament at

Tyneside for handicaps of 10 and above, that filled its quota of starters by spotting a gap in the market. Club play is blooming, notably at **Belsay Hall** who have 22 new members this year, representing a 69% rise. An innovation was Tyneside CC hosting a demonstration of PFC Mallets, attended by members from several CN clubs, that resulted in ten purchases from three different clubs. We managed to increase our previous representation of only one qualified AC Referee within the Federation, with a Full and an Assistant Referee generated from a course and examination held at the **Northern Academy in York**. The Federation subsidised the rest of the course fee after the CA subsidy, but travel and subsistence remains a significant cost to potential referees in both codes, even for courses at York. Despite this, we will be trying to augment our representation of GC Referees next year. The season was rounded off by what has become the traditional finale of a challenge between the **Croquet North** and **Yorkshire Federations**. This takes the form of teams of eight playing AC, GC and One-Ball, in a Ryder Cup-like format. This season's match was hosted at **York** in October under surprisingly forgiving skies, and saw the visitors triumph 17.5-14.5 to tie up the series of challenges at 2.5 each. - The picture shows the two teams in no particular formation with their respective flags. Yorkshire's White Rose spurred Croquet North to buy a flag of the ancient Kingdom of Northumbria, in order to cover our geographically diverse area. We'll gloss over the fact that the kingdom extended south and west of the host city as well.

| Derek Johnson



Yorkshire



The Yorkshire Federation held a full programme of tournaments and leagues this season, albeit with reduced entry numbers. GC tournaments held at **York** and **Bishop Monkton** were fully subscribed. Sue l'Anson (Ripon) won both the Restricted Doubles and the Open Doubles; she partnered and guided me in our success. She also managed the GC Open Singles at York where her club mate Ted Flexman beat all, while Leslie Wood managed of the two tournaments at Bishop Monkton. **Sheffield U3A** made a clean sweep of all the Federation's GC leagues. The annual Yorkshire Federation Short Croquet Tournament brought together players from **Beverley & East Riding**, **Huddersfield**, **Sheffield** and **York** clubs, all battling it out for a place at the National Short Croquet finals in September. After a strongly contested round robin, a deciding round produced Beverley as worthy runners-up to York who booked their place at the National finals, while Robin Edwards (Beverley & East Riding) won the Waterloo Cup for the most hoops scored during the day. The Federation AC singles tournament held at York was won by the York chairman John Harris, which was a nice reward for his years of hard work. **Leagues** - **Beverley & East Riding** won the Short Croquet (SC) League, and **York** prevailed in the AC League. Away from the competitive scene, **Sheffield** hosted 83 year 5 and 6 pupils from **Hillsborough Primary School** in mid-July to introduce them to croquet. With our full court divided into quarters, the pupils played 'Pirates' using junior croquet equipment (wire hoops, hockey practice balls and junior mallets) borrowed from **Nottingham CC**. The club are hoping to follow up with the school to offer more croquet opportunities, either as an after-school club or as part of their regular PE offering. The club have also made several grant applications for junior croquet equipment to become self-sufficient in that area, and have also been in touch with John Airey of **Swindon CC** who has lent some prototype 'flat iron' mallets designed and made by him, for young wheelchair users. John will be interested in any feedback on his mallet designs, so if you are at a northern club with a potential need, please get in touch with Eugene Chang (enquiries@sheffieldcroquetclub.uk). At the Heart of Yorkshire (high handicap) tournament, an amazing five players

gained an AC Bronze Award, indicating a growing competitive spirit at York; there they have been joined by 29 new members due to the hard work of John Harris and his team. **Club visits** - I have made a number of interesting club visits this season, the first being to the **Blue Pig Croquet Club** at Hebden Bridge. The Club, which was only established two years ago and is thriving under the guidance of Jo Sweeney, is situated in an idyllic ravine setting where the sun sets at 2.30pm even in high summer! My second visit was to **Driffield Croquet and Lawn Tennis Club** where Chris Atkinson is reviving our sport which was last played there before the war! The Driffield Club is actually older than Wimbledon! We wish them all well and assure them of the Federation's support. In June, I met up with Jan Webley to hand over a loan set of equipment as the first step in setting up a croquet club at **Slaithwaite**, near Huddersfield. Jan's enthusiasm and commitment to croquet shone through, but sadly Jan suffered a stroke the following day and died later in hospital. Our thoughts are with her husband and family. We will do all we can to promote her dream of a croquet club at Slaithwaite. We were also saddened to hear of the death of David Widdison after a long illness. Dave was a member of Bishop Monkton, Pendle and Ripon. He and Andrea did much to promote the GC programme for the Federation (An obituary is on page 23). Sadly, this will be my last Gazette column as I am emigrating back north of the border to be closer to family, so I send my best wishes to all in croquet who I have met in Yorkshire, and beyond, over the years.

| Derek Knight

PHOTOGRAPH The Yorkshire Federation Short Croquet Tournament 2021



As a wonderful season draws to a close, we reflect on happy memories of meeting up with old friends at tournaments across the country, renewing rivalries in hard fought games and sharing a glass or two in the important après match session. Personally I enjoy the socialising, eating and drinking together side of things as much as the stuff on the lawns. I really appreciate the places I have visited this year such as Norwich, Colchester, Nottingham and Surbiton which continue to produce scrummy meals made by members. I have my own sort of Michelin Guide (should that be Jaques Guide?) style rating system for croquet catering and would certainly put the last two mentioned above, at the top of my 5-Star list - Michael's canapés...George's roast potatoes...mmmm. As a Federation Development Officer, I spend most of my time encouraging new clubs to get off the ground and have been very pleased to re-visit Doddington in Cambridgeshire, who, having borrowed a set of equipment two years ago, were stopped in their tracks by the pandemic. Finally, this year they managed to garner the same group of enthusiasts to attend weekly sessions on their well mown ex-bowls green and they are clearly having a whale of a time. Sometimes good things happen quite by chance, and over lunch in the cafe in Central Park, during the Peterborough tournament, I had a chat with Louise, who is a member of the local tennis club. She explained that "they hadn't known what to

do with me at first" but she and the club had come to a positive understanding and she now played regularly. I explained that croquet is a very inclusive sport - old or young, male or female, fit or with bits missing...She was very interested in giving croquet a try so I suggested she pop into the lawns with me when I returned to play. She wheeled herself down the path with me and I introduced her to members who promptly gave her a mallet and balls to knock about. Louise will return to play more when the club has submitted an application to Awards for All for a couple of wheelchairs (Bowls Royce or Bradshaw Buggies). Congratulations to all the ECAF winners this season - Great Dunham, Wrest Park and Newport in the AC leagues, and Newport Oaks and Chelmsford in the GC leagues. But congratulations in particular to everyone who made things happen - to the bakers of cake, the brewers of tea, the mowers of lawns and the setters of hoops. Without you, where would we be? See you next year!

| Jonathan Toye



Tea at Downham CC in the ECAF

North-West



Congratulations to **Bowdon and Crake Valley** who are both double winners in the North West Federation (NWF) leagues this season. Bowdon were successful in AC Level-play League and the AC Midweek Handicap League, whilst Crake Valley boasts a 100% record in the AC Weekend Handicap and also the GC Handicap competition. **Chester** won the GC Level-play League and is due to play **Westmorland** for the Short-Lawn title. **The North West Festival of Croquet** took place later than normal, in August, but was still a huge success with **Pendle & Craven** winning the overall title. 41 teams played on 16 courts in five competitions, with over a 100 players attending each day, making it probably the largest croquet gathering in the UK (if not the world). The **Southport & Birkdale** courts were in excellent condition allowing beginners and more experienced players alike to

enjoy the weekend. Festival Manager Ivan Wheatley of **Westmorland**, is stepping down from the rôle, and our thanks for his excellent management skills over several years is duly recorded here - he will be a hard act to follow. Also on the recognition front, NW League Chair, Paul Rigge (**Pendle & Craven**), has been presented with a CA Diploma for his excellent contribution to croquet over many years. As NWF Development Officer, I visited **Cricceth CC** in mid-Wales to give support and advice. The small croquet group is part of a larger lawn tennis club (who have over 100 members) and their commitment to provide two half-courts to encourage more play in 2022 was evident. Nearby **Llanfairfechan CC** have offered to help with coaching and friendly games and Cricceth also benefits from equipment loans from the NWF and a CA start-up pack.

| David Cornes

West Midlands

Tied matches in the West Midlands. This year, the rules for the West Midland GC League were revised to cover the situations of teams of three or four, and to cover clubs with only one court. Also discussed were the rules to cover matches which result in an equal number of games. In the past, if there was an even number of games then one game was given an extra value to decide the tie. After much discussion it was decided that if the games were equal then net hoops would decide the winner and, in the extremely unlikely event of hoop count being equal, then the match was to be declared a draw. What happened in the first match of the season? **Kenilworth** hosted **Broadwas** and were behind by two games and therefore needed to win both doubles rubbers to draw level. This they achieved, and after much adding and checking, both teams had scored 92 hoops! So, the first match of the season was indeed declared a draw!

Kenilworth went on to win the GC League and Broadwas the AC League title.

The Welsh Connection with the WMF - The West Midlands Federation includes most of mid and south Wales, and over the last few years, croquet has been developing along the England-Wales border.

Shrewsbury is a long-established club and is closely linked with **Church Stretton**, **Ludlow Castle** and **Eardisley**. Distances between all WMF clubs can be great but there is much enthusiasm to improve croquet in these border areas. More recently, **Llanidloes CC**, in mid-Wales has joined the WMF fold. Llanidloes was a completely new club and at its inception ALL its members were new to croquet. They have worked hard to improve their lawns and their play, receiving help from the CA and some informal coaching and visits to existing clubs. Their progress has been all the more astonishing because much of it has happened during the pandemic!

Short Croquet and One Ball - Federation Chairman, Brian Shorney, has continued his initiatives of encouraging Short Croquet (SC) and One-ball. SC has enjoyed much interest and a One-ball tournament was held in Ludlow.

| **Adrian Morris**

East Midlands



CA Diploma Award recipient David Bell of Leicester CC at Phyllis Court

All three of the East Midlands Federation's GC leagues were completed this season. Division 1 was won by **Sheffield U3A**, Division 2 by **Long Eaton Park**, and Division 3 by **Nottingham B**. The 14-point and the 26-points AC Leagues were both won by **Ashby**, who had the star player in their team in Richard Sanville, who won all five of his games in the two competitions. **Nottingham CC** has been very successful, recruiting 57 new members this year, and one junior club has also increased by five new members. Nottingham CC hosted the GC First Eight (for the Ricky Savage Memorial trophy) with four of the eight players being Nottingham members. During the tournament a barbecue was held for 69 people, including many new members who came along to see the elite players in action. Also doing well on the new member front has been Ashby, where more new members have been recruited than for many years. **Ashby** converted a disused bowling green into two 5/7-size croquet lawns. They also recorded another great achievement in winning the GC Inter-Club competition for the fifth time. Newer 'kid on the block' **Branston CC** was formed as recently as November 2020, and play has been possible there throughout the 2021 season, in which there has been a lot of activity. In April the club had 20 members, but it ended the season with a membership of 37, thanks in part to holding an Open Day in June, and the Club has already organised internal tournaments and competitions. Branston members also took part in several local tournaments, and won the **Branston Open Doubles**, **Woodhall Spa's**

Lincoln Singles Cup and Invitation Cup, while one member blazed a trail for others to follow by entering two national B-Level Series tournaments, which has encouraged several other members. Branston is currently investigating the possibility of enlarging and improving their lawns, and any advice from other clubs who have undertaken similar projects would be gratefully received. **Darley Dale CC** has run two competitions this season, including the Laura Haywood Shield, named after a member still playing at 95. The three finalists scored equal points, but Louis McMeeken was declared the winner on a very close hoop count. In July, Darley Dale finally held an afternoon tournament for the Buxtons' Charity Bowl, after a previous attempt in 2019 was rained off twice, and COVID stopped it happening in 2020. This bowl was donated by Derek and Eileen Buxton from the Ashby CC, at the club's tenth anniversary dinner. David Gregory was victorious on the day, and the event raised £164 for the local hospice. **Leicester** Secretary Christine Fagan reports that numerous Learn to Play and Taster sessions resulted in 20 new members joining, which was a big increase on previous seasons. The club's Mark Buckley and Alison Murray Silver merit awards at the Hunstanton and Broadwas B-Level (3+) Series tournaments respectively. Leicester won the Bass Shield, and team member Paul Williams won the Coors Cup. A combined **Leicester and Melton Mowbray** team were runners-up at the short croquet tournament at Nottingham, and last but by no means least, David Bell was awarded a CA Diploma.

| **Mick Haytack FDO**

Southern

Southern Croquet Federation (SCF) ran a full set of league competitions. In the four AC leagues, **High Wycombe** won the A-Level (unrestricted) League, **Hamptworth** won the B-Level (0+) League and **Blewbury** won the Short Croquet League, whilst the Handicap League is still to be decided. In the five GC leagues, **Phyllis Court A** retained their Open League title, **Blewbury B** won the inaugural B-Level (3+) League, and **Caversham C** beat Caversham B in the One-Court Clubs handicap league. The GC doubles league is also undecided. However, the play-off for the interesting re-christened **Advantage GC league** (the SCF are hosting the official trial of this game for the WCF), has taken place and **Ryde C** (pictured) recorded a win for the South against their Northern counterparts **Phyllis Court C**. Ryde will therefore represent the SCF in the national GC Federations Shield next season alongside Phyllis Court, who retain their place as holders. Staying on the national theme, the joint **Harwell/Eynsham** team has reached the semi-final of the Longman Cup, despite my strategic blunder of getting my handicap cut to 2.5 before any of the matches were played (the competition limit is 3.5)! This meant that I have been the non-playing team captain with all the work and none of the fun. We were beaten



PHOTOGRAPH SCF Advantage GC League winners - Ryde 'C': Alistair Calder, Ron Gould, Joan Grove (C) & Chandra Shaw

3-4 in the semi by Hurlingham and then into fourth place by the same close score achieved by Bowdon. Many SCF clubs have seen a rise in membership this year, with **Harwell** in particular enjoying a 50% increase from 20 to 30 members - which bodes well for the future of the sport. **Phyllis Court** stretched their lead as the country's biggest club (by this measure) and now have 210 on their books, over 200 of whom are individual CA members. Tournament manager Ian Harrison reports that after an enforced one-year absence, the SCF Armada Trophy tournament re-appeared at **Winchester** in June. Previously this had been a one-day AC doubles event, but has been re-cast as an AC One-Ball, with the aim of attracting more players. Success of this venture can be judged by the participation of 16

players from nine clubs, ranging from experienced players to One Ball first-timers. Chris Pegrum (handicap 12) from **Caversham CC**, a recent graduate of Lincoln College, Oxford, who learned his croquet under college auspices rather than as a member of **OUACC**, was undefeated in the five-round Swiss and became the first solo name on the Armada Trophy.

The SCF's sister tournament for GC is a restricted doubles event for pairs with joint handicaps of 6+, and this year, Keith Southern and Tim Hughes of **East Dorset** were first-time winners of the Solstice Trophy.

| **Peter Allan**



Chris Pegrum, SCF Armada Trophy winner

South-East

Following the WCF decision that on-going travel restrictions in New Zealand mean that it is not possible for that nation to host the **2022 GC World Championship**, we're delighted to learn that Southwick has again been confirmed as host of the tournament, from 31st July to 7th August 2022. Clive Hayton said "Under normal circumstances, it was unlikely we would have had the opportunity to host the tournament again for 10 years or more and it is a tremendous accolade to the success of the 2019 Championship that the WCF has entrusted us with the 2022 event." The 2021 SECF One-Ball Tournament was won by host club **Canterbury** ahead of teams from **Medway**, **Ramsgate**, **Surbiton** and **Tunbridge Wells**. The event was held under a beautiful clear blue June sky, as Canterbury beat Medway in the

final to maintain their unbeaten record. The longest-break prize was presented to Charlie Martin (from Ramsgate). A wet day at Southwick on Sunday 8 August greeted 14 teams for the **SECF Teams Day** and my congratulations to everyone for enduring such atrocious conditions. The Doubles trophy was won by **Reigate Priory** who beat **Surbiton** in the final by 7-4. The losing semi-finalists were **West Worthing** and **Littlehampton**. The Singles trophy was a very close affair; Cheam 1 had been leading throughout the event, only to be caught by **Sussex County 1**, **Chichester**, and **Rottingdean**. But these three clubs ended up only sharing second place because **Guildford & Godalming** overtook all three in the last session to win the trophy.

| **Linda Gavigan**



The 2019 GC World Championship Final - Southwick will host again in 2022

South-West

Here in the South-West, we had very busy and successful season despite the restrictions, and we owe huge thanks to Stephen Custance-Baker, who made all our competitive croquet possible.

There were 184 matches in seven regional leagues, plus 18 play-offs and finals matches. Seven different clubs shared the nine league titles, with many of the finals settled by the smallest of margins.

Congratulations to all these winners:
AC Advanced League
Division 1 - **Bristol**
Division 2 - **Bath**
Division 3 - **Budleigh Salterton**
AC Federation League - **Winterborne Valley**
AC Intermediate League - **East Dorset**
Short Croquet League - **Bath**
GC Level Play League winners - **Winterborne Valley**
GC Handicap Play League - **Plymouth**
GC High Handicap Play League - **Budleigh Salterton**

| **Paul Francis**

BAMFORD WINS RECORD 12TH



Reg Bamford

Reg Bamford won the Association Croquet Open Singles Championship at Surbiton in early July. This was Bamford's twelfth victory in the historic Championship that dates back to Walter Whitmore's first win 1867. NICK PARISH looks back on the 2021 Championship with the aid of his diary.

Days 1 & 2 - Sat & Sun 3 & 4 July - THE DOUBLES CHAMPIONSHIP

The Association Croquet Open Championships began with the Open Doubles, this year held in its entirety before the singles began rather than being intertwined in its latter stages as in previous years. This change divided opinion, since it meant many players had little to do on the third day of the doubles. On the other hand, the doubles entry was higher than the singles for the first time for over 20 years, so perhaps it was popular. 15 pairs entered, including all but one of the top dozen UK-ranked players at the time of entry, with the missing player being Robert Fulford, who did play in the singles. There were no shocks in the first round; all the seeds not only progressed but did so 2-0 in their best-of-three matches. However the quarter-finals produced a notable upset, when Phil Eardley & Dominic Nunns defeated heavyweights Mark Avery & Jamie Burch. The semi-finals were played as best-of-five, given the easy conditions, but slow

play made the manager very grateful that both finished 3-0. In the first, Eardley & Nunns had an excellent chance to level their match against James Death & Samir Patel, but that chance slipped away and with it, the match. The second semi-final featured three World Champions, but the pair with two of them, Paddy Chapman & Stephen Mulliner, were defeated by Bamford and the sole "commoner", Pete Trimmer.

Day 3 - Monday 5 July - DEATH & PATEL WIN DOUBLES

The Open Doubles Champions are Death & Patel, who won the final 3-1. The final was played, as many matches were, as Alternate Stroke Doubles (ASD). This means that instead of each player owning their own ball and playing only that colour, the two players take it in turn to play strokes, regardless of which ball plays. All doubles games (including handicap doubles) may be played ASD if all players agree and it seems to be increasing in popularity in England, as it seen by many as more of a genuine contest between partnerships. At least a third of games at these Opens were played ASD. The third game of the final was particularly exciting, as starting from hoop 3, Bamford & Trimmer did an ASD TPO [a triple peel of the opponent's ball] as well as a peel on partner ball, and then pegged two balls off, leaving a two-ball ending of 1 v 2back. In a fascinating ending, Death eventually ran 1back to the boundary and Patel then hit a critical 30-yard shot at the opposition

ball in front of 4back. Shortly afterwards Trimmer missed a 10-yard shot, after which Death & Patel finished with a 4-hoop break to take a 2-1 lead that never looked like being overhauled. The doubles plate was won by Avery & Burch.

Day 4 & 5 - Tue & Wed 6 & 7 July - SINGLES PLAY WELL UNDER WAY

The last two days at Surbiton were dedicated to the preliminary stages of the Open Singles. Several years ago the Opens switched away from blocks and there is now a Swiss format for players to negotiate. In this system, players need to win a certain number of games (this year it was four wins from a maximum of eight games) to qualify for the knockout. Once a player has qualified, or can no longer manage to qualify, they stop playing in the Swiss. This system avoids dead games, which are common in blocks and ensuring every game matters. In addition, opponents are drawn to ensure that each player faces opposition of similar standards. The singles quality was extremely high this year, reflecting the fact that all the top players are playing but somewhat fewer of the -1s and -0.5s than normal. Most of the top players qualified, but there were plenty of shocks along the way. Mark Suter might have expected to lose to Bamford and beat Chris O'Byrne, but it ended up the other way round. Sam Murray qualified with early wins over Death and Burch, while Nigel Polhill was

AC OPEN CHAMPIONSHIP

still in contention having delivered TP wins over Trimmer and Jeff Dawson. The most surprising non-qualifier was Nunns, who played so well in the doubles but was unable to maintain that standard for the singles. There were still three places to be settled in games that began late yesterday evening, as players battled it out in fading light, and to the backdrop of the England-Denmark football match. This ensured a huge crowd (by croquet standards at any rate) were half-watching the football and half the croquet, with the latter enlivened by the occasional distracting roar as a result of the former. One of those games will see a further shock, as 2019 champion Death took on Suter, with the winner qualifying and the loser eliminated - a three-ball ending is ongoing following a Death TPO. Elsewhere Joel Taylor and James Hopgood have gone one better (or perhaps one worse) and are fighting out a two-ball ending, while lucky loser Gabrielle Higgins takes on Middlesex teammate Polhill for the final knockout spot. The main knockout will start late morning, once those games are complete, and will culminate with the final on Sunday.

Day 6 - Thursday 8 July - FINAL PLACES FOR KNOCK-OUT

The day started with the last of the Swiss games, which saw Death, Taylor and Polhill securing the final places in the knockout. In Death's case any relief was short-lived, as he was promptly knocked out by Taylor. - This was a big shock by any standards, given Death was 2019 singles champion, as well as having won the doubles just three days earlier. Taylor's shooting was superb, while Death's play was short of his usual high

standards. With the match tied at 1-1, Taylor embarked on a (very) delayed and tense TP to win. He peeled 4back before 3back, and the turn looked in peril when he was only able to peel penult as far as the peg in a straight double ending. However, leaving a ball behind, he played an excellent rush to rover, peeled a couple of inches through, and despite lacking a side ball managed to cannon the peelee out from behind rover to complete the TP and a memorable 2-1 victory. That was the only real shock. Bamford, Chapman, Fulford and Mulliner all secured the straightforward victories that the rankings suggested, and while two years ago Fisher defeating Trimmer might have been an upset, this year the upset would have been the other way round. Completing the quarter-final line-up were Christian Carter, who defeated Avery without conceding a hoop, and Giraud who overcame Burch in a much tighter match featuring an epic deciding game with lots of excitement but somewhat less precision croquet.

Day 7 & 8 - Fri & Sat 9 & 10 July - QUARTER AND SEMI FINALS

There were no great surprises in the quarter or semi-finals, although two matches came very close. Fresh from knocking out Death, Taylor took a 2-0 lead over Fisher in their quarter-final, and had he been able to complete the straight double finish to his QP, or subsequently hit a 13-yard shot, he would have beaten him. However Fisher is nothing if not a fighter, and made a great recovery to win 3-2. The other "almost shock" was Carter, who took Fulford to a deciding game in their quarter-final. With a TP in front of him to

take the match, he played a cannon and unfortunately sent striker's ball off the court and you don't get a second chance against Fulford. In the other two quarter-finals, Bamford and Chapman recorded slightly less precarious 3-1 victories over Giraud and Mulliner respectively. In the semi-finals, Fulford played beautifully against Fisher to win 3-0, although the latter could certainly have taken the second game but failed his TP at rover. In the other semi, Bamford won a very dramatic match 3-2 against Chapman, when, with everything hanging on the deciding game, Chapman was unable to finish his sextuple. After nine hours' play Bamford did complete his to clinch a place in his 17th final.

Day 9 - Sunday 11 July - FAMILIAR FINAL REG BAMFORD v ROBERT FULFORD

So, we were down to the final two of the Open Singles, and to nobody's great surprise they were Reg Bamford and Robert Fulford, who have each won 11 Opens titles (and incidentally five AC World titles each as well). Between them they had contested 35 Opens finals, and this was the eleventh against each other, Bamford having won six and Fulford four. Despite many pretenders to the crown, these two still set the standard for AC in the UK. The final featured no fewer than four sextuple peels - both players demonstrated a very high standard of break play, but Fulford's shooting was weaker, which with Bamford in imperious form was too great a handicap for him to overcome. It was all over and huge congratulations to winner Bamford who won 3-1 for his twelfth singles title, to become the leading Open singles winner of all time, 28 years after his first victory and 26 years after the first Bamford-Fulford final.

Jamie Burch won the Plate, and Joel Taylor the consolation Z. I'd like to finish by thanking the huge team of "elves" at Surbiton - all volunteers, who worked so hard to prepare lawns, set hoops, make and serve food, and operate the bar, for nine consecutive days. The public face of the elves most apparent are George Noble and Chris Osmond, but there are many others. These people, and many like them round the country, are the reason the croquet tournament scene is so enjoyable.

| Nick Parish



Rob Fulford

PHOTOGRAPHS Samir Patel

1st EIGHT THE PRESIDENTS CUP Winner - MARK AVERY

It's an easy game, isn't it? Every year the four top sets of eight players are selected to play in these four prestigious 'Eights' events, with the President's Cup being for the top available eight players in the country. What also happens every year, is the excitement around the selections themselves, the questions about who will make themselves available, who we think will be selected and who has 'done enough'.

There is also the excitement of the upcoming selections for the World Team Championship (MacRobertson Shield), where many of the players in contention will be competing at the President's Cup and will want to perform well for the team selection committee.

The selection policy is complicated and will always be a hard and thankless task for the selection committee who take charge of the challenge; players have to show their worth through the season where their wins, losses, quality and quantity of croquet played will be considered and compared.

This is precisely where the fun starts for the rest of us who look on with great anticipation, for we will have heard reports about who has been 'off their game' and who is 'hitting everything', so we have been making our own minds up as to who should be selected.

The cream of the crop

This year five of the President's Cup selected players; Mark Avery, James Death, Harry Fisher, David Maugham and Mark Suter, had all won championship events in the selection period, while Samir Patel won the Chairman's Salver (for the Second Eight) in 2020, and both Christian Carter and Stephen Mulliner, ranked 14 and 10 in the world respectively, had won matches against other President's Cup players. So one can see why these guys are the cream of the crop.

Once the selections for the Eights have been made, it's down to the serious business of the predictions contest (run by Nick Parish, entrants are required to pick the winner of each of the four Eights plus the Selectors' Weekend).

This year there were 47 predictions made. The favourite for the President's Cup was James Death, who had 17 backers to win, and, as an early favourite, this flamboyant player was picked by many before the selection period had even finished.



CA President Quiller Barrett and winner Mark Avery

But did they pick too early? The four-day event was played to Advanced rules rather than Super-Advanced as previously, and the Advanced game at this level was predictably less interactive, with 15 games finished +26tp, 3 games +26sxp, 1 game +26qp and 1 game +26 with no letters - many of these games will have ended with the loser not even taking croquet.

Fabulous Budleigh

As a spectator of the event, I just have to mention the fabulously welcoming and cheery club that Budleigh Salterton CC has become under the leadership of their Chairman John O'Gorman. From providing tasty lunches and treats for the players and their guests, through to bringing his own family along for some croquet fun in the sun, John made sure that all of us were welcomed with open arms, even to the extent of providing mini croquet for the mini spectators.

I should also mention for those of you who like more croquet than casual statistics, the lawns were in fabulous condition which made for perky Pres players all weekend. Who doesn't like a lawn speed of 10 to 11 for a feast of peeling turns?

Last day Spectacle - four can win!

As usual at the Eights events, it became increasingly clear that the last day of play would be quite the spectacle. With four players in contention for the win on day three, becoming two on day four, the croquet became a little more interactive. Mark Avery and Christian Carter were the final two who could take home the trophy, and by round 14, Avery had completed yet another meticulous triple peel to finish on 10 wins, but with Carter on 9 wins and in his final game against Stephen Mulliner, all eyes turned to that contest. Mulliner produced a fine break to complete

Finishing order: Mark Avery (10 wins), Christian Carter (9), Stephen Mulliner (9), James Death (8), Harry Fisher (7), Samir Patel (6), Mark Suter (4), David Maugham (3).

a TPO (Triple Peel on the Opponent) to peg out one of Carter's balls, having done a single POP (Peel on the Opponent) so Carter was starting with his other ball on hoop 2.

This final game of the tournament provided all the interaction we could possibly have dreamed of. With Carter hitting what seemed like anything and everything, and Mulliner playing the long game with tight 'wires' and some superb strategic leaves, the crowd was engrossed for the entire game.

Knowing that if Carter won, there would be a play-off between him and Avery, but if Mulliner won Avery would be the outright winner, the pressure was building for the final two players.

Spectators acclaim winner Avery

Fortunately there is lots of space at Budleigh, for more and more spectators came along to line the north boundary of the court, whilst tucking into a delightful afternoon tea.

2016 World Champion Mulliner finally took the win in that last game, handing the 2021 President's Cup title to Avery, who, with eight TPs out of his 10 game wins, was a worthy winner indeed.

I reflect on my spectating time at the event. Like that of any great spectator, my croquet from the side-lines commentary was not only perfect, but had the players listened to my thoughts they would all be on an eight-way tie. Alas, it was Avery himself who made quote of the tournament, whilst addressing my tactical genius thoughts on his opponent's croquet - "Puh, It's an easy game isn't it!"

Alison Maugham

PHOTOGRAPHS Samir Patel from the President's Cup at Budleigh

2nd EIGHT CHAIRMAN'S SALVER Winner - ROBIN BROWN

The field for the Second Eight tournament for the Chairman's Salver at Ryde, was of a very high standard (nearly all having a -2 handicap).

For some it was their first Chairman's, but most had played in it many times and most had won it at least once. It was, however, Mark van Loon's first eight of any sort, and he played very analytically and effectively throughout, especially when his long-hitting form returned.

Ryde's four courts were judged to be playing pretty well, with little moss and a good even grass cover. However they were on the slow side (9.5 to 10 seconds, getting faster in the afternoon sun) and this proved to limit the court-length shots that Ian Lines and Nigel Polhill in particular could manage, especially towards the end of Saturday when five games were played till dusk fell.

The late finish was due to only three games being completed on the Friday after a later start to tidy the courts (a wet and windy night bringing down leaves, plus crow damage) and a prompt finish to allow time for late-evening mowing. Duncan Reeve set off with six straight wins and everyone struggled to keep in the hunt. Robin Brown was the first to beat him, and it was he and Giraud that led the chasing pack.

Going into the last of the 14 rounds, Reeve, Brown and Giraud each had 10 wins, and the former two were to go head-to-head for the second time. Reeve set off well, but his under-hit hoop 3 attempt rolled back, leaving him walking off the lawn muttering 'game over'. He failed to hit in after his 4-back lift and so it was time for an early ferry to the North Island and long drive back to the West Country.

Meanwhile, Giraud overcame Polhill in the latter's best game of the second round, and this set up a play-off between Giraud and Brown who were tied on 11 wins. The sun came out and spectators flocked around the show court below Ryde's glass-fronted raised patio.

Brown took the early advantage after an aggressive opening, went quickly to 4-back and then was going well with a



Harry Fisher at Beautiful Budleigh

triple peel attempt until he hit the peelee in the jaws of 4-back hard to rush it through, instead it clonked solidly against the upright and did not move.

With Brown sitting out on peg & penult, scoreless Giraud had to hit, and to the delight of the crowd he did just that, almost full on.

He went to 4-back, saw Brown's lift shot miss by just a whisker and seized his opportunity. With two lovely pass-rolls to end up in almost the exact same position in the jaws of 4-back as Brown had been earlier.

Giraud had taken note though, got the peel, and the crowd anticipated watching his ninth successful triple-peel in 15 games, but a few shots later, he failed to run hoop 5 under control.

This was another 'game over' moment and four minutes later, Brown had finally won the Chairman's Salver for a second time, the first being all of 21 years ago!

Giraud ended the four days with eight triple-peels, Reeve and Brown both had four, Lines three and Murray and Ormerod one each; unusually at this level there were no TPOs (triple-peeling of the opponent's ball), nor even any attempts.

Harry Oldham

Finishing order: Robin Brown (11 wins, plus the play-off), Alain Giraud (11), Duncan Reeve (10), Sam Murray (7), Mark van Loon (7), Mark Ormerod (5), Ian Lines (4), Nigel Polhill (1)

3rd EIGHT THE SPENCER ELL Winner - JAMES HOPGOOD

Details of the Third Eight tournament for the Spencer Ell Cup at Ramsgate are thin.

Hot favourite James Hopgood won, but only just, from Callum Johnson who beat the former Mac player in both their head to head games but at the end, trailed by the slimmest of margins, one win, in the totals column. Hopgood recorded six triple peels, including one on opponent, whilst the rest of the field achieved eight between them.

Chris Roberts

Finishing order: James Hopgood (12 wins), Callum Johnson (11), Robert Wilkinson (8), Omiad Hallam (7), Phil Cordingley (6), Aston Wade (5), Debbie Lines (4), Stephen Wright (3)



Christian Carter

4th TREASURER'S TANKARD EIGHT Winner - David Warhurst

The Treasurer's Tankard got off to a great start this year. After some rather overly-insistent communications regarding a start time, the Manager contrived to turn up late on the first day! This was shortly followed by the realisation that Martin Murray, entrusted with shuttling the Tankard itself to the competition, had left it many miles away back at home.

This year's weather has made it near impossible to create difficult conditions, but Guildford CC has a well-deserved reputation for making things difficult but fair.

The first round was a bit of a struggle, and hopes of four games per day to get ahead of schedule dissipated early on. Lorna Dewar stood out, consistently running longer hoops, which gave others some courage.

It's only fair to say that a lot of defensive tactics were employed, generally successfully.

Advanced tactics didn't come into play too much, save for Neal Bacon taking advantage of a jawed 4-back to manage a TPO (triple peel on opponent), with partner on 4-back!

Diagonal spreads and OSLs (sld standard leaves) generally ruled supreme. Of the ten triple-peels completed, Andrew Hobbs managed the first and as probably the most consistent player going into the event, he was often let down by the random lawn dalliances which made precision croquet so problematic. Murray was, perhaps unsurprisingly, the one to cause trouble. Veering from being a benign threat to completing immaculate triples, missing the peg-out on one and using a rover bombard on another, he scored all of the entertainment points. Pegged-out endings became very popular, accompanied by some of the most questionable tactics imaginable, but provided a lot of discussion along with reference to some book that Pete Trimmer once wrote. Often, these endings were comically unintentional - one day saw four missed peg-outs, from as little as two yards.

By the last day, David "Warhorse" Warhurst had a solid grip on the crown, through his defensive patience and solid shooting. He romped home and the nicest guy won.

Chris O'Byrne



Nick Steiner

Finishing order: David Warhurst (11 wins), Neil Bacon (9), Andrew Hobbs (8), Martin Murray & Chris O'Byrne (7), Lorna Dewar & Jonathan Wolfe (6), Neil Coote (2).

5th SELECTORS' WEEKEND TIER Winner - Nick Steiner

The strength of the field for the 'fifth tier' Selectors Weekend, was back to the usual, after the Covid affected tournament of 2020, with handicaps ranging from -0.5 to 3. Rather less usual was the presence of no less than five Nottingham entrants. The Nailsea courts were slow on the opening day of three due to 16mm of rain on the previous day but they speeded up over the weekend as the weather improved.

Cliff Jones, who managed the tournament with his usual efficiency, ably assisted by Andrew Gregory from time to time, employed a two blocks of eight format and, to avoid a late finish on the final day, it was agreed that the two block winners would play-off for the trophy, with the runners-up to contest third place. At the end of Day 1, Andrew Killick was the clear leader in Block A with three wins and there was a four-way tie in Block B between Nick Steiner, Gary Bennett, Andrew Gregory and Bob Thompson. Despite a time limit being imposed for the last round, three games had to be pegged-down.

Thankfully an early start on Day 2 ensured that all the pegged-down games were

SELECTORS' BLOCK A:
Robert Upton (6 wins), Andrew Killick (6), Clive Goode (4), Andy Dibben & Paul Pristavec (3), Dave Gunn, Cliff Jones & Sophie McGlen (2)
Block B: Nick Steiner (6), Beatrice McGlen (5), Andrew Gregory (4), Gary Bennett, Keith Ross, Bob Thompson (3), James Brind & Ian Draper (2).

completed by the scheduled 9:30 start time, and more time limits were imposed to ensure that there would be no repeat. At the end of the second day, Block A had a two-way tie between Killick and Robert Upton (both on 5/6) with Upton having the head to head win, but Block B had a clear leader in Steiner with the same tally. Killick eased to another win on day 3 and sat patiently hoping that Sophie McGlen would beat Upton, but the Glamorgan man prevailed to win Block A on the 'who beat whom' rule, while in Block B, Steiner won his sixth game to also reach the final. The final was a fairly tense affair, culminating in a two-ball ending in which Steiner eventually triumphed over Upton and Killick beat Beatrice McGlen in the third place match.

There were no triple peels throughout the three days but Cliff Jones did complete a TPO (triple peel of opponent) and Andrew Gregory managed to achieve two in-lawn cannons in the same turn which may be some sort of a record.

Clive Goode

Finishing Order: 1. Nick Steiner, 2. Robert Upton, 3. Andrew Killick, 4. Beatrice McGlen.

1st RICKI SAVAGE MEMORIAL EIGHT Winner - J-P MOBERLY

John-Paul Moberly retained the GC First Eight title, and in doing so ensured his name is still the only name on the new Ricki Savage Memorial trophy. He is also the first to defend the First Eight title since Ryan Cabble in 2012.

Super-strong field & half are U25

Nottingham CC was as welcoming as usual and the players enjoyed the much improved facilities after the renovations last winter. The field included three previous winners, including the defending champion, and Rachel Gee as the top four seeds, as well as the current GC Open Champion Aston Wade and U25 Open Champion Euan Burrridge. Indeed, this was the first year in which half of the field were under 25 years of age, and six out of the eight were under 35.

Round 1 - headache for the Manager

A best-of-three 13-point games all-play-all block was played from Saturday to Monday morning to determine the top four who would progress to the knockout. The first match on the Sunday morning between Rachel Gee and Stephen Mulliner took three hours for the first two games, so they were asked to pause the match, have lunch, and come back to it later, if necessary.

In the end, the outcome of this game couldn't have affected who progressed from the block, so it was abandoned, which meant that Mulliner was the only one to play exactly two games against everyone else, and also meant that the only match that Gee lost was to club rival Ian Burrridge.

By contrast, Moberly finished all his matches, only losing to Gee, and was the only player to win 6 matches. Euan Burrridge matched Gee on 5 wins, having only lost to the top two seeds, Moberly and Gee. Wade came in fourth on 3 wins, just ahead of Ian Burrridge on net games.

Last hoop drama in the semis

Moberly dealt with Wade with relative ease in the first semi-final, albeit after a closer second game, winning 7-2, 7-6, while all the drama happened in the other semi, between fellow Nottingham members Gee and Euan Burrridge, who are familiar with each other's games, to say the least. Their recent head-to-head was fairly even - Burrridge beat Gee in last year's London Masters, but the outcome



J-P Moberley

was reversed in this year's Nottingham Championship, and in the block match on the previous day.

The first game was a straightforward win for Gee, before Burrridge managed to turn the tables at hoop 13 in game 2. In the deciding game, Gee had a comfortable 6-2 lead, but Burrridge battled to win hoops 9 and 10, and got the advantage at 11. He manufactured a chance to run the hoop and did so, and was pleased to see the ball continue down the court and also run hoop 12! He'd levelled the score 6-6, with his other ball

onside in the vicinity of hoop 13. The match was not over yet, though, and both players fought hard to give themselves a chance of winning the hoop. Surprisingly, Gee missed a two-yard attempt, Burrridge shot from the boundary and also missed, but his next boundary attempt took barely any wire, and the ball shot off the south boundary and into the bushes. So Burrridge had his revenge, after losing their block match, and beat Gee 3-7, 7-6, 7-6.

THE FINAL

Euan Burrridge v J-P Moberly

The final started at 5pm and Moberly's consistent clearing and hooping won him the first game 7-3, but that consistency completely vanished in game 2, and allowed Burrridge back into the contest 4-7. In the decider, Burrridge was 1-2 down, but - given Moberly's less good hooping in the last hour - he elected to leave him a three-yard hoop shot after a battle at hoop 4.

This paid off; Burrridge capitalised on Moberly's miss and was able to quickly take a 3-2 lead, after a clearance from



Euan Burridge

behind hoop 4 with the same ball. After control of hoop 6 seesawed from one player to the other, Burrridge hit what could have been a decisive clearance, sending Moberly to the north boundary, with his other ball ready to secure the hoop. When the return clearance missed, Burrridge would have been in a strong position for the match at 4-2, but his hoop attempt hit the outside wire and the ball was sent almost to the west boundary. This allowed Moberly to regain control again, level at 3-3 and resettle in the match.

Burrridge had a go at running hoop 7 from the boundary, but the hoop wasn't having it and Moberly was able to battle through 7 and 8. As Burrridge let a few unforced errors creep in at hoops 9 and 10, Moberly ran home 7-3, winning the Final 7-3, 4-7, 7-3.

The Bowl

James Galpin beat Mulliner in the first round of the Bowl 10-4 with superior clearing, and he brought that with him to just as easily defeat Richard Bilton 7-5, 7-3, thereby winning the Bowl. Nottingham CC were holding a barbecue for members on the Sunday evening, and the players very gratefully accepted their invitation to join them, while the club's members enjoyed watching some thrilling GC.

World Croquet Federation (WCF) President Ian Burrridge also took this opportunity to present a gift from the Management Committee to Stephen Mulliner, who was retiring as Secretary-General the following week.

Richard Bilton

2nd Winner - RAOUF ALLIM
3rd Winner - JACK GOOD

Reports have been held over to the next issue where space will allow full coverage

OBITUARIES

MARY CURRIE 1930 - 2021



Mary Currie was one of the first members of the Ramsgate Club. She passed away peacefully on 15 May.

I met her after the club had been on its present site for a couple of years and, as our friendship grew, so did our involvement in club activities including the CA events.

A strong player in her own right, Mary won many of the club's ladies events and doubles with me. It was not long before Mary managed the CA tournaments, while I played. As a member of the committee that organised the Ramsgate International Tournaments, Mary took on the rôle of the "hostess with the mostest" as the club entertained players from around the world, creating friendships with players from Egypt, USA and Italy that have lasted to this day.

If I were asked if Mary left a legacy to the Croquet World it would be her teacher's instinct to create Ramsgate's Junior Section. From watching some of the ball-boys and ball-girls playing around a hoop at one of the International weekends, she suggested that, if they would like to try the game, they should come down the following Saturday and have some coaching. The expected four or five attendees ended up numbering fifteen and the effort has certainly paid dividends - as the likes of David Dray, James Goodbun and Tobi Savage have gone on to greater things, and Tobi is now looking to recruit youngsters himself.

If there is one thing that sticks out in my relationship with Mary regarding croquet, it was while playing in the Worlds in Brighton; I missed a crucial shot (nothing new in that), except that I heard the echo of Private Pike as madam announced "Stupid Boy!"

Three stalwarts of the Ramsgate club have passed away recently - Len Hawkins, Bernard Smith and Mary. I am sure that it will not be long before the three of them are arranging their coaching sessions and tournaments in heaven - God Bless and rest in Peace

| Roy Ware

ABDUL AHMED

We are sad to announce that Abdul passed away suddenly but peacefully in Royal Blackburn Hospital on 31st August.

Abdul has been a long-time member of the Pendle & Craven CC and achieved some success as a player, winning the All England AC Handicap title in 1999 and the same crown for Golf Croquet in 2002. He also won and defended the CA's Men's Silver Challenge Bowl (one of the trophies of the Peel Memorials) in 2009 and 2010.

Abdul managed and refereed many events for the club, for the NW Federation and even the World Croquet Federation!

Lately he was instrumental in the success of Pendle's U3A group visits and his gentle coaching style - "Will be sadly missed".

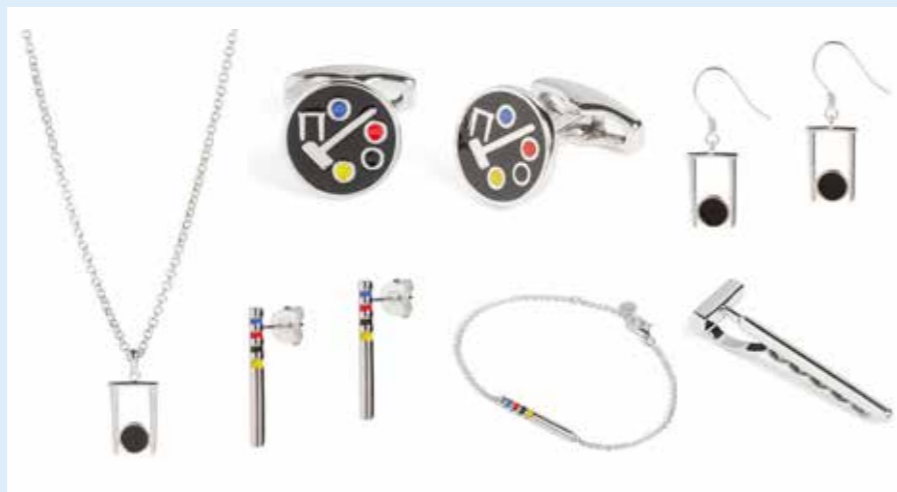
A well-attended service was held for this retired mathematics teacher at St Thomas' Church, Barrowford on Monday 20 September, where eulogies covered his passion for croquet as well as gardening, poetry, contract bridge, chess and bowls, his love of Spanish Guitar Music and his tolerance of Live Jazz (due to his love of his wife's company and taste).

Abdul is now reunited with Judith in Barrowford Cemetery, who preceded him in 2019.

| Paul Rigge



NEW Croquet Jewellery range for the CA by Simon Carter



"As a regular player on the croquet circuit, I was delighted to design this range of cufflinks and jewellery for the CA.

The jewellery is in polished Sterling Silver highlighted with semi-precious stones, the cufflinks and pins are in a polished Rhodium plate with hand painted enamel.

I've used all the key components of our beloved game, and worked them into pieces that are fun, but highly wearable. Perfect for yourself, or ideal for the croquet addicts in your life!"

Simon Carter

The CA Shop • www.croquetassociationshop.org.uk

DAVE WIDDISON 1955 - 2021

Big Dave" Widdison was one of the most friendly and unassuming golf croquet players on the circuit. His passing is a loss to all that knew him.

Dave first took up croquet at Bishop Monkton in Yorkshire as a result of always hanging around there waiting for wife, Andrea, to finish her game.

Asked to give it a try, all-round sportsman Dave did, and found that he both loved it and had a knack for the game.

That wasn't too surprising as he had studied PE at Loughborough University, was a serious runner (winning a hilly Bradford marathon in just 2 hours 28 minutes), a keen cyclist, and was also an accomplished guitar player.

Jack Upsall, Chairman of Bishop Monkton CC, said "David was an outstanding player, a cheerful and outgoing personality, and a friend who was always keen to share his knowledge and encourage others." Later Dave was a member of Pendle CC and Ripon Spa CC where Ted Flexman commented that "Dave was a fine and gentle man who always found time to organize the Ripon Spa team in The Northern League".

Being very competitive and keen to improve his skills, Dave first entered the CA's Grass Roots competition at a heat at Ben Rhydding CC.

By 2014, he was playing on the B-Level Series circuit and got to the National Final that year and also in 2015, when, not content with travelling the UK, he took part in the Lake Toxaway Invitational in North Carolina.

2016 proved to be a breakout year for Dave, as his Ranking Dynamic Grade rocketed from 1877 to 2174 and he had A-Level Series wins in the Pendle and Northampton Opens, leading to him winning the inaugural A-Level Series title.

He followed this up by winning the Kate Jones Memorial Trophy (for the GC Second Eight) beating Peter Balchin on the 13th hoop when Peter generously put Dave's ball through the hoop.

Dave was invited to join the International Performance Development Squad where he met Lionel Tibble, who contributed "Sometimes on rare occasions, when your life path crosses with another, you instinctively know and have an intuitive feeling that this person will become and remain a friend in the truest sense of the word." They went on to win the Black Sheep Doubles together.

In 2017, Dave was selected for England at the European GC Championship where he was a semi-finalist in the Plate and he made his Inter-Counties debut for the combined Yorkshire/Durham team. The following year Dave and Andrea really got the travelling bug, and they attended the Scottish Open (finalist), the Swedish Open, the Austrian Open (winner), the Sarasota Open (winner), the Baltic Open and the Over 50s World Championship in Egypt where he was thrilled to win the Plate.

Dave's technique was never in the classical mould; for him, hands well apart and crouching low over his mallet with a distinct stop shot action, he bludgeoned the ball through the hoop, using a keen eye especially when attempting an acutely angled shot.

Some of Dave's happiest tournaments were when he was wearing the Royal Blue Yorkshire/Durham shirt at the Inter-Counties. His play was often inspirational and his contribution in overcoming the Nottinghamshire team that fielded four -4 handicappers in 2019 was a most memorable occasion.

He was a fine doubles partner and must have been thrilled when he partnered Andrea to a runners-up position in the National Forest GC Doubles in 2020.

Dave's final tournament was the English National Singles Championship (Ascot Cup) in 2020 when he won the plate. He faced his diagnosis of pancreatic cancer with great courage and gentle, good humour.

He leaves Andrea, their two daughters, Prudence and Rosie, and three grandchildren.

| Stuart Smith



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Michael Percival

07780 677943

michael@croquetmallets.co.uk

Bury win National SC competition

The Big Short Croquet Weekend in mid-September saw several key events in the Short Croquet (SC) calendar running simultaneously.

Four Federations qualified teams through to the final stage of the National SC Inter-Club Competition, but sadly Blewbury CC, representing the Southern Croquet Federation, was unable to field a team matching the exacting requirements of the competition. The South West, a SC stronghold, was holding a major SC event of their own that weekend and so that left Nottingham playing for the East Midlands, Bury representing the North West, and York flying the flag for Yorkshire.

An eleventh-hour decision was made to hold the final on one day rather than two and Blewbury's Joe King quickly came up with an excellent three-way format. Battle duly commenced at Bowdon, with Alan Mayne doing a splendid job as tournament manager.

The White Rose team proved no match for Nottingham and Bury, who fought hard for supremacy. After 21 games (each limited to 75 minutes), Bury edged a well-deserved victory for the North West.

Adams wins SC Viking Challenge

That same weekend, York hosted its usual SC Viking Challenge which is the longest established of the SC tournaments in the CA Fixtures Calendar.

Regular attendees mixed with tournament debutants and several players, including 2020 winner Christine Rice (East Dorset), made the journey up from the south to compete.

At the end of day one, after five quick-fire timed rounds, Sue Longcroft (Beverley) and local newcomer Chris Atkinson had a lead, but by the close of the event experience, care and strategy had won through in the shape of Peter Adams (Caversham, pictured) who took the trophy back down south with an excellent eight victories out of nine record.



SC GAME TACTICS

AC players trying SC for the first time often ask whether special tactics are involved, so here is my advice. SC is simply 14-point handicap AC played on a half-size court, with full bisques, a trivial adjustment of the wiring rule and its own handicapping system. The best SC game plan is therefore similar to that for 14-point handicap AC: use bisques to get

in quickly and set up a break, then go to peg. Plan to use half your bisques for the first ball, and half for your second.

Games are short, so seize the initiative early.

If you win the toss and are confident in three-ball breaks, go first. Otherwise go second, to be the first to have all four balls in play and give yourself first chance to set up that all-important first break.



A clever leave at The Open for Paddy Chapman and Oppo unknown
PHOTOGRAPHS Samir Patel



COACHING

Raouf Allim played Association Croquet whilst reading Medicine at Cambridge

University in the 70's and was twice the University Cuppers champion (with partner Martin Coward). He took up Golf Croquet seriously in 2018, and won the GC Second Eight (Kate Jones Memorial Trophy) in both 2020 and 2021.

In January 2018, I was sitting at a Cambridge University Croquet Reunion dinner opposite Stephen Mulliner. I'd recently retired, and had returned to playing croquet after a gap of more than 30 years. I mentioned that I was enjoying playing GC and was thinking of dipping my toe into competitive play, starting with some B-Level tournaments (I had a GC handicap of +2), but he told me to forget all that and just throw myself in at the deep end.

In at the Deep End

Change of plan – I signed up for some A class tournaments instead! In this I was greatly helped by the advice of croquet buddies Chris Roberts and Roger Goldring.

In my second tournament at Wrest Park I had the honour of playing the inestimable (and frankly slightly terrifying) Lionel Tibble. He was cool and calm, smoking a cigarette while we waited for the double-bankers. I was nervous, sweaty palmed, and had butterflies in the stomach. Lionel politely asked me about my croquet experience, and in the conversation I bemoaned the fact that I couldn't get into the Open Championships (Stephen did say to jump in at the DEEP END) because of my rubbish grade. I think Lionel's exact words were, "Steady on. You haven't started playing yet." I'm not sure what he thought of me, and perhaps I didn't make a great first impression. I did manage to take a game off him in the semi-final, so it wasn't all terrible.

My IPDS invitation

At the end of 2018, I was pleasantly surprised to get an email from Lionel (Director of the GC International Performance Development Squad) inviting me to join the IPDS in 2019. What an honour!

We started with the traditional early-Spring freezing weekend at Wrest Park. It was a pleasure getting to know the other squad members, who spanned the generations. We had the talented youth of Euan Burridge and James Galpin, as well as more mature folk such as Steve Leonard and Colin Britt (and me, I suppose...).

THE INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT SQUAD - A PERSONAL ACCOUNT BY RAOUF ALLIM



Mentored Weekend at Wrest Park Back row: Tim King, Aston Wade, Raouf Allim, Lionel Tibble, Tim Jolliff, Harvey Smith, Sam Cuthbert. Front row: Ron Carter, Morgan Case, Richard Bilton, Michelle Leonard, Jane Tewson, Rachel Gee, Will Mellor, Jack Good.

Wrong ball rules, big jump shots and insightful tactics

We had an interesting presentation by Stephen Custance-Baker explaining the new wrong-ball rule. I think I had the advantage over everyone else of not knowing what the old rules were, so it wasn't as confusing for me. We then had some practical sessions, which included coached games, with players such as J-P Moberly, Lionel Tibble, Richard Bilton and Tim King lending their wisdom. We also worked on big jump shots, and had some video feedback. We had a session on all of the angled clears and promotions that allow you to gain position for the next hoop and negate your opponent's 'first-up' advantage. These were great sessions, as it's impossible to get coaching with players at this level anywhere else.

The major insights I got from this weekend were on the tactical aspects of the game. I had spent 2018 walking around the court saying 'Blue/Red/Black/Yellow' endlessly, and still getting the order wrong, so my tactical knowledge was pretty rudimentary. When J-P talked about correct positioning (he said something really simple during the game which was, "If you go there your opponent can clear you to the corner"), I suddenly realized I had spent a whole season putting my balls in the wrong place, and what's worse, I hadn't been thinking about it either. This weekend really switched my brain on for the first time, as I began to realize the benefits of good tactics.

Covid-19 and back to work as a GP

Unfortunately, I missed the Autumn mentored weekend, because of a conflict with the AC Eights, but I was looking forward to the 2020 season. Then Covid-19 hit... I answered the government call-up and returned to work as a GP in the Buckinghamshire Coronavirus Service. What a nightmare 2020 was for medical professionals! I won't tell you more about it because this isn't the right place for it and, frankly, it still makes me cry.

Performance analysis was a real eye-opener

In April 2021 the IPDS had a remote training session on Zoom, concentrating mainly on Performance Analysis as developed by Andrew Cowing. The Cowing Performance Analysis tool is predicated on classifying every stroke played as a success/fail, judged on the intended outcome of the stroke. The analyst sits courtside, scoring your every stroke, and you just get on with your game.

As an exercise it offers insights into the relative frequency of the different types of stroke, and your success with each type of stroke. At the end of a game it is usually easy to see where a particular player has dominated, and indeed why that player won the game. The take home point for me from doing the analysis a couple of times was the importance of positioning.

Mentored weekend

A few weeks ago, we had the Mentored Weekend at Wrest Park; they laid on

some great lawns for us, complete with Atkins Quadway hoops. Many thanks to the team who stuck those in! We were blessed with good weather, and had amazing coaching, all scheduled on a multi-coloured timetable by Rachel Gee. We played each other, we played Elite Squad players, we had mixed singles and doubles, and we had access to some of the best croquet players in England. On this occasion we had the company of Rachel Gee, Aston Wade, Richard Bilton, Lionel Tibble and Tim King.

As an example of one of the sessions, Jack Good and I played as a doubles pair against Rachel Gee, and we asked her to declare her shot intention before playing every shot. We discussed any of her shots with her if we wished. This, to me, is the essence of what the IPDS offers, which is coaching you can't get anywhere else.

So what has the IPDS done for me?

Being selected was a great boost for my self-esteem. I got to know many of the players who play in the top tournaments, which made me more comfortable in entering these. It helped me identify strengths and weaknesses in my game, and in particular it woke my brain up. It has undoubtedly made me a better player. Lionel Tibble has laboured long and hard to make the IPDS work, and his achievements are truly laudable. The Elite Squad members who have donated their time to this project deserve great praise. The take home message is that if you get an invitation to the IPDS don't turn it down!

| Raouf Allim

RECENT COACHING QUALIFICATIONS

The following people have all been added to the CA List of Coaches and congratulations to them all.

Are you interested in becoming a coach? If so, please keep your eyes open for course announcements which are usually run via the Coaching Academies, where places are limited and get taken up quickly.

QUALIFIED COACHES

(Qualified to coach appropriate skills and tactics throughout the country)

GOLF CROQUET - Grade 2

Helena Jansson Phyllis Court CC
Ian Shore High Wycombe CC
Mike Jay Compton CC

GOLF CROQUET - Grade 1

Brian Jamieson Caversham CC
Carol Jamieson Caversham CC

ASSOCIATION CROQUET - Grade 2

Chris Coull Sussex County CC

ASSOCIATION CROQUET - Grade 1

Brian Jamieson Caversham CC

ACCREDITED COACHES - CLUB-LEVEL

(Trained to coach high handicaps and beginners at their own clubs)

Pamela Branley Abbey CC
Gill Clarke Bath CC
Andy Dixon Nottingham CC
Ed Dolphin Sidmouth CC
Chris Greensted Plymouth CC
Lyndon Hughes Bath CC
Martin Isles East Dorset CC
Carol Jamieson Caversham CC
Jackie Raby Cheltenham CC
Ian Shore High Wycombe CC
Roger Watson Nottingham CC
Naomi Whitehead Cheltenham CC
Ian Willis Kington Langley CC

**Sarah Hayes
Chair, CA Coaching Committee**

WOMEN'S GC COACHING

FOR 2022, 2023 & THE WOMEN'S GC WORLDS AT SOUTHWICK

Women's Golf Croquet World Championship will be hosted at Sussex County CC (Southwick) in August 2023.

If you are already playing a lot of GC, are keen to play and want to improve your chances in the event, or if you were even considering giving Golf Croquet a proper go, the next two seasons are the time!

Following the hugely successful Women's Group AC Coaching that took place prior to the Women's AC World Championship at Nottingham in 2015, a similar programme of coaching events is going to be run during 2022 and 2023 in the run-up to the Women's GC Worlds Championship at Southwick in August 2023.

Rachel Gee and Ian Burrige will be running two single-day coaching sessions (with identical content) at the beginning of 2022, and here is the plan:

Sat 9 April 2022 - Nottingham CC
Sun 10 April 2022 - Cheltenham CC

There will be two further weekends in 2023 for those likely to gain a place in the event.

If you would like to register your interest, and haven't already been in touch in the last few weeks, or have any further questions, please contact me.

Rachel Gee
rachelvgee@yahoo.com



Helena Jansson has improved her coaching qualification to GC Grade 2. Here she is with Jeremy and Lizzie Wheeler at Phyllis Court

NOW IT'S TIME TO SAY GOODBYE

My tenure as Chair of the CA Coaching Committee (CACC) comes to an end in November 2021. I do not yet know who will be taking over but I know that they will have a great team behind them – the best in fact.

Whilst there are many serious aspects to the position there is also the opportunity to make loads of new contacts and friends and have many laughs with them along the way.

Sadly, I think the old ways of committee get-togethers at meetings at the Victory Services Club in London have been firmly replaced by Zoom.

Being able to chat face to face cannot really be replicated through computer screens, and I therefore count myself lucky to have been able to get to know all the CACC members and thank them for being so welcoming all those years ago – I'll miss you. After November, there will be a new Chair of the Committee, but if you do forget and send me messages in error, please be assured that I will forward these on for you. Attend courses and enjoy yourselves!

Best wishes, Sarah Hayes

FIRST GC PLATINUM AMONG MERIT AWARDS CLAIMED

You will see within these Coaching Pages a list of recipients of the new GC Merit Awards. Recipients have been really thrilled to get their awards and I have received many emails thanking the CA Coaching Committee for this initiative, and even a photo of one proud recipient with badge firmly attached to their cap! For the croquet 'facts people' out there, the first Platinum Award was made to **Raouf Allim** – of the two recipients, he actually claimed his award straight away and therefore became the first to have received it!



Claiming awards has been a real issue

I am optimistically hoping this is because they are new this season, and I have been contacting Tournament Managers to remind them to inform their winners, but am unable to guarantee this will happen every year. I felt particularly sorry for one chap who might have been planning to collect the set (of bronze, silver and gold awards) because if his club had held their C-Level (7+) Series tournament before their B-Level (3+) Series (they were on consecutive days) he might still be on track. However, because the B was played first and he won it, he was awarded a GC Silver Merit Award, so when he subsequently won the C event as well, he was ineligible for a Bronze Award because he already had the Silver – that was a shame!

Debutant Connolly is surprised by his award

Kevin Connolly of Watford CC won the end of season C-Level (7+) National Final at Ryde – well done that man! However, he will not receive a GC Bronze Merit Award for this achievement because he had already been awarded one. He won the very first Bronze to be awarded earlier this year, and I was pleased to be able to get the award to Watford CC in advance so as to be a surprise for the winner.

I emailed Kevin to congratulate him, and he replied: "...I'm a bit confused. I'm not sure about a GC Bronze Merit Award. I've only entered my first tournament, a GC C-Level, and was lucky enough to win it. So, I'm not sure if this is a bronze level merit; or you have emailed the wrong person". How very humble of him and "Yes Kevin it was for you!" Very well done indeed to enter and win your first tournament and then go on to win the Series final as well.

If you haven't won a GC Merit Award yet, do make sure to enter the relevant Series tournaments next season and you just never know – you might be another Kevin!

**Sarah Hayes
Chair, CA Coaching Committee**

MERIT AWARDS

ASSOCIATION CROQUET

Gold

Tim O'Donnell	East Dorset June Week	June
Neal Bacon	Southwick Advanced A Class	July
George Plant	CA v SCA	August

Silver

Neil Fillery	Budleigh Salterton	August
Neil Adams	Hunstanton 122nd Annual	August

Bronze

Sam Cuthbert	Cheltenham Easter Handicap	April
Francis Lambert	East Dorset June Week	June
Ged. Smolskas	Fylde Handicap Weekend	July
Philip Snowden	Fylde Handicap Weekend	July
John Crompton	Tyneside High Handicappers	July
Nigel Durie	Tyneside High Handicappers	July
Ed Dolphin	All England Handicap Final	September
Guy Hewitt	Woking Autumn Open	September

GOLF CROQUET

Platinum

Raouf Allim	Kate Jones Memorial (2nd Eight)	August
J-P Moberly	Ricki Savage Memorial (1st Eight)	August

Gold

Tony Butcher	Woking A-Level (0+)	July
Richard Brooks	Sussex County Annual	July
Colin Britt	Sussex County A-Level (0+)	August
Jack Good	Suzanne Roberts Memorial (3rd Eight)	August
Peter Balchin	Guildford & Godalming A-Level (0+)	August

Silver

Andrew Larpent	Ryde B-Level (3+)	May
Phil Davies	Woking B-Level (3+)	June
Debra Hayns	Hamptworth B-Level (3+)	June
Jill Waters	Colchester B-Level (3+)	June
Jane Powell	Bath B-Level (3+)	July
Alison Murray	Broadwas B-level (3+)	July
Andrew Beaumont	Nottingham B-Level (3+)	July
Neil Fillery	Nailsea B-Level (3+)	August
Paul Bradley	Budleigh B-Level (3+)	August
Rick Lilley	Hurlingham B-Level (3+)	August
Tony McCann	National Final B-Level (3+)	September
Roger Goldring	All England Handicap Final	September

Bronze

Anthony White	Colchester C-Level (7+)	June
John Armer	Crake Valley C-Level (7+)	June
Nick England	Ryde C-Level (7+)	June
Howard Freeman	Camerton & P. C-Level (7+)	June
Robert Scallon	Roehampton C-Level (7+)	June
Bob Honey	Broadwas C-Level (7+)	July
Ken Hughes	Hurlingham C-Level (7+)	July
Jim Beach	Cheltenham C-Level (7+)	July
David Long	Blewbury C Level (7+)	July
Peter Uglow	Bury C-Level (7+)	July
Andy Brister	Bath C -Level (7+)	August
Marc Colson	Hamptworth C2B (5+)	August
Jill Shaw	Budleigh Salterton C-Level (7+)	August
Nicola Hyde	Grass Roots Nat. Final (8+)	September



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The products below are all available in my online shop. The main winter threats are moss and fungal attacks such as fusarium. Both can be controlled by using Soluble Iron. This comes in crystalline form and is very low cost. It is mixed with water in a bucket and poured off into the sprayer. It is best to put some fresh water in the tank first. You can spray affected areas with a knapsack sprayer or spray all of the lawn(s).

I usually spray the lot and then, when the moss blackens, discover that there was moss present that I hadn't seen. Iron can ruin sprayers so be sure to get a high-grade product and rinse the sprayer thoroughly after use so that no iron is left in the tank, pump and pipes. Anything left in the sprayer will recrystallise and probably make the sprayer unusable. Using Iron to control fusarium is limited to killing fungus on the leaf that hasn't yet broken into the plant. Once the fungus is in the plant you are too late but iron will reduce and may stop the spread.

Nobody likes using fungicides and it is best to avoid them if possible. Bayer's Dedicate Fungicide claims to cure and provide protection. It is used at Surbiton with success, it costs a bit over £200 to cover 2500 square metres (2.5 courts) and the operator needs a Pesticide Certificate.

Seeding and top-dressing are usually done in October. But it is still possible to lightly top-dress through the winter months when the existing grass can grow through. Fertilising with low nitrogen in the winter is beneficial and only costs £11 per court if you spray with liquid fertiliser. Mowing through the winter at 8 to 10mm will improve the sward density.

! Duncan Hector

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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.

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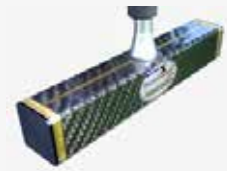
Your club chairman will be happy to give you more information.

UK & WORLD RANKINGS - THIS IS A SNAPSHOT AS OF 10 OCTOBER (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	3	Robert Fulford
=	2	5	John-Paul Moberly	=	2	7	Jonathan Kirby
=	3	10	Tobi Savage	+	3	10	Stephen Mulliner
+	4	16	Robert Fulford	+	4	11	Mark Avery
-	5	22	Rachel Gee	+	5	12	James Death
+	6	24	Stephen Mulliner	-	6	13	Jamie Burch
+	7	33	Euan Burrigde	+	7	14	Christian Carter
+	8	34	Jamie Burch	-	8	15	Samir Patel
=	9	35	Will Gee	-	9	16	Harry Fisher
-	10	37	Ian Burrigde	=	10	20	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 10th 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

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

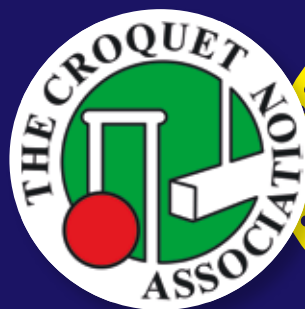
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