



# CROQUET

## GAZETTE

Issue 400 | December 2022



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**The Croquet Association  
Issue 400 | December 2022**



**Front cover:**  
England Mac Team  
**PHOTOGRAPH**  
Chris Roberts

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# WELCOME

**G**ood morning, good afternoon and good evening. A familiar greeting from the Australian commentary booth as the MacRobertson Shield 2022 has been livestreamed throughout the second half of November. Our Croquet players have been meeting up online through the night to watch some of the best Association Croquet Players in the world battle to become the next World Champions. This is the World Cup of Croquet, and it belongs to England! Congratulations to our fabulous team; Mark Avery, Jamie Burch, Christian

Carter, James Death and Harry Fisher, captained by our very own CA Chairman Samir Patel. Whilst the international events have been gripping us over the winter months, it was the impressive performance from the Roehampton club players, who dominated the lawns through this year's season back at home. Teamwork, determination and passion, this is what makes Croquet the great sport we love.

**| CA Editorial Team**



## LEPTON CROQUET CLUB MEMORIAL

**L**epton Croquet Club remembered Hazel Wadsworth with a Doubles Golf Croquet competition on Friday 23/9/22. Hazel was a founder member of our club which we started in Lepton in 2010, where we played for 5 years before moving to Ravensknowle Park Bowling Green in 2016. She was our "I will be mum" for brewing a cuppa, always making Tea/Coffee and Biscuits for all our members during a playing session. Hazel was a bit grumpy at times; don't put the wet teaspoon in the coffee or sugar jars; put your teabag in the bin; put the lid on the biscuit tin, but we loved her nevertheless. Hazel played at Huddersfield Croquet Club when it first began 30 years ago,

and played constantly until becoming a social member. She was playing at least twice a week at Lepton Club until shortly before her death in August 2021. She was always keen to win and to help new members with their coaching. We have named a Trophy in memory of her, "The Hazel Wadsworth Memorial Teapot Trophy", which was presented to the winners Bryan Hopkinson and Marian Swift by Hazel's granddaughter, Carolyn. A good day was had by all, playing and reminiscing about her character and willingness to help everyone she knew. She is sorely missed.

**Margaret Wood**  
Founder and Chair  
Lepton Croquet Club





# HIBISCUS COLUMN

**I**n autumn, croquistas suffer severe withdrawal symptoms. With courts closed - as they must be if they're to emerge in pristine condition next spring - and the roadie buzz on ice, playing at Cheltenham in shirtsleeves a month ago seems a distant dream. My second visit confirmed my first: if you're an AC high bisquer, you'll be in a more buoyant mood when you leave the club than you were when you arrived.

Not that the auguries were good on day one of the Daniel's Cup weekend in early October. Ignobly I joined the whingeing millions who routinely finger Covid for life's every insignificant wrinkle. Why so pathetically listless over three losing games? The jab of course, administered the evening before. No matter that I've never had a hint of pain or reaction to previous needles. In 2022, it's my citizen's right to explain away shortcomings without hint of self-blame.

I was lucky that my first game was against Klim Seabright, a skilled Cheltenham coach with a talent for analysis that he was kind enough to turn into sound advice. Naturally I didn't take it. In every game, I face the high handicapper's dilemma. Squander bisques setting up a 4-ball break, then watch oppo using it to make 12 hoops in one turn. Or hide and divide, joining up passively in the hope oppo will miss long hit ins. If he does, grab a hoop or so and perhaps win on time.

We all know which one is correct, but initially it can make for a lot of chair-time. Day two began in similar vein. My seasoned opponent was equally dedicated to hide and divide so we were able to demonstrate its frustrations over three attritional hours before I edged the win. In the afternoon, the worm, as I saw myself by then, knew it had to turn. My opponent, Keith Davis, was a five so I had 15 bisques. As he launched an accomplished break, I vowed I'd get one ball round on my next turn. If it took all my bisques, so be it. If he went through rover, I'd do it anyway. When he broke down on one back, I set to work. Eight bisques later, my clip was on the peg.

By the time I reached four back with my second ball, I'd squandered the remaining seven. A friend had mentioned that the Croquet Association gives a bronze badge for 12 hoops in one turn using bisques: the next level is silver without bisques. Luckily, he hadn't told me that you have to win the game to earn the reward. If he had, those last three hoops might have gone AWOL...

As it was, Sarah Hayes presented me with a china CA mug, with badge and certificate to follow in the mail. The applause for a relative stranger was very generous.

Thank you Cheltenham, thank you Keith, artist, comic writer and sporting opponent. His book, A to Z of Croquet, comprises a series of croquet cartoons with witty

captions and an informative glossary of terms used in play. A Christmas gift for fellow obsessives? Look no further. (£12.50, [keithandcaroledavis66@gmail.com](mailto:keithandcaroledavis66@gmail.com)).

For redoubtable addicts, there's plenty of scope for off season tournament play. The downside is wind and rain, the upside that the informal events are non qualifiers so the results don't go down on handicap cards. What better way to polish more daring tactics? In my area, High Wycombe Croquet Club has hosted three advanced and three handicap AC tournaments in the autumn, with further dates to follow over the winter ([ac-captain@hwcroquetclub.com](mailto:ac-captain@hwcroquetclub.com), £10).

Hamptworth Croquet Club is also proactive, with AC tournaments planned for the last weekends in January, February and March. These are back to back one day events: contestants can choose whether to play advanced or handicap matches, depending on standard ([abeard68.ab@btinternet.com](mailto:abeard68.ab@btinternet.com), £15).

Both clubs stage one day GC tournaments throughout the winter: they're often over-subscribed so think ahead ([enquiries@hwcroquetclub.com](mailto:enquiries@hwcroquetclub.com); for Hamptworth, [richard.jenkins21@btinternet.com](mailto:richard.jenkins21@btinternet.com)). If you live elsewhere, check out the clubs in your area. Odds on there'll be something for you.

▮ Minty Clinch



## OPENING DOORS TO CROQUET PENRITH CROQUET CLUB

**T**he CA Opening Doors campaign gave our small club the motivation and funds to try more divergent recruitment activities, and spend more on publicising croquet locally.

We invested time and money in staging a croquet 'showcase' at a local popular event at a prestigious and attractive venue. Our participation at the international Marmalade Festival at Dalemain House was featured in the CA Gazette in June.

We marketed ourselves more professionally by developing a modern club logo, and used this on new feather banners, sportswear and local advertising.

The local publicity generated interest from people wanting to try croquet, so we offered free "taster sessions" on our lawns during the week and also Sunday mornings. We wanted those with an interest to be able to try croquet at times that suited them, as a number were at work during the week.

Our club coaches committed many hours to coach and encourage novices so they can participate in games with more experienced members. A few 'taster sessions' is nothing like enough to make a croquet player. We have and will continue to keep in touch with those that came to our taster sessions. The proof of our endeavours will come when we see how many sign up to join our club when play resumes in the spring of 2023.

▮ Ian Tupling





# TUNNEL OF TIME

## 45 YEARS AGO

In the Winter 1977 Gazette (#146).

Le Weekend: Twenty years ago very little croquet was played on a Sunday; there was no morning play and nothing approaching a match or a tournament was allowed in the afternoon. But gradually the continental attitude to Sundays became more acceptable, and in 1956 Hunstanton started the trend for weekend tournaments. Three years later Cheltenham introduced their Whitsun tournament, which was such a success that by 1965 they were running five weekend tournaments from April to October, and all were so overbooked that entries closed in January. Woking, Nottingham, Colchester and Compton soon followed and by 1970 there were 10 and by 1977 23 weekend tournaments in the Fixtures List.

## 50 YEARS AGO

In the December 1972 Gazette (#124).

In a series of portraits of great crossword puzzle compilers, the Daily Telegraph made the following intriguing statement about Patrick Cotter ... Croquet... "Won

Doubles World Championship - with a partner". John Solomon might well cap this with: "Won an Open Doubles Championship match - without a partner". Yours sincerely, Anne Reader.

## 70 YEARS AGO

In the December 1952 Gazette (#8).

It was reported in the minutes of the October Council meeting that "Mr Cotter then said that through Capt HG Stoker he had sounded out the Wimbledon Lawn Tennis Authorities in an informal way, as to the possibility of playing the President's Cup competition at Wimbledon. The normal date for the President's Cup would coincide with that of the Junior Lawn Championship. Mr Cotter read a draft letter he proposed should be sent to the Lawn Tennis Association Secretary. This was approved and the Secretary instructed accordingly."

From the minutes of the November meeting. A letter was read from the Keeper of the Privy Purse announcing that the Queen has been pleased to grant her patronage to the Croquet Association.

## 90 YEARS AGO

In the December 1932 Gazette

The Use of Smaller Courts

The Council understands that it is the intention of some Club Committees to give occasional trial during the season to the Settings for Smaller Courts now provided for in the Laws for 1933. There is reason to believe that the use of these settings may prove helpful in attracting beginners. Any reports to their value in various circumstances will be much appreciated by the Council.

Past Gazettes can be found on the CA website at <https://www.croquet.org.uk/?p=ca-gazette&Action=issues>.

Currently there are scans of the Gazette back to 1954, when the current numbering system started, on the CA website.

| Chris Williams, CA Archivist

IN THIS SECTION WE ONCE AGAIN TAKE A LOOK THROUGH THE 'TUNNEL OF TIME' TO SEE WHAT WAS TAKING PLACE IN THE CROQUET WORLD IN THE PAST, AS SEEN IN THE CROQUET GAZETTE

# WINSLOW CROQUATHON!

It was many years ago that our founding member, Di Kemp, created the Croquathon as a way for members to improve their playing skills. Through a series of fun games our abilities to clear a ball, run the hoop, master jump and in/off shots etc are tested.

This year our Croquathon was held on Saturday, 24 September, when, after some recent rain, the ground was starting to look vaguely green again and more like a lawn rather than the very brown, bald surface we had been playing on for most of the summer.

Even so, trying to get the ball to stop in a designated area or travel in a straight line still proved a challenge on a surface with

very little friction. But it was great fun as always.

To round off a very successful afternoon, club member, John Beckerleg had baked some wonderful gingerbread croquet players, sporting marshmallow mallets, and shortbread squares decorated with croquet balls.

(Primary colours only as secondary colours were more tricky to find!).

The biscuits were delicious and worthy of a place in 'biscuit week' on The Great British Bake-Off!!

| Jill Lord, Secretary  
Winslow Croquet Club







# CHAIRMAN OF THE CA COUNCIL



PHOTOGRAPH  
Steven Greenway

**T**he past few months have seen the sad news about the passing of our patron, Queen Elizabeth II. Her Majesty became our patron in 1952, but her connection to our sport went back to 1939, when she met Prince Philip on a croquet lawn at the Royal Naval College in Dartmouth.

I had the honour of representing the Association at the state funeral at Westminster Abbey. It was clearly a solemn occasion, but with a sense of celebration. The congregation, in addition to the family, and domestic and international VIPs, represented a wide array of people and organisations from around our country, being drawn from the Queen's New Year's Honours list, and the 500+ organisations of which the Queen had been a patron. We collectively remembered that the anthem is now "God Save the King", although

the second verse had many scurrying for the order of service.

Looking ahead, this is the time of year when volunteers up and down the country will be working at Croquet Clubs, Federations, and the Croquet Association, to review the season past and start planning for the season ahead. If you have any ideas, or items you think you can help with, I'm sure they'll be delighted to hear from you.

The Charity Commission has reviewed our application to form Croquet England as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation and have raised a number of questions. These range from routine to easily addressed. Publication schedules for the Croquet Gazette mean that, once again, I will need to refer you to our website and the newsletter for the latest news on this topic.

**Samir Patel**  
Chairman of Council



# CA PRESIDENT

**I** am delighted to have been put forward by Council members for the role of 12th President of the Croquet Association and was pleased to accept the nomination. I thank Beatrice McGlen and Samir Patel for putting my name forward.

I am aware of the honour bestowed on me and greatly admire the previous incumbents, most of whom have been A-class players.

Quiller Barrett will be a hard act to follow, as reported by Jonathan Isaacs in an earlier Gazette. We both believe in getting out and about the Domain, as I hope many will remember from my time as Chairman a decade ago. Quiller has ensured that the CA is represented at all prestigious CA tournaments using the team of Vice-Presidents and Chairmen of CA Committees. I propose to do the same.

Having followed in the footsteps of Daisy Lintern, who was the first lady to chair Council (1958-60) and then first lady Vice-President (1973-76), to be the first lady President is an honour.

I enjoy reading and learning about the history of croquet and was heartened to be congratulated first by Chris Williams, the CA Archivist, when the announcement was made.

As I regard myself as an ordinary club player, I have been fortunate to experience setting up a club after a visit to my village of Woodhall Spa by the National Development Officer at that time, Chris Hudson. I received much support from the CA which I joined in the centenary year of 1997 and I still have the gold membership card. When the club I founded joined the Federation, I was again delighted to have won an election to be the Representative for it on Council. I learned a lot and met many colourful characters during my 12 years.

I have been asked by some who have offered their congratulations what I am likely to change. I do not see the role of President as one to suggest changes but to be an independent observer who is able to comment or share thoughts and concerns.

Having said that, I would like to ensure



that all work and surveys are followed up. The Quinquennial survey recently published should be carefully considered and I have noted with interest the thoughts of Kevin Carter who initiated these surveys. I would have great concern if the CA, or as we are now pursuing, Croquet England, did not thrive.

I continue to have a place on Council as the representative of both the East and West Midlands Federations. These are interesting times as we seek to become a Charitable Incorporated Organisation which I hope will bring its own benefits.

I wish all croquet players a happy Christmas and New Year, and that you benefit from your CA membership and continue to enjoy all forms of our wonderful sport. I look forward to meeting up with many of you in due course.

**Patricia Duke-Cox**  
CA President

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# NOTTINGHAM HOSTED THE NATIONAL SCHOOLS' AND JUNIORS' CHAMPIONSHIPS, 24-25 SEPTEMBER 2022

Only two entries were received for a **Schools Championship**: Winchester, the defending champions, and Chilwell School, Nottingham. Sadly, Winchester withdrew the week before the event, citing in particular the lack of affordable accommodation in Nottingham. This was the result of an unfortunate clash of dates with the Nottingham Half-Marathon, which attracted several thousand runners and pushed up hotel prices as a result. This left Chilwell as the winners for 2022, the second year in a row that the event was uncontested, since Winchester had no opposition the previous year.

For a **Junior Championships CA** tournament, this seems not to have been well-publicised. There were two visitors from Cheltenham, Sam Cuthbert and Erin James, and the rest of the field came from Nottingham's own junior players. Players were divided into under-13 and under-19 competitions.

The four players in the under-13 category, all aged between 7 and 9 years old, played doubles on Saturday, in which the 7 year olds, Alfie Baldwin and Millie Draper, beat Tilly Hallam and Frances Draper 7-5 in a GC match on half-size lawns. It was keenly contested and played in an excellent spirit. The players particularly enjoyed being able to summon a referee to adjudicate on a number of occasions! On Sunday, only 3 of the players were available, and in a round-robin Alfie was unbeaten. He has a beautifully free swing which reminded some of the older onlookers of a young James Death: definitely one to watch for the future.



The under-18s played GC on full lawns. There were 8 players in total, but two were available only on Saturday, and one only on Sunday. It was clear from the outset that Sam Cuthbert was in a different league from the rest, and he duly swept the board with 7 wins out of 7. The nearest he got to being challenged was when he



went 3-1 down to Rae Holland, but he came back to win 7-3. Best of the rest were Declan McPhee with 5 wins, followed by Rae Holland and Elizabeth Shelton with 4, Erin James 3, Lois Holland 2, Marnie Tor 1, and Natasha Thomas 0. Declan also earned kudos by making a banoffee pie for dessert on Sunday!

Three pairs also contested the GC doubles on Sunday, when Sam and Natasha beat Declan and Elizabeth, and Lois and Rae.

The under-18 AC competition had only two competitors, and Sam Cuthbert quickly wrapped up a win against Elizabeth Shelton.

The prizes were presented by Ian Vincent on behalf of Quiller Barret, CA President.



**Peter Death**  
Manager







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# SHORT CROQUET CORNER

**S**eaason round-up: The conclusion of the 2022 season saw both major Short Croquet events taking place within days of each other and both providing satisfyingly tight finishes.

The final of the National Short Croquet Inter-Club Competition, held on neutral ground at York, saw last year's winners, Bury, defending their title against the mighty Nottingham, who had narrowly defeated Blewbury to reach the final. It was good to see recent converts to Short Croquet in both teams, and an encouraging number of female players. Nottingham in particular is showing the way by consistently fielding Short Croquet teams with good gender balance. Bury had taken the hard route to the final, beating Yorkshire and a combined Chester/Westmorland team along the way. Richard Leach played a captain's innings, pegging out his opponent twice, winning all his games, and steering his side to a close 6-5 win and another year as stewards of the handsome Ranelagh Cup. Meanwhile the York Viking Challenge drew competitors from five different Federations sporting full lawn handicaps from 5 to

24, a range easily accommodated by the Short Croquet handicapping system to make for a level playing field. There were notable performances from Hilary Bird (Guildford & Godalming), Lionel Stock (Budleigh Salterton and York) and Shelley Hennell (Church Stretton), but, after a satisfying weekend blessed with excellent playing weather, it was the positive playing style and experience of Richard Sanville (Ashby) that secured the cup.

### LIFTS IN SHORT CROQUET

Wiring lifts can occur more readily in Short Croquet than in full lawn croquet. A key element of the game therefore is to avoid giving them, and, as the out-player, being alert to whether you may have one. They are more likely to crop up in Short Croquet partly because, on the smaller lawn, the hoops conceal proportionately more of the lawn; and partly because of the special Short Croquet wiring rule: the striker's ball must have a clear shot at all parts of its partner ball, not just (as in full lawn games) at any ball.

So, when playing croquet shots using an opposition ball, be actively aware of

where the other opponent ball lies, to avoid giving a lift. Each of the balls needs a clear shot at the other. As the in-player you are not permitted to use an extra ball to check, but your opponent can when starting the next turn, so err on the side of safety. Games can easily be lost by needlessly giving away a wiring lift.

### John Harris, York CC



Viking Challenge winner Richard Sanville



## OPENING DOORS TO CROQUET COFFEE & CROQUET MORNINGS AT OUTREACH RADCLIFFE

**A**s part of Bury Croquet Club's involvement with Opening Doors to Croquet, the club has partnered with Outreach Community Residential Services to introduce COFFEE & CROQUET MORNINGS.

Outreach is a not-for-profit charity supporting adults with learning difficulties, or long-term mental health needs, to live an independent life. Based in the town centre of Radcliffe, the charity operates The Reach Out Café, that has a large community space that is ideally suited to play indoor croquet.

With Opening Doors funding from the CA, an indoor croquet set has been purchased by Bury Croquet Club (BCC). The Coffee & Croquet mornings are now a regular Wednesday event keenly anticipated by service users whilst enjoying coffee & cake.

Norman Shaw, Outreach Volunteer Programme Manager, commented: "BCC continue to provide free Croquet to Outreach service users (people who identify with mental health needs and/or learning difficulties) and the wider Radcliffe community. This has been of immense benefit to people in providing an opportunity to reduce social isolation in a

safe and warm environment, whilst also learning a new game/sport in a friendly and fun manner. The activity has now built-up regular attendees who really look forward to Wednesday mornings, whilst we, as an organisation, can see how this is so fruitful in respect of people's well-being, and in promoting the active health benefits of croquet to those partaking. We very much wish this to continue in our community space and would like to thank BCC members for having the vision and drive to reach out for the benefit of mental health services and the wider community".

Roy Spencer, BCC Chairman, added that "It is a great pleasure to be involved with Outreach, and to see the enjoyment that their service users get out of running the hoops, and we thank the charity for their co-operation and support". Whilst established croquet players may think the hoops large, they are ideally suited for the purpose. The club also hopes to partner with a local Rotary Club to introduce croquet at local schools, and the equipment can also be utilised with our events for uniformed youth groups.

### Roy Spencer







SCAN TO HEAD TO  
OUR CROQUET PAGE

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# CROQUET CRIBS

One of the most rewarding parts of playing croquet is the opportunity to travel around the country to participate – or even spectate – within a wide variety of tournaments, meeting old friends and making new ones. Even when stuck - usually on the A303 at Stonehenge as traffic grinds to a crawl whilst people gawp at a decayed stone circle – we emerge from the South-West full of the promise of the weekend to come.

The travelling GC players have a great sense of camaraderie, and of course, we have our own “Fools” and a great deal of proverbial leg pulling adding to the entertainment. On the serious side, we get to test our skills against a wide variety of fellow competitors, broadening experience and development.

However, the one element of travelling that frankly can be a huge gamble – not to mention cost – is the selection and availability of affordable accommodation. “Croquet Cribbs” seemed an apt title for this article, with “crib” being an old English word for ‘manger’ which over the centuries has been applied as a name for various types of enclosures resembling the structure, including a small room or dwelling.

We’ve found it quite easy to relate to the words of William Shakespeare (Henry IV, Part 2), with his references to “smoky cribs” and “uneasy pallets” seemingly mirroring some of our own experiences...

*Why rather, sleep, liest thou in smoky cribs,  
Upon uneasy pallets stretching thee,  
And hush'd with buzzing night-flies to thy slumber,  
Than in the perfum'd chambers of the great,  
Under the canopies of costly state,  
And lull'd with sound of sweetest melody?*



Indeed, one of our recent – let’s be kind, and say “unconventional” - Airbnb bookings, meant we spent a week in a converted garage whilst competing at the British Open at Southwick. Nothing wrong with that you might think, lots of people convert garages into parts of their home, and after all, we saw the very select photos on the website. But this was not a garage attached to a house - this was

a garage in a block of other garages, our ‘neighbouring guest suite’ with its ‘up and over’ door propped open by a ladder....! What’s funny is that we had also booked for the Inter-counties as well....!

Yet, despite appearances, our ‘garage’ did the job, and we are well aware it could have been worse, much worse. Another pair of touring croquet players of our acquaintance were forced to make a frantic departure at 3.00am from a hotel in Clacton-on-Sea. Their urge to flee was caused by the grisly discovery that they were sharing their nightly accommodation with a family of bed bugs, caught under a drinking glass, and filmed as evidence.



And again, we must be grateful to have had a roof over our heads at all. Alison Maugham bravely camped for 11 nights, along with her 2 ½ year old son, Ben, to attend the recent GC World Championships. Without resorting to life under canvas the cost of attending would have been prohibitive. The World Championships did benefit with some free advertising as, with Alison being quite a chatterbox, her four sets of tented neighbours got to hear all about the tournament and its excitements! A further boost of “media” coverage expanding the croquet audience! For future reference, Alison did mention that blow up tent poles are definitely the way forward – especially if you are trying to pitch a tent aided by a toddler....!

There are some plus sides to this article, though. Other travelling croquet players, mindful of accommodation



issues themselves, offer a bed for the night to competing croquet friends when tournaments are held in their location or at their home clubs.

But many travelling tournament players

are not necessarily known to a great number of club members that do not compete far afield. I have often thought it would be very useful if individual clubs could compile a list of members willing to help fellow croquet enthusiasts with accommodation for a nominal fee. It’s not something that needs to be overcomplicated, just a way of putting people in touch to then make their own informed decision. This information could potentially be issued with the allocation details of each tournament. There is some food for thought.

At the other end of the scale, more akin to Shakespeare’s “perfum’d chambers of the great” there is one glorious option of the most perfect croquet billet now on offer at Budleigh Salterton Croquet Club - giving us the contrast from the ridiculous to the most sublime in croquet accommodation terms.



Not only is Budleigh Croquet Club located in one of the most picturesque areas on the Devon coast, but it was fortunate enough to have an unused pavilion building, that long ago was previously used as tennis changing rooms.

Re-purposing the building, which dates from 1906, took 18 months – not to mention the additional six-month delay to allow the roosting bats to move on. Both contractors and club members have been involved with the project, notably volunteers that prepared the internal design, the fit out, and all the external gardens and landscaping.

The resulting three apartments, now known as Lawnside, offer high quality fixtures and fittings and, most perfect of all, outdoor seating directly in front of court one where you can either watch or play croquet during your stay.

For those who desire some luxury whilst competing away, further information on Budleigh’s Lawnside accommodation can be found here: <https://www.thelawnside.co.uk>

I suppose, whatever “croquet crib” we temporarily inhabit, it’s all about the adventure, creating memories and having stories to tell - and maybe winning the odd tournament here and there.....!

**Louise Smith**



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PROUDLY BRITISH

# LETTERS

## AN OPEN LETTER TO MINTY CLINCH

It was good to meet you at the Daniels Cup, even if it was through a forest of bisques. I think it is useful to have an article in the Gazette which gives an insight taken from a relative beginner to our sport.

What a terrific name, sounds like a wrestling hold or chocolate bar.

Congratulations on achieving your Bronze Merit Award. "Hi Ho Silver"! Perhaps the following coaching tips will help achieve your next badge.

Your hits were strong. Your hoop running was good and you could set up your rush shots quite well.

Keep up both forms of the sport...they actually complement each other. I find GC players are good at running hoops and AC players have good clearance shots.

See what the Croquet Academies are offering. There is bound to be something for you.

Play away from "home". It is good to compete against different players.

Perfect your rush shots, increasing the gap between two balls.

Practice a takeoff shot to get a ball behind a corner or yard line ball...that's where a low handicap player will put you or themselves.

Practice hoop approach croquet shots. Start one mallet length from the hoop gradually increasing the distance back to the Yard Line. Where can you put the forward ball to "notionally" reduce the size of the lawn and also avoid too many roll shots?

One Ball is a great game. It gets you thinking about the placement of the forward ball in ways which will enable you to continue the break.

Set a measure of improvement e.g. randomly throw three balls on the lawn and count the number of bisques it takes to set up a perfect break (preferably get someone else to do the throwing).

Don't leave two balls in the middle of the lawn. Go to a corner or yard line and practice as wide a join as possible so that you can subsequently hit in when your opponent misses.

Before you hit a ball.... smile at it! This will help you to "relax" your hands!

**Enjoy! Klim, Coach**

## WITHDRAWALS

This year there were 5 (I think) withdrawals from the CA Eights competitions after the selections had been made.

Such withdrawals can cause confusion and annoyance for other players, and more work for the volunteer selection committee and CA admin dept, yet currently there is no consequence to a player who is selected and withdraws.

Why not?

I therefore propose that the CA should enforce a policy of forced unavailability for the Eights events in the next season, of any selected player who withdraws, for whatever reason, after publication of the selections.

### **RESPONSE:**

*As selectors we share your sense of frustration with withdrawals from the selection events.. These cause a lot of work for the Office and the selectors, and uncertainty for players. We would strongly encourage all players to be certain there are not existing impediments to them playing in any event for which they make themselves available, and to treat availability as a commitment, not an option. Withdrawing from an event for reasons that could have been foreseen before selection is not fair to administrators and other players.*

*Banning players for a year or more for withdrawing from an event is problematic, however. Firstly there are legitimate reasons for withdrawing which could not be foreseen, such*

For me personally, the withdrawals this year were annoying, as I was selected for the Treasurer's Tankard and yet players withdrew from the Spencer Ell circa a week or more after selection, by which time I had booked accommodation with a fellow player, so I therefore felt I couldn't accept the promotion.

Whilst I have no idea why these people withdrew, I think if there were a one year forced unavailability policy, then it might make people think twice about making themselves available and then withdrawing once selected.

**Jack Wicks**

*as illness or bereavement. Secondly, selectors are reluctant to reduce the pool of available players from the selection events. Being in a position of deciding which reasons are legitimate, and which are not, is not one the selection committees would relish. Sanctions other than a ban may be possible, and the committees will be making notes of who withdraws from events to see if there are 'repeat offenders'. We can assure you that the matter will be discussed further by the two committees in the off-season.*

**Sam Murray & Chris Clarke  
Chairman, AC Selection  
Committee & Chairman, GC  
Selection Committee**



READERS ARE REMINDED THAT THE VIEWS EXPRESSED IN THE LETTERS PAGES OF THE GAZETTE ARE THOSE OF THE AUTHORS ONLY, AND NOT THOSE OF THEIR CLUBS, UNLESS SPECIFICALLY INDICATED.



## CROQUET ON YOUTUBE

I have recently enjoyed watching the AC & GC Nationals on the official USCA YouTube channel. Russ Dilley (rdilley) has produced and commented on National and Regional US croquet events for several years, and is now the official USCA channel for croquet videography.

The CA streaming of the 2022 WCF GC Championship was also very welcome viewing this summer, representing further commitment by the CA to sponsor video recording of major croquet events in the UK. Reflecting on what each of these afford to the armchair croquet enthusiast I perceive there are four principal differences in the approaches taken by each governing body.

1. The CA stream live events, the USCA release edited video after the event.
2. CA streaming deploys numerous commentators, the USCA has one, Russ Dilley.
3. The USCA require that videos must have a pedagogical value by way of editing and narration. The CA doesn't include a policy statement on its channel.
4. The USCA videos feature a single match, referenced by the event, stage and players. CA video and commentary switches between adjacent, concurrent matches, referenced only by day and session.

Still in its infancy, the CA England YouTube Channel has streamed the final stages of two UK Open Championships and recent WCF GC Championships. USCA (rdilley) videos have covered numerous regional as well as national US tournaments, including block stage games.

In contrasting these approaches one can't but question which is preferable, and what purpose and what audience they serve? Whilst there may be a very small nationalistic interest in individual players, more so in team events, there is no fan base in croquet of the sort that underpins popular sports like football, tennis or cricket. So why would anyone watch croquet at home, when the predominant view is that croquet is not a 'spectator sport'.

The simple answer, I believe, is that some people, those interested in croquet, do enjoy watching games when the event is

## SWINGING MALLETS?

This is to do with swinging mallets; but not croquet mallets, the kind you use to hit hoops in with.

I have noticed that when people are setting up and they knock hoops into the ground with a mallet, they generally stand in front of the hoop (in line with the run of the ball) and whack away until they are fairly sure that the hoop is secure.

The problem with this is that, unless your swing of the mallet is very accurate and the mallet is descending exactly vertically, the mallet will impart a lateral force on the hoop. i.e. knock it towards you (or, less likely, away from you).

enhanced by the medium of video production.

For me this enhancement is a combination of succinctness, interpretation, and coherence. Even at the most expert level games can be repetitive, overlong and hence tedious. Judicious editing, timely and informed commentary, and clarity of the match narrative are the essence of enhancement. For me, the immediacy of live streaming is no substitute for enhancement when there is no emotional connection to the outcome of the match.

So why does the CA favour live streaming? I read in the Executive Board report to the CA Council that an (unnamed) American streaming channel has shown an interest in croquet in the UK. Might now be a good time for CA members to be consulted about what they want and expect from future additions to the CA England video channel?

**Howard Bowron**

### RESPONSE:

*The current view is that there are 2 main uses for match videos:*

- *For established players to watch live matches and,*
- *To facilitate demonstrating*

It would seem eminently sensible to stand at the side of the hoop (90 degrees to the ball run), so that if your swing is anything less than accurate you would be far less likely to pull the hoop towards you with the swing of the mallet. A poorly executed swing would only put slightly more pressure on one leg of the hoop than the other. If the hoop does go in slightly wonky then it could be straightened up by tapping above the other leg.

If everyone adopted this approach then the carrot holes, that the hoops fit into, would receive far less wear and would not need to be repaired quite so often.

**Phil Taylor**

*elements of the game at all levels. We do not think that there is much demand to watch edited highlights of matches played several days earlier – although we are happy to be convinced otherwise. There are numerous videos already available to demonstrate many aspects of the game. We recognise that these vary greatly in quality and that it would be useful to get an 'official' repository of high quality educational videos accessible from the website and to use edited highlights of streamed matches to supplement them, where applicable. This is something for the future. The priority at the moment is to build up equipment and expertise to film and stream live events. Demand for this has been demonstrated by the numbers viewing recently streamed events and this remains the focus for 2023. As always, availability of volunteers is a limiting factor. Live streaming requires a significant volunteer effort and producing edited highlights requires even more – and different skillsets. We welcome other readers' views on the subject and would be especially interested in hearing from anyone who can offer video production and editing expertise.*

**Andy Dibben**  
CA ICT Director

# WALTER JONES WHITMORE (1831-1872)

PART ONE

Whitmore's record, though very patchy, was sufficiently impressive for him to be remembered as "the father of modern croquet" and to be described, by Arthur Lillie, as the man who "transformed the game from the silliest of open-air games to the most intellectual one".

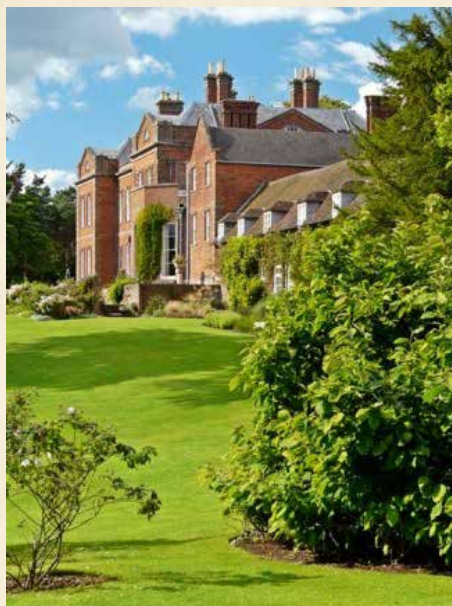


Walter Whitmore-Jones (as he then was) was born at Chastleton House, Moreton-in-Marsh in March 1831. He was educated at Bridgnorth Grammar School and St John's College, Oxford. He was an undergraduate for only two years and left without taking a degree. He then entered the Civil Service and took a post in the Audit Office, procured for him by Benjamin Disraeli, the flamboyant future Prime Minister who had recently served as Chancellor of the Exchequer. However, after a promotion in 1855 and a move to the War Department, Walter left government service. He was a "difficult subordinate". He also found "much to criticise in the Civil Service".

Freed from responsibilities in Whitehall, Walter channelled his "irrepressible energies" into "a flood of ingenious inventions". He devoted himself to inventing and selling gadgets and games. He never married. In due course, he codified the game of croquet.

## THE DUDMASTON INHERITANCE

There were hopes, within the family, that Walter would become heir to his uncle, William Whitmore-Wolryche, the owner of the Dudmaston estate in Shropshire. This had been in the Wolryche family, and the barely-related Whitmore family, since 1403, when William Wolryche, of Much Wenlock, acquired it by marriage to the heiress, Margaret de Dudmaston.



Walter's elder brothers were, respectively, in poor health and rather dull. However, Uncle William formed the view that, although his nephew was bright enough and next in line, young Walter was

"too unreliable and unstable" to meet his expectations. With the benefit of retrospection, it was in the highest degree unlikely that the vigorous, reforming, Whig MP for Bridgnorth would have selected Walter to succeed him. He probably cared little for his demeanour and even less for his politics. In 1858, William died and left the estate to another nephew, Francis Laing.

## CHASTLETON HOUSE: HUNTING; DANCING; ARCHERY AND CROQUET

Walter's brother, Willie inherited Chastleton House after the death of his fragile elder brother, Arthur in 1857. Walter remained living in the house, supported by his mother and brother, with the younger family members.



He rode to hounds; shot arrows at targets; danced and planned the transformation of croquet into an organised sport, in the hope of making some money. This "decidedly chancy" enterprise was supported by his one-third share of the profits of the game of "Squails", invented by his younger brother, Wolryche and accepted and published by Jaques and Son in April 1857.

*To be continued....*

John Reddish



## ROEHAMPTON CROQUET CLUB MAKES CROQUET HISTORY

In 2022 Roehampton became the first club to win four of the five main CA team season-long knockout trophies in one season. They triumphed in the AC Inter Club, the GC Inter Club, the AC Longman Cup and the GC Inter Club (Murphy) Shield. The only trophy that eluded them in 2022 was the AC Mary Rose, where they lost in the first round to the eventual winners Hurlingham. Prior to 2022 no club had won more than two in the same season. Roehampton also became only the

second club, after Nottingham, to have won all five, having previously won the Mary Rose in 1985. Roehampton's wins in the two GC events was their first in both, whilst their sixth Longman Cup win was the first since 2012 and the ninth AC Inter Club was their first win since 1984. Roehampton has a prominent place in the history of croquet in the UK. From 1902 until 1959 the headquarters of the Croquet Association were at Roehampton and the

*...continued on next page*





majority of major events over that period, such as the Opens, the Men's and Women's, and the President's Cup were held there. The club had twelve courts for much of this time, but over the years more and more of the courts were turned over to tennis. The first ever MacRobertson Shield Test match was held at Roehampton on 26 to 27 June 1925 when England defeated Australia 6-0 dropping only one game in the six matches. The club also hosted MacRobertson Shield Test matches in 1937 (England v Australia), 1956 (England v New Zealand), 1974 (GB v Australia) and 2010 (Australia v USA).



**Chris Williams, CA Archivist**



## CROQUET, COMMUNITY & CRAFT

**B**udleigh Salterton Croquet Club ("BSCC") held its first "Winter Arts & Crafts Fair" on Saturday 22nd October, which proved to be a resounding success.

The idea was conceived in February 2022, and members were offered vendor places before seeking artisans to fill the remaining stall places. The ethos of the event was to offer top quality goods for sale, and it was clear the makers' creativity had blossomed throughout the

summer in preparation. As the date drew nearer, no-one really knew what to expect as it was a whole new concept to open up the clubhouse and Bridge room for such an event, but interest began to grow. The marketing efforts concentrated on Budleigh and the surrounding villages, hoping to attract visitors from the local community that had never even thought of coming to the club before. So, with this in mind, an information area with an

introduction to croquet was arranged and staffed by club member volunteers. Quite a few visitors enjoyed trying out a few hoops, with one gentleman commenting: "I've been trying to get my wife to come and see what this is all about for ages, and the craft fair was just the temptation to get her here! Hopefully we'll be joining up after the winter!"

We also had the opportunity of seeing our fellow club members in a whole new light – talented potters, textile artists, painters, and woodworkers are in our midst! But it was the home-made sloe gin offered by one enterprising artisan that sold out in record time!

Over 150 people attended, with the stallholders unanimously requesting a repeat of the fair to be held again next year. Just over £600.00 was raised in stall and entry fees for BSCC, and hopefully one or two new members as well.



**Louise Smith**







# OPENING DOORS TO CROQUET EALING CROQUET CLUB

**I**n 2021 Ealing Croquet club ran a public Pay & Play trial over the course of a few weekends at our site in Lammas Park.

The trial successfully demonstrated a strong local interest, and we set about planning for a significant increase of those sessions in 2022. A key strand of the club's strategy is to open up the site to the wider community, and provide an offering which will appeal to locals and park users wishing to play on a more informal, ad hoc basis. While some may only ever wish to play informally in this way, we hoped the sessions would also provide an entry point to membership and, as importantly, would raise awareness of the club in the community.

This year during April to September we ran 3 hours of public sessions every Saturday afternoon. We only cancelled two sessions in this time – one due to essential lawn maintenance work and one due to the heatwave! Covid remained an ongoing consideration and did hit some bookings, but did not have a significant impact overall, and we offered a full refund in those circumstances.

From the trials we knew that the majority of bookings had come from notices put up around our site, due to the benefit of our location being in the middle of a local park. The competition prize money was spent on a new and welcoming club entrance sign and large impactful Pay & Play promotional banners, matched by a grant from the local council ward forum.

The sessions were costed at an affordable £6 per hour per person, with bookings taken via Eventbrite. We quickly realised that running these on a weekly basis



would stretch our volunteer workforce, and recruited a local youth football coach as a Pay & Play supervisor (with a crash course in the basics of GC and simple games of “5 hoop”) to lead the sessions, supported by club volunteers on hand to help with play and answer more technical questions.

The people booking the sessions were noticeably younger than the average age of our existing members, with family groups and young adults making up a high percentage of the bookings. During the course of the season we took 289 bookings, of which 19% were children. A number made repeat bookings, proving that the sessions were enjoyed.

An unexpected spin-off was a significant rise in enquiries from local community organisations looking to book group Pay

& Play sessions, which we offered at any time in the week to suit the groups, run entirely by our volunteers. An additional 149 people came to the club via these Pay & Play group bookings, which conversely were predominantly older retired people, although we also hosted a small number of exuberant children's birthday parties too!

Six bookings resulted in enquiries about membership, of which three signed up, with one pending. Although this was not as high as we had hoped, it reinforced our observations that these sessions were attracting younger people keen on sampling different activities, and families with younger children whose other



commitments meant it was not easy to join up to full membership and, as such, considerably broadened the range of people playing croquet at the site.

In total we took an amazing 438 bookings over the course of the season. Our challenge next year will be to increase the number of bookings per public session. Armed with our new signage and with the learning from this year we anticipate a great season ahead.

**Lindy Jordan**  
Treasurer  
Ealing Croquet Club



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# ASSOCIATION CROQUET TOURNAMENT COMMITTEE

## NEW B AND C SERIES FOR AC

**O**ne of several recommendations of the Competitive Play Working Group was that AC level play series should be introduced at both B level and C level. Such series have proved very successful in GC in recent years.

So, 2022 was the first time we held such series - opening with a B level mid-week event at Woking in April. Twelve players competed in two groups of six with Guy Hewitt (4.5) of Hurlingham winning all five games in his group. The other group was closer with Neil Coote (0.5) of Reigate Priory topping the table with 4 wins. The Reigate man won the final.

Winners of all 2022 events were as follows:

### B Level Series (0+)

Woking	Neil Coote (Reigate Priory)
Budleigh	Robert Moss (Budleigh)
Pendle	Neil Adams (Westmorland)
Surbiton	Cliff Jones (Newport)
Nottingham	Alex McIntyre (Nottingham)
Newport	Brian Havill (Letchworth)
Middlesbrough	Dennis Scarr (Middlesbrough)
Bowden	Alan Mayne (Bowden)
Letchworth	John Noble (Letchworth)
Cheltenham	Andrew Wise (Hurlingham)
Southport	Charles Harding (Bowden)
Watford	Brian Havill (Letchworth)
Bristol	David Hunt (Nailsea)

### C Level Series (7+)

Pendle	Eileen Magee (Ben Rhydding)
Phyllis Court/Blewbury	Raghu Iyer (Phyllis Court)
Cheltenham	Robin Smith (Cheltenham)
Phyllis Court/High Wycombe	Robin Morrison (High Wycombe)

Of course, the most successful players are those that have too good a handicap to play in 2023. Many congratulations to all of them.

We hope to expand both series in 2023 – particularly the C level in which Nottingham have already said they intend to hold an event in June. If any club is interested, please make contact.

### ALTERNATE STROKE DOUBLES

Another recommendation of the Competitive Play Working Group (CPWG) was that Alternate Stroke Doubles (ASD) should be encouraged.

This recommendation was supported by Council in spring 2021 and the CPWG was to approach federations; to liaise with the handicap committee; and to consider whether independent decisions with regard to ASD should be allowed. (At present, both pairs need to agree to play ASD. Should one pair be able to play ASD regardless of the views of the other pair? Is there any reason why one pair shouldn't play alternate stroke regardless of what the other pair does?)

The ACTC is to pick up the baton with regard to the third of these points with trials at two of its events in 2023:

- The Mixed Doubles Championships
- The Mary Rose Inter-Club Trophy

If the trials go well, it is envisaged that changes will be made in time for the 2024 season.

**Brian Havill**  
Chair ACTC  
07870 269695

## AC INTER-CLUB FINAL



**R**oehampton beat Bowdon 5-2 to win the AC Inter Club Cup for the first time since 1984 when Nigel Aspinall was in his pomp and he had a pretty useful partner in Stephen Mulliner! This broke Surbiton's impressive 6 year hold on the event.

### Results (Roehampton names first):

Harry Fisher & Joel Taylor beat Alain Giraud and Angharrad Walters +13TP; Mark van Loon beat Nigel Matthews +26TP; Tim Russell lost to Brian Storey -26; Harry Fisher beat Alain Giraud +26TP; Joel Taylor beat Angharrad Walters +26TP; Mark van Loon beat Brian Storey +25; Tim Russell lost to Nigel Matthews -6.

After a strong season Joel managed to pip Mark to the number 2 slot in the Roehampton team, and having a President's Cup player at number 3 gave Roehampton a significant edge. The doubles could have gone either way after Angharrad followed Joel round to 4 back and Harry missed the lift. Unfortunately for Bowdon, Alain, having played a wonderful sideways

...continued on next page



jump shot to get through hoop 1 then missed a mid-range roquet on his deep reception ball. Harry didn't need another chance; he continued to play in exemplary fashion in the afternoon, with the only sniff of an opportunity for Alain coming when his straight rover peel attempt stuck in the jaws, with his ball very close and at an angle. Harry wisely decided against trying the jump/peel shot - it was difficult enough jumping, but he managed it well enough to get behind the reception ball, rush it back north of rover, bombard peel his ball through rover going on to the other reception ball, and pegging out. He looks in good form for the Mac next month.

Mark and Joel played almost faultlessly to win their three singles matches, with the only mistake being Mark blobbing one-back when on a triple against Brian Storey. With the balls well placed Brian made hoop 1 but then missed a shortish roquet to allow Mark to finish next turn. Brian had played very well in the morning to beat an off form Tim +26.

Tim's shooting improved in the afternoon but was matched by Nigel Matthews who hit for fun across the lawn, including the winning peg out from corner 3 to win a tight match. Having written in a complimentary fashion about his progress in GC, this was my reward!

The victory completed a stellar year for Roehampton winning four of the major club competitions (I think unprecedented). Participation rates have shot up since Covid, and there has been a very encouraging take up of both codes. Commiseration to Bowdon who had an excellent season themselves getting to three finals, and were unlucky to be missing John-Paul Moberly for the AC final.

Many thanks to Surbiton for hosting the finals, and to George Noble and his team for providing us all with a typically accomplished Surbiton lunch. Although their lawns were a little easier than they were for the Championship of Surrey where the Ps were missing after the Ts, the approaches to hoop 1 on both lawns 1&2 were tricky enough to keep everyone interested.

Finally a word of thanks to our outgoing President Quiller Barrett who in one of his final duties presented the Beddow Cup to Roehampton, giving all those in attendance an accomplished history of this Cup.

**I Tim Russell**

## SOUTH OF ENGLAND CHAMPIONSHIP 2022

JAMIE BURCH RETAINED HIS TITLE; ANDY MYERS WON THE PLATE

**O**ver the course of the weekend the weather gods conspired to visit a multiplicity of climatic conditions upon Eastbourne: drizzle, then torrential rain on Friday; overcast but mostly dry on Saturday; and finally, some sunshine plus a coolish breeze on Sunday. Fortunately, or perhaps unhappily for those in play on Friday afternoon, the Compton lawns drain very well and there was no flooding to hold things up. With November's MacRobertson Shield competition in Australia pending, we were delighted to welcome four members of the current England team, (Mark Avery, Jamie Burch, Christian Carter and Harry Fisher) as well as two veterans of these international contests, David Maugham and Stephen Mulliner (both 5-times winners of this championship, the latter returning to the fray after a gap of 27 years!). We were also very pleased to see former 3-times champion Keith Aiton, in a purely spectatorial role, casting his expert eye over proceedings.

Of the eight seeds, seven reached the quarter-finals in emphatic style without conceding a game. They were joined by former champion Ed Duckworth, and the top two seeds went on to contest the final: rankings vindicated! Mark Avery forfeited his first game against debutante Lorna Dewar after his late arrival in pouring rain, won the next easily but then just scraped home

by 4 in the third. But no such peril in the next round when he beat Christian Carter in straight games without reply. In a six hour, 3-game encounter Harry was well tested by Sam Murray, who took the second game +26, and only narrowly lost the third. Detailed commentary on the final, from the keyboard of the masterful Andrew Gregory, can be found on croquetscores, a first for this tournament.

By Saturday evening results in the Swiss competition were fairly evenly spread, with Sam Murray and then Tim Wilkins just ahead of the pursuing pack. But in the first round of the knockout Sam fell to Tim, who then succumbed to an Andy Myers triple. Nigel Polhill's triple to defeat Ed Duckworth was his 4th of the weekend and propelled him into the final. A close-fought final between Andy and Nigel ended in Andy's favour to secure him the Sussex Union Cup.

Full results are to be found on croquetscores. There were triple peels aplenty: Jamie Burch and David Maugham finishing with 6 apiece to tie for the peeling prize; Harry Fisher and Mark Avery close behind on 5 each.

Particular thanks go to Hilary Smith for the lunches, and to John Crisford and his team for presenting the lawns in such good shape after an extremely challenging summer.

**I Roger Wood**



**PHOTOGRAPH Hilary Smith:** Jamie Burch receives the O'Callaghan Gold Cup from Compton President Marjorie Platt



**PHOTOGRAPH Hilary Smith:** Runner-up Harry Fisher gets a stick of Eastbourne rock



**PHOTOGRAPH Hilary Smith:** Andy Myers wins The Sussex Union Cup

# AC FIRST EIGHT, PRESIDENT'S CUP

**T**his year's President's Cup started with players with 60 previous appearances between them. An impressive 44 of which belonged to Stephen Mulliner. It also had 3 players, Gabrielle Higgins, Sam Murray and Mark van Loon, making their debuts.

**DAY ONE** started with all players rushing off the lawns during the warm-up to fetch their waterproofs. As with much of the day, by the time they were found and put on, the downpour had stopped. Heavy rain leading up to the event meant that lawns were heavier than players were used to and many early croquet strokes were under hit. By the end of the day Burch, Patel and van Loon were leading the way with 3 wins. No one finished the day without a win.

**DAY TWO** followed a similar pattern weather wise. Patel continued his fine form and picked up 3 more wins to top the table on 6/8 with Burch and Murray one behind on 5/8. Burch vs Patel was first up on **DAY THREE** in a top of the table clash. Both players spurned good chances before Patel eventually won picking up his first of 4 wins for the day. By the end of day 3, Patel had 10 wins and Burch had 8. This meant that, going into the final day, only Patel and Burch had a chance of winning.

Burch beat Burrridge and it looked like Patel would win his game against Mulliner to become champion, only to come to grief rushing his peelee to rover. Mulliner hit his last lift and completed a tp to take the tournament into the final round. Burch had a swift tp vs Higgins leaving all eyes on Patel vs Mark van Loon. Van Loon had a ball round third turn and had a couple of chances to get a triple peel going but never quite had control and Patel eventually prevailed plus 12tp to win his second President's cup.

The tireless work of the ground staff and volunteers meant lawns were cut and hoops reset during the tournament. All players were very grateful for all the effort made both with this and the fantastic lunches.

**Jamie Burch**  
PHOTOGRAPHS Roy Tillcock



Gabrielle Higgins



President's Eight Ryde 2022



Stephen Mulliner



Samir Patel



Mark van Loon



Jamie Burch



Jamie Burch  
Presentation



President's Cup  
Winner Samir  
Patel, Ryde 2022



# AC SECOND EIGHT, THE CHAIRMAN'S SALVER

I think all participants in this year's Chairman's Salver will remember it primarily for what they were doing when they found out about the death of the Queen, which occurred on the first day of the tournament.

Given the lengthy distances participants had travelled, it was felt to be appropriate to continue with the tournament, despite the sad circumstances.

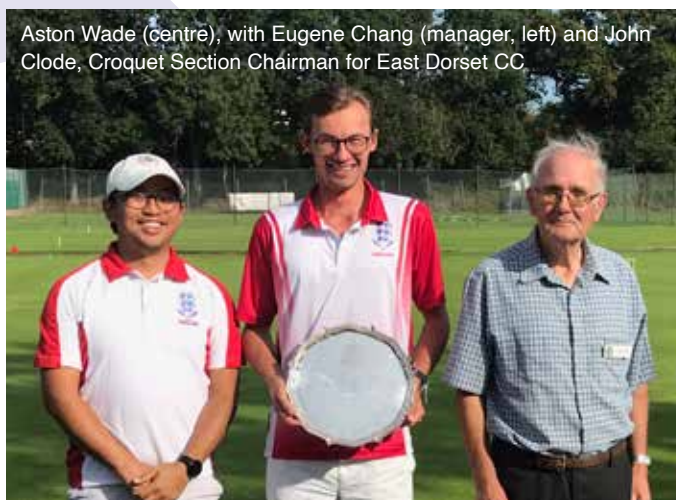
There were certainly other reasons to remember the event, though, particularly if you were Aston Wade. In the first round of his first Salver, Wade was playing another first-timer, Ali Maugham, and reaching the end of the game Wade hit in with his 4b ball, his other ball already for peg. Needing only a 3-ball break to win, he under-approached penult off Maugham's ball from two feet, and stuck in it. Maugham needed no second bidding and pounced to win the game.

That was particularly notable, since it was the only game Wade was to lose in the entire event. Combining astonishing shooting with precise hoop running and very accurate croquet strokes, he racked up a remarkable 365 points out of a possible 368 and in only one of his 13 wins did he concede more than 12 points. Given all those strengths, his reluctance to attempt TPs did not hamper him at all, and as a result he became the first player since Roger Tribe in 1996 to win the event without doing a single TP. Even allowing for the easy conditions, once he adds TPs to his repertoire, we can expect this rising star to challenge for the top AC events, in addition to the GC ones he has already won.

Only two players really threatened Wade. One was David Goacher, who couldn't have been a greater contrast to Wade in terms of experience, playing in his 23rd Salver and notching up his 150th Salver game win during the event. Goacher began well with six wins from his first seven, and then in a crucial game pegged Wade out. A prolonged, tactical pegged-out ending took place, with both players having chances to win, but eventually Wade came home +3 in the only game he won where he was run close. After that Goacher seemed to lose heart, and won only one more game. The other contender was Nick Parish, another Salver first-timer, whose shooting and croquet strokes were sufficiently on form to make up for periodic problems with the hoops. In the other crucial game, Parish TPO'd Wade, who stuck in hoop 1 off the contact. Unaccountably, Parish missed a 4-yarder at Wade's ball in the hoop, finishing on the south boundary. Wade ran the hoop to the north boundary, hit the ball in corner 2, rolled off hoop 2 and, taking the two-ball break to 2-back, finished to seal the Salver. Parish eventually came second with 11 wins.

Other than the games between them, Parish and Wade lost only one game each, so it was no surprise that the other players finished a little way back. A special mention must be made for Omed Hallam, who lost his first eight games, getting more and more despondent with each game. Eventually he crawled over the line against Nigel Polhill to win game 9, to a round of applause from all present. This win completely transformed his mindset and with his confidence restored he went on to win four of his remaining five games, losing only to Wade, and avoiding coming last for good measure. Of the other players, Maugham and Eugene Chang performed confidently in their first Salvagers winning 5 and 7 games respectively, while Nigel Polhill struggled a little with the heavy lawns but finished strongly by winning his two pegged-down games against Goacher. Andy Myers entertained us off the lawn with his excellent chicken chasseur, but by his standards had an event to forget. As always, Parkstone was a lovely place to play, with excellent catering and wonderful support from local members, for whom nothing was too much trouble, including having to take a crash-course in hoop setting since their principal hoop-setter was 200 miles away playing in the Spencer Ell. With torrential downpours on the first two days, the lawns were inevitably easy-paced, but the weather lifted after that, and rookie manager Chang deftly organised us to finish the growing number of pegged-down games, and conclude the event on time. I knew he wasn't only there for his cooking...

## Nick Parish



Aston Wade (centre), with Eugene Chang (manager, left) and John Clode, Croquet Section Chairman for East Dorset CC

# AC THIRD EIGHT, THE SPENCER ELL, SOUTHPORT

2022 had been a glorious year so far, but surely the weather was bound to break – all weather reports were confirming rain. Not only this, but for some strange reason I had Southport down as the wet North. I had been driving 3hrs when I saw my first sign for Southport, at which point the heavens opened – as predicted, I thought. What a turn up for the books; reports coming in from the other AC 8's of "chucking it down", but we were reaching for our SUNCREAM!!! and I can confirm that "the wet North" is now (in my head) known as "sunny Southport". I am tempted here to provide a promotional dvd for Southport,

as I am completely sold. So much to do here for all age groups, but also much croquet to be played, and lovely, friendly members. Finishing a game quickly one day, I did manage a visit to the Classic Car Show in the park next door, and grab a 99, with flake obvs – fabulous. Southport has 10 lawns, split on two sides of a park footpath, with a lovely quaint clubhouse. Barbara and John Haslam were very much the doers, for this event, with Barbara catering (nom) and John everything to do with the lawns. But there were also other members who mowed, lined, switched, cleared, opened and locked up, and provided a ...continued on next page

never-ending supply of bottled beers – our thanks to all of you. Then there was Paul Rigge (Riggey), our Tournament Manager and organiser of the evening entertainment – Ling’s, karaoke, hats – I’m saying no more, you’ll just have to ask. Paul also took it upon himself to set the hoops each day, as they had to be taken in at night. 128th of an inch clearance was set, but with ground that slowed at high tide (you could just make it out on the horizon), the tight hoops were necessary to provide the expected challenge.

Lawns 1 and 2 were good to play on, (3 not in use), lawns 4 and 5 had a diagonal slope and were an interesting challenge. Frustrating at times, but still enjoyable.

The AC 8’s is truly one of my favourite events, and is always immediately put in my diary when the Fixtures Book arrives, along with the Inter-Counties – whether or not I am to be selected. The format is simple: everyone plays everyone, twice. Opponent, lawn allocation and winner of the toss are all determined well in advance – simples. I didn’t even need to think which colour balls I was playing with, as every single game I ended up playing with black and blue.

### LET PLAY COMMENCE.

**DAY 1:** Ultimately a day of sadness, with the announcement of the death of Queen Elizabeth II, and a little uncertainty as to whether we should or even wanted to continue. When playing away at a tournament there is a certain separation from reality, but reality was really knocking. We knew various public events were cancelled, but the decision was made to continue play after guidance from the CA.

**DAY 2:** Getting used to the challenge of the lawns, so triple peels were attempted and achieved. However, by the end of the day we had a total of three pegged down games. Visits from motorised parachutes made for an unusual distraction, and more beer arrived.

There was a bit of fun on lawn 1, which had a dashing visitor, sporting a tartan neckerchief – a Dachshund, racing around. Call of the rolling croquet balls was strong, but call of the owner stronger, and he leapt gracefully over the boundary board and away. Dave Kibble now had something to blame for his next shot.

**DAY 3:** Ended with five pegged down games and things starting to get interesting. The results of these pegged down games could make all the difference, and Riggey encouraged players to come in early to attempt their completion. I honestly lost count of how many involved Mark Ormerod, but he was good at turning up early and squeezing in games when free to complete them. A couple more boxes of beer arrived.



Spencer Ell Eight Southport 2022

**DAY 4:** A strong competition was now being contested, with Neal Bacon, Lorna Dewar and Robert Wilkinson on similar wins. But more importantly, mallets were laid down at 11am when the club Ship’s Bell sounded for a 2-minute silence – Thank you Queen Elizabeth II.

Only two pegged down games left and it was time for the group photo. Over these few days there had been regular dog training in the field next door, with whistles and calls, and as you can see from the picture, using the correct commands we could almost corale everyone into suitable position.

**DAY 5:** An exciting day, with only two games each left to play. A good win by Annabel McDiarmid over Neal Bacon meant the trophy winner would be either Robert or Lorna. These two had been getting stronger throughout the tournament; Robert determined to win the Spencer Ell Trophy for the second time; Lorna, a relative newcomer to croquet, and boosted up from the Treasurer’s Tankard, was just... determined. Lorna won her last two games, and surprisingly, Paul Rigge (sorry Paul) beat Robert. Lorna Dewar was the very deserving victor with 11 wins out of 14. Lorna accepted the trophy with a lovely, slightly tearful smile, and dedicated her win to her father.

### SORRY, NOT FINISHED.

5pm and, with long journeys for many, people were saying their goodbyes – leaving three players playing three pegged down games. All three games on the go at the same time, all set up on different lawns. David Harrison-Wood vs Paul Rigge, Mark Ormerod vs David Harrison-Wood, and Paul Rigge vs David Harrison-Wood!!!!!! At the end, one win each. At this point I would like to say thank you to David Harrison-Wood, who helped us as a very last minute fill-in.

**RESULTS:** Lorna Dewar 11 wins, Robert Wilkinson 10, Neal Bacon 8, Annabel McDiarmid 7, Mark Ormerod 7, Paul Rigge 6, Dave Kibble 4 and David Harrison-Wood 3.

### Annabel McDiarmid



Lorna Dewar  
winner Spencer  
Ell 2022  
PHOTOGRAPH  
Dave Kibble



PHOTOGRAPH  
Dave Kibble



Group Social



# AC FOURTH EIGHT, TREASURER'S TANKARD, SIDMOUTH

**T**he 2022 draw for the Treasurer's Tankard threw up a couple of fun surprises from the selectors, including having the possibly over-qualified, shy and retiring Jack Wicks, and the up and coming Guy Hewitt (a real contender for Most Improved Player this year, having risen over 200 ranking places in the past year), with a couple of the competitors in their first ever Eight.

The Sidmouth lawns were excellent, with lawns being mowed and hoops reset nearly every day by the incredible volunteers at the club, and the flatness of said lawns encouraging a higher quota of aggressive shooting throughout. And it's always nice to be beside the seaside.

The weather was supposed to be awful, but after a dalliance in the first couple of days with stronger winds and sporadic rain, leading to continual outfit adjustments, things markedly improved.

While Wixy efficiently took about dismantling all in front of him, a number of names were bubbling away just behind, including Alex "Don't Mention The Crown" McIntyre, who comfortably exceeded his aim of 4 wins through a combination of some solid break play and a fair bit of shouting at himself! Every player was a threat to the others, and there was unsurprisingly a number of differing idiosyncrasies. Very few games were finished without the opponent taking croquet, and 10 of the games ended +3.

John Davis had casually mentioned early on that he'd only lost both head-to-heads once in all his previous (4?) Eights, which put a target on his back - David Warhurst succeeded in his mission to be added to the illustrious list!

As expected, the soul of the group was provided by Martin Murray, with his frankly ridiculous ability to recall croquet-based

facts, and his proclivity to pounce on anybody who might not yet have heard them!

But throughout, Wixy was unassailable; going about things in his usual delicate, sweet and caring way, only dropping 2 games by the end, including to Andrew Killick, who did an excellent job throughout of befuddling his opponents with his unusual but often highly-effective tactics. I think every player and spectator, at some point, mentioned his approach of firing his first ball into corner 2 from A Baulk in every game, whether first or second!

After a long week of competing at this level, Guy finally managed to get his name on the board, winning his final game - he'll definitely be back and winning more in the future. Sidmouth were superb hosts in a beautiful location - it's well worth the trip next season!

## I Chris O'Byrne



Jack Wicks

## AC CHAMPIONSHIP REFEREES WANTED!

**T**he CA is looking to appoint more AC Championship Referees. At the moment there are fewer than 30 qualified people, and not all of those are still active. More are needed to act in the most important events, especially those organised by the World Croquet Federation (WCF).

### Do I have to be a minus player to qualify?

No. For WCF events, in particular, the event regulations normally prevent players in the event from acting as referees so the very best players are likely to be ruled out.

### So what qualifications do I need to have?

You need to be an experienced player of AC, and to have at least 2 years' experience as an AC Referee.

### What is the process for becoming a Championship Referee?

As with the ordinary Referee qualification, there are two parts to the process:

1. Questions on the Laws and situations which may arise in games. This may be a written paper, or done by question and answer with the Examining Referee. The questions are similar to those set for the ordinary Referee examination, but the pass mark is higher.

2. A practical examination on the lawn, conducted by two Examining Referees. Again, the situations you will be asked to judge are similar to those in the ordinary examination but the pass mark is higher. The second Examiner will observe the shots or situations set by the first, and

also observe how you deal with each problem.

### I'm interested. How do I go about getting qualified?

1. Look at the Fixtures Calendar when it is published in the Spring. Some Academies, Federations or clubs may be offering refresher courses in the Laws, plus the opportunity to take the Championship Referee exam. Note that the CA will normally offer a subsidy towards the cost of any course fees, or

2. Contact one of the Examining Referees listed on the website. The link to the list of Examining Referees is at <https://www.croquet.org.uk/?p=games/association/refereeing>

# MACROBERTSON SHIELD

**C**ongratulations to England for winning the 23rd holding of the MacRobertson Shield. It is the first time that England have won the title playing under the name England, since the 1969 series in Australia. For the nine wins between 1974 and 2010, the Croquet Association's team was known as Great Britain, or Great Britain and Ireland to reflect the fact that the team included players from Wales, Scotland and Ireland. Following the introduction of the WCF's World Team Championship in 2010, the team now only includes English qualified players.

In 1918 an invitation was received by the CA from the Victorian Croquet Association, for a team of four players to take part in a series of Test Matches. Regrettably not enough players wished to travel to Australia and the invitation was declined.

A few years later, the generous enthusiast Sir MacPherson Robertson, presented the famous trophy which bears his name, and the Australians decided to travel to England in 1925 instead. Three test matches were played in the 1925 series at Roehampton (26-27 June), Cheltenham (24-25 July) and Southwick (4-5 September). Only two of the Australian players were first class and England had comfortable wins in all three tests, dropping only 1 match. In between the test matches, the Australian players played in many tournaments during the summer, having arrived in early May and left in mid-September. The next three series were all held in Australia, with the one in 1935 being the first triangular series featuring New Zealand as well as England. Until the 1960s it was felt that it was unlikely that both Australia and New Zealand would travel to the northern hemisphere at the same time, and it took until 1974 for this to happen for the first time.

Until the 1950-51 series teams consisted of four players, but since then six has become the norm. In 1993 the series became a quadrangular one following the admittance of the United States. The current format of each country playing the other three countries in a 21 match (9 doubles and 12 singles) Test Match has only been in place since the 1996 series. Prior to that each test match was usually a best of nine matches (3 doubles and 6 singles) held over two days.

**I Chris Williams, CA Archivist**

## CONGRATULATIONS TO ENGLAND!

**T**he prestigious international event for the MacRobertson Shield, the AC World Team Championship Tier 1, was last contested in Australia in 2017 and their team were the defending champions.

The four nations competing in Tier 1 gathered in November to put up a fine show of brilliant play. With tactical singles and doubles games that were a joy to see, being available on Vimeo live streaming and supplemented by Croquet Scores, enabling live viewing and written commentary. Those volunteers working both in front of the cameras or enabling continuous input behind the scenes are much appreciated. I would stay up late or rise early to catch up on the news and many hundreds of other croquet players did the same.

The result was a victory for England but an exciting culmination of 15 days play by the four nations. The first test match was won convincingly, the second was a nail-biting experience whilst the third test match proved victorious. The experienced four English representatives who have competed in this event before proved their mettle and won most of their games convincingly. The two new members are also worthy ambassadors of the game and will have enjoyed their wins. Great to see Jamie Burch winning all of his single matches, then alongside Mark

## MAC FACTS

- *David Openshaw, with 4 series wins, has captained the most winning series (1982, 1990, 1993 and 2000).*
- *Robert Fulford has played in the most winning series - eight.*
- *John Prince of New Zealand has played in the most MacRobertson Shield series - nine between 1963 and 2003.*
- *David Maugham has played the most matches in the MacRobertson Shield (114).*
- *Australia have won the MacRobertson Shield four times. Their win in 2017 was their first since 1935 and the first time they had won outside Australia.*
- *New Zealand have won the MacRobertson Shield four times. Their win in Britain in 1986 is the only time they have won it outside New Zealand.*
- *Hedley Gunton of Australia was the oldest debutant in the MacRobertson Shield at 73 in 1969.*
- *13 teenagers have made their debut in the MacRobertson Shield, with Robert Fletcher, John Prince and Richard Baker all being 17.*
- *Two players have played for two different countries in the MacRobertson Shield. Damon Bidencope (Australia and USA) and Chris Clarke (GB and New Zealand).*
- *Only three players have played more than 100 matches in the MacRobertson Shield - David Maugham (114), Robert Fulford (111) and John Prince (103).*
- *The club that has held the most MacRobertson Shield Test matches is Warleigh in Melbourne, who held 23 Tests between 1927 and 1982. The club was sold in 2005 and the proceeds used to build the club at Cairnlea.*



Avery winning all of their doubles. Chris Clarke's prophesy that England's chance of winning was 43% proved to be true. We thank the England team, captained by Samir Patel, and including Mark Avery, Jamie Burch, Christian Carter, James Death and Harry Fisher for their willingness to compete in this prestigious world championship.

**I Patricia Duke-Cox, President**





# ENGLAND MAC TEAM

It's been an honour and a privilege for me this year to be the coach of the English MacRobertson Shield team as they prepared for the contest in Melbourne, Australia. We had an initial get-together at Surbiton in March, where I introduced them to a set of drills I had developed to focus their individual practice. We also met up in August, again at Surbiton, to work on developing our doubles pairings. The conditions were incredibly testing, thanks to George Noble's excellent hoop setting and an extended dry spell that produced lawns running at approximately 15 seconds. We were very grateful that Mark Suter was able to give up a weekend to play as a fourth 'pair' and he pulled no punches in giving each pair a good workout! The final get together was held at Blewbury in mid-October. If you've not been there, go, as the lawns are first class, and with Joe King setting their Ultra hoops to 1/64" in new holes the team were again given a good test of their skills. All members of the team performed well and a great team spirit was developed.

It's no surprise to me that the team was successful in regaining the Shield. You've been a pleasure to work with. Well done guys!

**I Keith Aiton, England Head Coach**

England Team with coach Keith Aiton  
**PHOTOGRAPH Chris Roberts**



# WE ARE THE CHAMPIONS

The England team put up a fantastic performance in Australia to triumph in the MacRobertson Shield winning all three tests against the other nations. The final day of play was when the trophy was decided though at that stage the England team needed just one win from the remaining six matches this was duly delivered by Mark Avery just ahead of Christian Carter.

Samir Patel lining up the crucial peg out to win the test against New Zealand



The first round saw England playing against the United States and wrapping up a comprehensive victory, passing the 11 match margin with a day to spare before running out 16 to five winners, including 11 triple peels. In the other first round test Australia sneaked past New Zealand 11 matches to 10. In round two England faced New Zealand in a match where fortunes swung throughout. England built a two point lead from the first two rounds of doubles only for New Zealand to grab a five to one victory in the first round of singles opening their own two point lead. The third round of doubles saw England pull back to seven to eight down meaning England needed to win four from the final six singles matches. It was at this point that England Captain and Chair of Council Samir Patel showed the real grit

and character that would propel England to the title, the test was locked at 10 all and his match at one game a piece when he pegged out to win and give England the all-important 11th match point that saw them to victory. In this round England managed nine triple peels.



Samir in action against the USA

Australia had meanwhile prevailed 14 to seven against the USA setting up a winner takes all final round, whilst New Zealand and the USA faced off in the third/fourth place play-off. Sadly, the playoff was impacted by Covid rearing its ugly head with the test reduced to a best of 13 matches; won eight to five by the New Zealanders. Our best wishes to all those infected to make full and speedy recoveries.

Thankfully the final was unaffected as the two unbeaten teams took to the courts in a test that all anticipated would be nip and tuck all the way to the finish. Indeed, after the first two rounds of doubles the teams were tied at three apiece. But this all changed in the first round of singles where England pulled off a stunning five to one result with only Robert Fletcher making points for the Australians. In the previous round against New Zealand, England had clawed their way back to victory from a first round singles setback but then the deficit was two matches here it stood at four. The final round of doubles

saw England extend their lead winning two to one setting up a final day needing just one win from the final six matches which they duly achieved including three triple peels taking the test total to eight. England won the test 13 to eight to bring croquet back home.

Mark Avery and Jamie Burch won nine out of nine doubles matches by a staggering 18 games to two including 8 triple peels only the fourth undefeated pair in the history of the Shield. Jamie Burch also distinguished himself in the singles winning all six matches including seven triples (12 including the doubles).



Mark Avery and Jamie Burch discuss tactics in one of their doubles matches

Mark Avery and Christian Carter each only lost one game of singles in that first round against New Zealand. But the key to success was whenever the chips were down or the pressure on the team all stood up to be counted and delivered the world championship for England well done to Samir Patel (captain), Mark Avery, Jamie Burch, Christian Carter, James Death and Harry Fisher the winning team and of course coach Keith Aiton and all the many others who helped prepare them. Also, a huge vote of thanks to the live streaming crew who provided insightful commentary throughout the night.

**I Paul Hetherington  
Director of Marketing**

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# STUART M. SMITH WON GC ENGLISH NATIONAL SINGLES CHAMPIONSHIP - ASCOT CUP

**T**he 2022 ENSC took place at Cheltenham Croquet Club on 17/18th September with players participating from the eight qualifying tournaments held throughout the year.

The format is four blocks of four players playing matches of best of three games, followed by best of three quarter-finals, semi-finals, and main final matches. The knock-out draw was done using the Modified Grade Based Seeding methodology which uses the updated dynamic grade of the players and subsequent removal of any block round clashes to determine the order of play.

Three of the four block winners were, as expected, the top block seeds, James Death (Block A), Richard Bilton (Block C), and Euan Burrige (Block D), with Jack Good taking pole position in Block B from Stuart M. Smith with a great performance over their three-game match, 5/7, 7/3, 7/5. Jack was the only player to gain a match win over the eventual Championship winner. Richard Bilton showed consistent form with all block games won 2/0, - the only player to do so - and also from Block C, second placed Nick Archer took out the tournament's top seed James Death in the Quarter-Final round in three games, 3/7, 7/6, 7/4. Richard Bilton continued in his Quarter-Final in the same clinical way as the blocks, with a 2/0 win over Chris Roberts, meaning that so far Richard was unbeaten.

Callum Johnson (2nd in Block D) faced Jack Good in the Quarter-Finals, with Jack starting well taking the first game 7/4. Callum rallied taking the second game comfortably 7/2 with the third ending in a nail-biting finish, Jack just losing out on the 13th, 6/7 to Callum.

As 2nd place in Block B, Stuart M. Smith inevitably was to face a Block winner, in this case, Euan Burrige from Block D. Euan's hard-hitting style is something we all expect, and in game one he hit the target more frequently than Stuart, winning comfortably 7/2. Stuart then countered confidently with back-to-back wins in the remaining games, 7/5, 7/4 moving him on to the Semi-Finals.

The Semi-Finals pitched Nick Archer v Callum Johnson and Richard Bilton v Stuart M. Smith. In the former contest it was Callum that continued with a strong performance, but it took two tight games to better Nick Archer, 7/4, 7/6.

Having found his form in the previous Quarter-Final round, Stuart halted Richard's unbeaten run with two straight wins 7/4, 7/4, setting up the main Final between himself and Callum.

For the remaining players, the Plate was run as an 'All Play All' Block with the Manager having been left with an awkward number of 7 players with one withdrawal. It was evident that the two main players on form here were Sam Cuthbert and Tim Crowdy, both only dropping one game each and ending on 5 wins apiece. Tim took the Plate winner's title on a narrow hoop difference of 4 hoops.

It is worthy of note that all the younger age range of players

were impressive – Sam Cuthbert and Jack Good still in education but playing with a maturity in advance of their years. And Euan, Richard and Callum all progressing through the knock-out stages ahead of other experienced competitors. James Death, Jack Good, Euan Burrige and Chris Roberts as losing Quarter-Finalists moved into the consolation Bowl event. James Death withdrew due to a broken mallet face, giving Jack a straight Bye to the Bowl Final. Euan and Chris opted for a single 19pt game that was closely fought, but with Euan bettering Chris after a lengthy game 10/7.

The Bowl Final pitched two similar style players against each other, Euan and Jack, both showing excellent strength and skill which was evidenced by the closeness of the scoring. The more experienced Euan was the eventual winner over three very well played games, 7/6, 6/7, 7/4.



Lionel Tibble presents the Ascot Cup to Stuart M. Smith

The Main Final was watched by Cheltenham members and players that had completed their games. With Stuart on form, clearing consistently and running long range hoops, it looked as though this was going to be a short match with the first game result coming in 7/2. However, Callum remained composed and responded with equally good clearance play, and a hoop run from just wide of the peg to take hoop 12 gave him an equalising win, 7/5 in game two.

As the players squared up in game three, Stuart controlled the opening play taking an early 3/1 lead, although the game was far from over with Callum's responses pushing up his hoop count. Both players showed accuracy and consistency, but that early gap left Callum with too much to do, unable to break Stuart's centre ball clearance rallies.

Once again hoop 12 was run smoothly from around 5 yards which gave Stuart the overall match win and the English National Singles Championship title.

**| Louise Smith, Tournament Manager**

## GC 'C LEVEL SERIES' FINAL, CAMERTON & PEASEDOWN CC, 17-18 SEPTEMBER 2022

**A**s one would expect at the end of a long series of "C Level" club tournaments, the play in this Final was of a high standard – ok, not many "jump shots", but good, accurate placements, clearances and competitive play.

20% of the games went to 7-6.

Two Blocks of 8 played in the first round.

Giles Pepperell (Llanfairfechan) won all the games in his block,

the last one with a difficult angled jump shot, and Andy Jones (Phyllis Court), Philip Tremble (Guildford & Godalming) and Colin Spencer (Downham) only losing 5 games between them in the second block.

The 19 point Quarter-Final games were very close with Giles, Colin, Andy and Mark Innes (Nottingham) going through to a Semi-Final, "Best-of-3".

...continued on next page



In the Semi-Final, Giles had a slight hiccup in the first game, but sailed through the other two to win and Mark Innes played two very close games with Andy Jones, but kept his calm, going through to the Final against Giles.

Giles spent some time “resting” while waiting for the second Semi to finish, and took a while to get going again in the Final “Best-of-Three”. Mark got the upper hand and won the first game 7-5, but Giles thundered through the next 2 games to win 7-3, 7-4.

Giles started off the season playing in the C Level at CPCC, so it was fitting that he won the Series at our Club.

The “Plate” eight “played all” with Michael Tideswell (Eynsham) winning 6 out of 7 games.

The weather was perfect all the weekend, Saturday evening ending in the twilight with a welcome BBQ.

■ **Mo Boys**



Giles Pepperell

## WOMEN'S GC WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP AVAILABILITY

**T**he 2023 Women's GC World Championship will be held at Sussex County Croquet Club (Southwick) from 7 to 14 August. Players wanting to play should register their availability via the

'Availability' page in the 'Members' area of the CA website by 4 January 2023.

The event capacity is 56 players. After the WCF have allocated ranking places, it is expected that England will receive two Member places and four Host

places, so don't feel shy about making yourself available! There will also be a Qualifying Tournament held from 3 to 5 August 2023 at Eastbourne (Compton).

■ **CA International Committee**

## GC GRASS ROOTS NATIONAL FINAL, RYDE, 25 SEPTEMBER 2022

*L to R: Bernie Phillips (Winner), Roy Tillcock (Manager), Pamela Sim (Ryde Croquet Chair)*

**R**yde's inaugural involvement with this event brought a chilly but dry and bright autumnal day. Sixteen players from eight different clubs (Cheltenham and Broadwas being unable to provide a finalist) were mostly making their first visit to Ryde. Many of the entrants had improved their handicap during the season such that the starting field ranged from 4 to 12.

After the morning's three games of block play two players remained undefeated – Bernie Phillips (Guildford 4) and Kevin Woodgate (Ryde 9) – with the other two blocks each led by a 9 handicapper, Jackie Hikal (Stony Stratford) and Dee McKibbin (Phyllis Court). Paul Rockall (Gainsborough) and Woodgate provided some excitement for the manager and referees in round two, necessitating a quick reference to Rule 15.3 before both players resolved the situation and a Penalty Area Continuation was avoided.

Several visiting players had brought their supporters with them and, after a splendid lunch provided by Joan Grove and Debbie Hayns, the serious business of the Knockout began. Three of the block leaders won their quarter final games against second place opponents but McKibbin, returning again to Lawn 4, was involved in a long and dogged scrap with her Phyllis Court colleague Wendy Kingon, decided on time in favour of the latter. The semi-finals brought the two remaining undefeated players together with the relatively experienced Phillips proving too strong for Woodgate playing his first ever tournament. In the other semi, Hikal continued her fine form with a similarly strong win against Kingon.

The Final got underway shortly after five o'clock in front of an enthusiastic audience on the Lawn 2 patio, many rooting (get it!) for the underdog Hikal. Both players had earned their places and, despite the large handicap difference, provided an



enthralling and unpredictable game showing a good grasp of both tactical and practical skills. Clearing accuracy and positive hoop running were equally matched, but Phillips was able to gain the initiative at 5-5 and close out the match undefeated on the day; a worthy winner of the Grass Roots trophy.

Paul Cotterell (Eynsham) earned himself a bottle of wine by achieving his fourth win of the day defeating Frances Broadway (Enfield) in the Plate final.

My thanks go to Richard Bilton for all the 'behind the scenes' work, making the Manager's life that much easier, and similarly to my three willing assistant referees on the day.

■ **Roy Tillcock, Manager**

# ENGLAND WON GC HOME INTERNATIONALS

**E**ngland overcame opposition from Wales and Scotland to retain the GC Home Internationals. Ireland was unfortunately again unable to raise a team, so the previous year's format was reused, each test being best of 9 matches (3 doubles and 6 singles).

The event has now been hosted by each of the four nations, and it was back in England for its fifth year. Nottingham was chosen to host and provided excellent playing conditions with their newly re-laid east lawns. The event was enhanced by the use of Quadway hoops and the lawns were even faster than usual as the tournament was played on the hottest weekend of the year. There was also live streaming for most of the event.

England got off to a good start, winning both their first doubles matches, and Wales won their first match against Scotland. Wales' Ian Burrige and Chris Roberts then scored a great 7-4, 7-3 win against England's Aston Wade and Euan Burrige, as well as only dropping 4 hoops in their next match against Scotland. England won their second doubles against Scotland.

Up until this year, I Burrige had beaten England's top seed 2-0 in every year of the event, but that run came to an end as John-Paul Moberly returned the favour in this year's encounter. England also won both of Saturday's singles matches against Scotland 2-0, as did Roberts against Martin Murray. Jack Good and Tudor Jenkins, and Angharrad Walters and Lorna Dewar, had to finish for the day tied at 1-1. After day 1, England had 6 wins, Wales had 4 and Scotland were yet to get onto the scoreboard.

Day 2 started well for Wales, as I Burrige and Roberts beat England's Moberly and Good 2-0. The other two doubles pairs wrapped up one win each against Scotland. E Burrige and Wade both won their singles against Wales 2-1 and both countries won another singles match against Scotland, but they also lost one each as well, as Sam Murray beat Good in three games, and Dewar beat I Burrige at hoop 13 in the third game.

The Burrige pair then won their matches against Scotland 2-0, and Tudor Jenkins won his match against S Murray. Unfortunately, Jenkins had to leave early, so couldn't finish his match with Good, and one match was not played due to the hot weather. This meant that Wales would win the event if they won the remaining two matches – Moberly v Walters and Good v Roberts – as England currently led their test 4-2. The latter match was at 1-1 while the other match was well into the third game, but they thought it best to continue into game 3 even though Moberly had a strong lead. They didn't get through many hoops before Moberly ran hoop 9 for the win against Walters and sealed the victory for England.

## Positions

**England – 2 Wins**

**Wales – 1 Win**

**Scotland – 0 Wins**

Full results available at: [croquet.com/2022/gc/home-internationals/summary](https://croquet.com/2022/gc/home-internationals/summary) Streamed footage from the weekend available at: <https://youtu.be/jfX4lbFQNOQ> and <https://youtu.be/aZdJtHihm84>

## I Richard Bilton



# THE GC EIGHTS

**A**ston Wade became the second name on the Ricki Savage Memorial trophy as he did just enough to win the GC First Eight at Budleigh Salterton CC. Lionel Tibble also won his first Second Eight (Kate Jones Memorial) at the same venue. Sam Cuthbert won the Third Eight at Compton CC to continue the feat of the Third Eight only having been won by players under 21. All Eights use the same format – a best-of-three all-play-all block, followed by a semi-final and final for the top 4, played over the three days of the August Bank Holiday. Players are selected to play in the Eights after making themselves available on the CA website.

In seeding order, the First Eight comprised Aston Wade, Rachel Gee, Stephen Mulliner, Euan Burrige, Richard Bilton, Ian Burrige, Stuart M Smith and Callum Johnson. Bilton started the event well, winning all three of his matches on the first day, while Gee, Wade and Johnson finished the day on two wins and I Burrige was the only player to not trouble the scorers. E Burrige had a better second day, only losing to his doubles partner Johnson, to get himself onto 3 wins, and this time it was Wade's turn to have nothing to show for the day's play. Meanwhile, Bilton also had a drop in form and only won 1 match and Mulliner won all his matches, so both he and Bilton were on 4 wins at the end of day 2, with E Burrige, Gee, Johnson and Smith close behind on 3 wins. With such a select, talented field in

the First Eight, it was no surprise that a nailbiting finish was to unfold for the knockout places. Top seed Wade had a poor time in the block stage and retired on the Sunday evening with only 2 match wins, he needed a miracle set of results from the remaining Monday morning matches to qualify. Things started to go his way as Mulliner beat I Burrige in three games 7-5, 2-7, 7-5 and Bilton beat E Burrige with almost the same score line. Both the youngsters got off to a bit of a slow start, though Bilton managed to do enough to win the first game 7-5, but Burrige then found form to level the match with little effort, taking game two 7-2. Burrige had a 2-1 lead in game three and the two players took it in turns to miss at hoop 4, but Bilton made sure to run it with his second attempt after Burrige's miss. *...continued on next page*

1st EIGHT RICKI SAVAGE MEMORIAL





Aston Wade

He then went on to nail clearances from the South and North boundaries at hoops 5 and 6 to enable him to take a 4-2 lead. Burrige then trailed for the rest of the game, he managed to level at 6-6 from 4-6 down, but Bilton ran 13 with the first ball in position to take the match. Bilton and Mulliner then qualified comfortably for the knockout, both with 5 wins from 7. As Wade brought his total matches to 3 by defeating Johnson 7-6, 7-4, his chances of qualification now rested with Smith. As the pivotal block match unfolded, a close first game was won by Gee at the 13th hoop. Smith countered strongly in game two with an easier 7-3 victory. Gee's accurate and superb positional shots were of her usual high standard, but equally, Smith's centre ball clearances left him in commanding positions around the hoops. Smith gained a 2 hoop advantage, which led to a final score of 7-5 to win the match and gain a place in the Semi-Final. Already on 3 match wins, if Smith lost in the last round to Gee, both would still qualify. However, Smith beating Gee to reach 4 match wins meant Wade went through as the best player on three wins. Wade, Gee, E Burrige and Johnson all had 3 wins, with 3 also tied on -1 net games, so hoop difference became the deciding factor which gave Wade his Semi-Final place.

The Semi-Finals saw Mulliner against Wade and Bilton against Smith. Not wishing to leave anything to chance, Wade upped his performance and took a relatively easy win in game one, followed by a closer result in game 2, and beat Mulliner 7-2, 7-5. This decisive action now launched Wade into the Final. The Semi-Final match between Bilton and Smith was very closely fought. Bilton won the first 7-5 despite being 2-4 down. Smith took the lead again in

game 2, but misses at hoops 5 and 6 allowed Bilton to level at 3-3 and get his ball to hoop 7 with an almost perfect peel. As this ball could not run the hoop, he elected to block Smith's shot, but it was just millimetres short, and Smith ran it cleanly down to hoop 8. From here, Bilton was this time unable to level the game and Smith won it by running hoop 10 and 11 from over 7 yards. Bilton took a 4-0 lead in game 3, which included a jump at hoop 3 after a missed clearance from Smith. Bilton then decided against a clearance which allowed Smith to run an angled hoop 5, and again at hoop 6, putting a ball in as Smith's ball was a bit further away, but that didn't stop Smith from running it with little wire. Bilton was a bit unlucky when he managed to snuggle up to his own ball in taking position at hoop 7 – he tried to jump the edge of his partner ball to score the hoop but it didn't go through, and Smith once again ran it cleanly. Bilton was able to maintain his advantage and take a 6-4 lead, however Smith played well to get a ball into the jaws of 11, and made the most of his position as he quickly went on to score 11 and then 12. Bilton had a small gap between Smith's ball and hoop 10 to take position at 13, it hilled slightly and went through the back and stopped a foot in front. Smith pulled out a centre-ball clearance from 12 yards to remove the danger, but Bilton positioned his other ball ready to clear Smith's ball back into the court. He did this but Smith's ball hit the upright of the hoop, and Smith was able to gain the initiative at the final hoop and take the game 7-6. Both playing well, Wade and Smith worked with similar styles, they controlled the mallet with consistent rhythm, and utilised powerful clearances and hoop running. In the end, it was Wade that continued with his consistency, and with a determination to not let it slip away from him, and perhaps

the pressure of the Final got to Smith. The games were close, both level at 4-4, but Wade went on to take them 7-4, 7-5 and win his maiden GC First Eight.

## 2nd EIGHT KATE JONES MEMORIAL

Defending champion Raouf Allim was seeded third in the Second Eight behind Tim Jolliff and Lionel Tibble. Below them were David Goacher, Chris Roberts, Tim Russell, Stephen Custance-Baker and Tim King. Jolliff showed why he was top seed as he won all three matches on day 1, Russell, Tibble, King and Allim all claimed two victories, while both Custance-Baker and Goacher finished the first day without winning a match. However, they both managed to win two matches on the second day, as did Roberts, Tibble and Jolliff, and it was King that didn't win any matches this time, as he and Goacher finished their match not being able to tell which ball was which at 8pm, while everyone else was enjoying their fish and chips. At the end of day 2, the top 3 seeds were almost guaranteed a place in the knockout, and they all made sure by winning their remaining block match on Monday morning. The other contest was between seeds 4 and 5, the cusp match was Goacher against Roberts. If Goacher won, the knockout would have involved the top four seeds, despite a very strong field. In the end, Roberts jumped up to fourth with 4 wins from 7, joining Allim (3rd, 4 wins), Tibble (2nd, 5 wins) and Jolliff (1st, 6 wins) in the Semi-Finals.



Lionel Tibble

The first round of the knockout saw Jolliff face Allim and Tibble against Roberts. Jolliff played well but was never really able to build an advantage, so two very similar games saw Allim win the match 7-5, 7-5, and a place in the Final once again. Robert's battle with Tibble was an altogether more entertaining affair with each player trading hoops in tightly fought games. Two wins at the 13th hoop allowed Tibble to join Allim in the Final, 4-7, 7-6, 7-6.

The Second Eight Final didn't really see the previous winner Allim rise to the occasion, as Tibble gave a solid performance over two games (with some good fortune along the way), winning 7-2, 7-3 for his first GC Eights title.

### 3rd SUZANNE ROBERTS EIGHT MEMORIAL

Don Beck was top seed of the Third Eight, followed by Paul Gunn, Sam Cuthbert, David Thirtle-Watts, Rick Lilley, Michelle Leonard, John A Richardson and Giles Pepperell. In the three rounds that were completed on Saturday, there were some very long matches that went to three games. These included Cuthbert's opener against Lilley, which

he won 7-5, 4-7, 7-6 (nothing like an opening round marathon to make a manager jittery!), and his second round match against Richardson, which he won by the narrowest possible margin 7-6, 6-7, 7-6. Cuthbert was the only player to win all three of his matches on the first day, with four players snapping at his heels with two wins each: Lilley, Beck, Gunn and Pepperell.

Beck broke out of this pack when rounds 4-6 were played on Sunday, with three straight wins, including 7-6, 3-7, 7-4 over an otherwise undefeated Cuthbert. Gunn and Lilley also continued to strengthen their positions with three wins apiece on day 2.

The final block round on Monday morning saw wins for Thirtle-Watts, Gunn, Beck and Cuthbert, who narrowly topped the block ahead of Beck on net games, both on 6 wins out of 7. Gunn, was on 5/7 and Lilley on 4/7, so they were the other two players who qualified for the knockout. However, Beck sadly elected to not proceed to this stage, and so Pepperell, on three wins, took fourth place.

In their Semi-Final, Cuthbert despatched Pepperell with a speedy 7-0, 7-4 win, while in the other Semi, a much longer

and more tightly-fought match between Lilley and Gunn saw the former triumph by an almost-as-close-as-it-gets 7-5, 6-7, 7-6 to avenge Gunn's victory in their block match. Despite this, or perhaps because of it, Cuthbert defeated Lilley in the final in two straight games by a decisive 7-4, 7-4. Due to everyone else withdrawing, David Thirtle-Watts was pronounced the winner of the Bowl.

**Richard Bilton**  
**Louise Smith**  
**Andrew Fall**



## DEVELOPMENT OF GC RULES

**M**y first copy of the Croquet Laws booklet was the red-covered fifth edition of 1989. It was many years before I looked at the short section on Golf Croquet with its imperious opening paragraph:

“The laws of Association Croquet relating to ordinary singles and doubles play and handicap singles and doubles play apply subject to the following modifications:”.

I had started playing GC after the “new” rules of 2005 and had also worked on the history of my then club, Dulwich, whence it seemed that GC had been played there from about 1928. I found it hard to imagine the 1989 rules being implemented at that date, as did others, who thought GC had developed as a practice game for AC, or who were convinced their club had never played GC. I now know that match reports involving Roehampton, Hurlingham, Dulwich and Brighton (aka SCCC) appeared regularly in Croquet in the 1950s and 1960s

A few years later (2014) I prepared a small booklet on the History of

Golf Croquet (available at SCCC). I discovered that the rules used by Horace Crowther Smith in his 1913 book *How to win at Golf Croquet* were totally unlike the 1989 rules. The next finding was that, in 1933, F H Ayres had urged the CA to standardise the rules, implying an existing and widespread interest in GC.

The CA published standardised rules in 1934 modified slightly to give the 1936 version which is printed alongside. This version would still be a simple introduction to the game, though containing one or two surprising entries, including banning the jump shot. (H C Smith thought this was terrible because it was the most creative part of the game.) This 11 paragraph format then continued to be used, with small additions, until 1961.

Prichard (p148) describes what happened after that: “by the late 1950s it was realised that the laws of croquet had undergone so many alterations that their original shape had been lost and they resembled a much patched garment, ill fitting and out of date. It was time for a new coat and Ian Baillieu undertook to be

the tailor.”

Baillieu, an active and skilled croquet player, was a QC whose practice was concerned mostly with the House of Lords and Privy Council. He was known for his intensely logical approach to issues and though there was a Laws Committee, the members seem to have been glad to leave the main work to him. In fact he served the first notice of an intention to undertake a wholesale revision at the AGM in May 1958 by proposing additional powers to Council to approve alterations to the laws.

In the council minutes for October 1958, Baillieu had already started work and attracted some negative comment, so Council formed an ad hoc committee “to assist him”. The April 1959 issue of Croquet referred to embarking on an ambitious re-draft of the Laws with the main aim of clarification. By May 1959 Baillieu reported to Council that on the first draft there was virtual agreement with the “dominions”; Oz & NZ were asked to send comments asap in order

...continued on next page



## NEW GC REFEREES

**C**ongratulations to the following who have passed the written exam and on-court test to become GC referees:

- Kevin Connolly (Watford)
- Nick Harris (Norwich)
- Andy Jones (Phyllis Court)
- Diane Martin (West Chiltington)
- Ian Martin (West Chiltington)
- David Pitman (Dulwich)
- Ruth Raunkiaer (Phyllis Court)

**Ian Cobbold**  
Chair of GC Rules Committee

to be sure of having a Laws Book available for the new season. In fact, the new laws were approved and the Laws booklet, published in May 1961, was labelled the first edition, giving rise to the series which we still use. Prior to that the laws had been published commercially.

It is clear that Bailleu did not think much about GC, though he did play in the 1958 annual Hurlingham vs Roehampton match: perhaps the 1-6 loss conditioned his attitude? Not until galley-proof discussion in December 1960 was GC mentioned explicitly. Croquet for April 1961 edition has a page on the changed AC laws but nothing on the drastic changes for GC. By 1972 the third edition had few changes from the first and just one page and a half of modifications from the laws applicable to ordinary level play...

My thanks to Roger Wood for the loan of early laws books; Prichard: The History of Croquet (1981).

**Ray Hall (SCCC)**

## GC 1936 LAWS

### 1. THE GAME.

*The game of Golf-Croquet is played between two sides playing alternate turns, each side consisting either of one or two players. The court and setting of the hoops and peg are the same as in the game of Croquet, but the balls are played throughout in the sequence, blue, red, black and yellow,-- one side playing blue and black and the other red and yellow.*

*The game consists of 13 points. The points are scored in the same order as in Croquet. The first ball to make a point scores that point for its side. The next point in order is then contested.*

### 2. THE START.

*The choice of start or the allocation of balls is decided as in Croquet. At the commencement of the game each player, in due sequence, shall play his ball from any spot on the East yard-line.*

### 3. THE TURN.

*The turn shall consist of a single stroke, even though the striker hit another ball or make a point-in-order. There is no croquet-stroke in Golf-Croquet.*

### 4. METHOD OF SCORING.

*The state of the game is indicated as in Match play in Golf.*

*As in Golf, it will not be necessary to complete the whole series of points to win the game if either side has scored a balance of points greater in number than remain to be played.*

### 5. PLAYING AT PEG.

*After the rover hoop has been scored each ball (whatever its position may be) shall, until the end of the game and immediately before its turn, be lifted to any point on the yard-line and played therefrom.*

### 6. PEELING.

*If a striker's ball hits another ball and causes it to run a hoop in order or hit the peg in order, then that other ball scores the point in order.*

### 7. ADVANCING A BALL PREMATURELY FOR THE NEXT POINT.

*If the striker play his ball, without hitting another ball, to a position which commands or threatens to command the point succeeding that which is being contested, the adversary may require such ball to be replaced and the stroke shall be made again to the adversary's satisfaction; but, if the striker hits another ball or scores a point, no ball displaced by the stroke can be so recalled.*

### 8. FOULS.

*Strokes which are fouls in Croquet are fouls in Golf-Croquet, and the penalties for fouls in the Laws of Croquet, so far as they are applicable, shall be enforced in Golf-Croquet.*

### 9. JUMP-STROKE.

*The jump-stroke is a foul in Golf-Croquet.*

### 10. PLAYING OUT OF TURN OR WITH A WRONG BALL.

*If the striker play out of turn or with a wrong ball, that stroke and any subsequent strokes, are null and void. All balls displaced shall be replaced; the right ball shall be played by the correct player, and the other balls shall follow in due sequence. No points made during the period of error shall be scored.*

*If the players cannot mutually agree as to the original position of the balls, all balls shall be lifted and played from the corner square nearest to the point being contested ; but the player first in error shall play last in sequence.*

### 11. BALLS IN CONTACT ON YARD LINE AND IN CORNER.

*A yard line or corner ball which is prevented by a ball in contact from obtaining an unimpeded shot in some desired direction, may be moved so as to obtain a clear shot, but must still maintain contact.*

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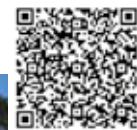
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**Scarifying:** Scarifying is a mechanical process that rips through the grass into the roots in an effort to remove dead material from the soil. It can be damaging, leaving scores and bare patches that often don't recover for months. So it isn't a desirable process, especially for fine grasses.

1. If you use biological fertilisers, there is no need to scarify because thatch is broken down by bacteria and converted into nutrition for the grass. The annual cost is less than £500 per lawn - see my website.

2. If synthetic fertilisers are used, thatch will build up. Scarifying is an option, switching to a biological system is another.

**Moss, Fusarium, Dollar Spot, Red Thread:** These are easily treated by spraying Soluble Iron. This cure costs about £5 to spray per croquet lawn. The Brilliant Sprayer makes this very easy and takes about 12 minutes to cover one croquet lawn. You can pull the sprayer by hand or tow it with a lawn mower or lawn tractor.

**Seeding bare patches:** Plant pot seeding is a method recommended by the STRI. Punch holes 8 -10mm in diameter, 10mm deep, and drop a few seeds in each hole. There is no need to cover the seed, the holes provide adequate protection. Even December and January sowing can work.

**Winter mowing:** It is important to keep your grass trimmed in the winter. This encourages side shooting and helps to thicken the sward. I recommend a cut height of 8 to 10 mm during the winter months. A trim every few weeks is usually sufficient.

**Avoiding price increases:** We are building mowers and sprayers during the winter. Components prices are volatile but, to avoid increases, you can reserve a mower or a sprayer at the current price, take delivery next spring and pay when delivered.

**I Duncan Hector**

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# THE COACHING PAGES **JOHN HARRIS**

## COACHING QUALIFICATIONS

**T**he following players have all been added to the official list of CA Coaches:

### ACCREDITED CLUB-LEVEL

**COACHES** (*Trained to coach beginners and high handicap players at their own Clubs*):

Brian Aikens	Sussex County
Neil Cotton	St Agnes
Mick Haytack	Ashby
Peter Reed	Sheffield U3A
Russell Robinson	Phyllis Court

**QUALIFIED COACHES** (*Qualified to coach skills and tactics at an appropriate level throughout the country*)

### Golf Croquet – Grade 2

Ivan Segal	Rottingdean
------------	-------------

## **T**hinking of becoming a Club-Level Coach?

Coaches are at the very heart of developing the game, by inspiring enthusiasm for croquet and raising standards of play. Nor is it all one-way: becoming a coach brings its own rewards. Coaching others and accessing coaching materials both help directly to develop and improve your own game.

Effective coaching is not about being a top player. Nor is it about lecturing, or finding fault, or always drilling new recruits in the Laws or Rules. It's personal qualities that are much more important at Club coaching level – a warm and welcoming personality; good inter-personal skills; and a genuine interest in supporting and helping others.

The aim of the Club-Level Coach course is not only to ensure you have a secure working knowledge of areas such as the Basic Laws/Rules and Safeguarding, but also to develop your understanding of session planning, group management skills, visual aids in coaching, and other aspects of what it takes to be a successful Club-Level Coach.

Accreditation is as follows. First, sign up for a Coach Training Course ("CTC"). A financial contribution of up to £25 is available for this from the CA to cover part of the cost; your Federation may also be able to offer further support.

You will receive a Pre-course Study Pack which, as well as giving lots of background, will point you to the CA's two Manuals for Coaches, one for AC and one for GC.

Then follows the course itself. The final part of the accreditation process is for prospective Club-Level Coaches to lead, and write up, five coaching sessions at their own Club. As one of the 2022 cohort wrote after completing these sessions, "I am deriving considerable satisfaction and working with increasing confidence."

Official recognition as a Club-Level Coach means that your planned coaching activities are covered by CA insurance. Perhaps most importantly, you have the satisfaction of putting something significant back into the game by helping others on their croquet journey.

Places on Coach Training Courses will soon be available to book direct with the Academies at High Wycombe, Southwick and York. Federations sometimes also plan CTC courses. Most courses are at the start of the season and places normally go quickly, so now is a great time to consider whether becoming a coach is for you, and whether you can put something back into the game you love by helping to bring on the next generation of croquet players.

## MERIT AWARDS

Congratulations to the following:

### ASSOCIATION CROQUET – BRONZE MERIT AWARD

Anne Alvey	Longman Cup
Minty Clinch	Daniels Cup, Cheltenham
Tony Mason	Challenge & Gilbey
Lynn Percy	Roehampton 'End of Season' Handicap

### ASSOCIATION CROQUET – SILVER MERIT AWARD

Chris Alvey	Longman Cup
Noel Harris	Daniels Cup, Cheltenham

### GOLF CROQUET – BRONZE MERIT AWARD

Philip Tremble	Hamptworth GC C Level
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### GOLF CROQUET – SILVER MERIT AWARD

Marc Colson	Budleigh B Level
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### GOLF CROQUET – GOLD MERIT AWARD

Sam Cuthbert	Suzanne Roberts GC Third Eight
Mike Hills	A Level National Final

### GOLF CROQUET – PLATINUM MERIT AWARD

Lionel Tibble	Kate Jones GC Second Eight
---------------	-------------------------------

If you qualify for a Merit Award, do claim it! A revised claim form can be downloaded from the CA website covering both AC and GC Merit Awards. Putting Croquet Association Merit Award Scheme into Google will get you straight to the standards required.





# ON OR OFF?

**B**oth GC and AC now have the same definition of when a ball is on or off the lawn. The official rubric is written in rule-speak, involving vertical right angles and straight-edges, but if this is hard for students to remember, a simpler way to coach it is to picture the white line as the lowest course of a brick wall.

If any part of a ball would touch any part of this imaginary brick wall, the ball is off the lawn and needs to be brought on. In GC, bring it on to touch the boundary at the place it started leaving the playing area; in AC, bring it onto the yard line at right angles to the place where it started

leaving the playing area.

There are a few refinements which it's as well for students to know.

- If there is doubt as to whether a ball is on or off, it's off (See AC Laws 13.1.2; GC Rules 6.4.4).
- Boundary or yard line balls near each other need to be in a straight line parallel with the main line of the boundary, even if at that point the boundary line has wandered (AC Laws 15.7; GC Rules 2.2.3).
- If more than one white line is showing from successive re-markings, work from the newest, or if in doubt the innermost (AC Laws 4.3.1; GC Rules

2.2.3).

- If the position is already occupied by another ball, place it in contact with the other ball, on whichever side you choose (AC Laws 15.2; GC Rules 6.6.4 – unless in GC the other ball is to be played first, in which case mark the position and place your ball afterwards).

Remind students not to worry if they're not sure; they can ask. Players are not permitted to seek advice on tactics or technique during a game, but it's perfectly in order for them to check a Rule or Law as they play.

## OBITUARIES

### JOHN COLIN THORNTON

04.01.1928 – 23.08.2022



**L**ittlehampton Croquet Club is saddened to announce the death of Colin Thornton, who joined the Club in 1994. A stalwart of the club if ever there was one, he was highly respected, nay, revered by all members. Colin excelled in the South East Croquet Federation League in which he led Littlehampton to 59 victories out of 65. In 2000, he gained his Referee qualification and in 2001, took over the Captaincy of the Club from Elizabeth Irwin-Hunt who had been in the post for 9 years. Romance flourished and Colin and Elizabeth married later that year, uniting the 2 top players of the Club. Colin held the Captaincy for 3 years during which time he started coaching new members. He was Tournament Manager for the Littlehampton Centenary Cup that attracted teams from throughout West Sussex. Colin was the doyen of 'One Ball' that he also coached. Watching him and Elizabeth play was sheer poetry; their accuracy was quite something to behold.

Colin's biggest attribute was his infinite patience and, despite the handicap system, he was difficult to beat; except by Elizabeth!

**Lilian Holdsworth, President, L.C.C.**

### DAVID TEMPLE

**I**t is with sadness that Sidmouth Croquet Club records the death of David Temple, one of our more active and influential members. After retiring from a long career as a vet, David and his wife Nancy retired to Sidmouth. Here, at Nancy's urging, he joined the croquet club and they both became major 'players' in club activities. Their names appear on many trophies, both AC and GC, reflecting their development as proficient croquet players. However, for most of us, David will be remembered as one of those key members on whom many clubs depend. The always willing volunteer, the one who sees a job needs to be done so just gets on with it. He coached new members; turned his hand to practical issues, like producing a very artistic 'tea and coffee perambulator' for tournaments; and many other unheralded jobs. The mundane tasks that are actually so important and form the solid base of a successful club. He served on the committee, including as Chairman, and was ever available as a 'sounding board', helping to ensure the club worked for all. Having initiated the



lawn watering system, orchestrated the funding, and seen the installation come into use, he was a multi-talented man and a valuable asset to any organisation.

David was also a reliable member of the General Management Committee which oversees the running of the Sidmouth Cricket, Tennis, Croquet [and then] Hockey Club. He fought the croquet section's corner but was also able to take the overarching view on the best way forward for the club as a whole. His strengths were recognised when he was asked to serve as the main club's president.

For these and many other reasons both he and Nancy were finally recognised with CA Diplomas in 2020. Unfortunately, this coincided with David's major decline in health and his final years were difficult for him. He died peacefully in the early hours of 20th September with Nancy and his eldest daughter, Sarah, at his side. David was a true friend of the club and a dedicated family man. Our condolences go to Nancy, his four children, and his 12 grandchildren.

**Chris Donovan**

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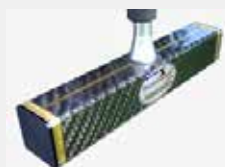
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# OBITUARIES

## DR. TIMOTHY WILLIAM SMITH



**T**im Smith's early childhood was in Bath, but the family moved to Canterbury when he was 9 years old. His life-long interest in cricket dated from then, as their garden backed onto a cricket field and his dad gave him batting practice by bowling to him along the side of their house. He was fortunate to attend Simon Langton Grammar School for Boys, which had a strong reputation for teaching science and mathematics.

He went on to Bristol University, where he read chemistry and stayed on to gain a PhD in the field of physical chemistry and crystallography. His research was on the structure of high cristobalite, a form of silica found in blast furnaces. On the back of his research, he got a job in the laboratory of Steetley, a company involved with aggregates, bricks and minerals, and so moved north to Worksop in Nottinghamshire.

However, chemistry was not the only thing he learnt at Bristol. As a student in one of the halls of residence on the Downs above the city he discovered croquet being played there, which was the start of what was to become a significant part of his life.

Tim's interest in croquet as a serious sport was awakened by a Test match between GB and New Zealand, hosted by the Nottingham Croquet Club in August 1974. He was impressed not only by the skill of the players, but also the friendly spirit in which the match was played, with a winning pair fetching ice creams for their opponents from a van parked alongside the lake nearby. Coincidentally, one of the GB team was another chemist from Bristol, Martin Murray.

Tim joined the Nottingham club and was fortunate to find that it had a few other young and enthusiastic players, who were generously tolerated by those many years their senior. It was there that I met and came to know him, as a fellow player, friend and generous host over many years. He joined the CA in 1976, quickly improved and won the C Class in Nottingham's annual tournament in 1977. He also went on to win some of the internal club competitions and was a formidable opponent when armed with bisques in handicap play.

He was good company and shared other interests with this group of players, including bridge, which he had also played at Bristol, and music. One of the group, George Henshaw, was a keen opera enthusiast, and organised outings to Opera North's productions when they visited Nottingham's Theatre Royal, which re-opened after restoration in 1978. Tim himself arranged visits to classical concerts at Sheffield city hall and also enjoyed jazz.

He became Treasurer of the club when his predecessor moved away and undertook the role with quiet efficiency: in one year he presented the accounts to the auditor on 2nd January. He kept meticulous records, which he retained, showing that the full subscription in 1984 was just £18 a year and beer was 85p a pint! Record keeping and statistical analysis were a life-long interest, with subjects ranging from cricket, to the stock market, home energy consumption and rainfall.

A few years earlier, Hilary Watson-Walker had been invited by George Noble to the club with a view to learning the game and meeting other players. She met Tim there, assisting him with his crossword. Their relationship flourished, with a shared interest in cooking, and they married in Loughborough in 1985. A few weeks beforehand they had catered for the first USA v GB match, which was held at Nottingham, and enjoyed the lavish civic hospitality laid on for the occasion. Sadly, for those who knew him at Nottingham, Tim's job moved to Rugby, and they set up home there the following year. His role had changed from scientific research to financial analysis. After he had advised on several acquisitions, Steetley was itself taken over by Redland in 1992, and Tim's position became redundant. Hilary became the breadwinner and her work took them to Derby, then finally to East Sussex, where they spent their last 22 years together. They developed a garden, on unpromising clay soil, which was both productive, for fruit and vegetables, and ornamental, with colour coded beds.

Tim again became a stalwart club Treasurer, this time at Compton, the club that plays in the Saffrons ground at Eastbourne. He and Hilary together catered for many tournaments there, making and renewing friendships while doing so, and he did much for the club behind the scenes, before ill-health forced him to restrict his activities. Their service was recognised by the award of a Croquet Association Diploma in 2013.

**I Ian Vincent**

## PAM ARLISS 1936 - 2022



**P**am Arliss was a long standing member of Sussex County Croquet Club (SCCC) and the wife of Bill Arliss (A former Chairman of the CA Council and the South East Croquet Federation). Pam's involvement with Croquet started in the Summer of 1989 when Bill arrived back from a business trip to Bangkok to be told by Pam that they needed to do more together and that the Croquet Club had an Open Day and they were going that afternoon. Bill obeyed! Later that day, even with Bill's jetlag, they fell in love with the game and joined the club immediately.

Pam went "International" in 2002, when Bill was awarded a place in The GC World Championship at Palm Springs. Apart from accompanying Bill, Pam ended up refereeing a number of matches at the Championship, including faulting the then reigning Egyptian World Champion! A group of us had the pleasure of accompanying Pam & Bill on their 50th wedding anniversary, when the CA had been asked to arrange a croquet tournament of top players to showcase a new cruise liner - Celebrity Equinox which was moored at Southampton. The players and organisers having completed the tournament on the 15th deck, under the gaze of the International press, were given a free overnight cruise. This proved to be a lovely way for Pam and Bill to celebrate their 50th anniversary in the company of the croquet community. By 2012 Pam was having problems with her ankle and eventually had to give up play. However, she still continued to help the club by making numerous tray bakes for tournaments, and assisting Bill with managing federation tournaments. More recently her health went downhill, but she still used to visit Southwick to watch play on her mobility scooter or from the club car park. Pam was a truly thoughtful person, always having time for other people, remembering the highlights in their lives. Above all she was Bill's "Rock" and will be sadly missed.

**I Jonathan Isaacs**

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## CA WEBSITE

[www.croquet.org.uk](http://www.croquet.org.uk) is a fabulous resource for croquet information covering membership, news, laws & rules, coaching, who's who, and tournament details 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 online, visit:

AC <https://www.croquet.org.uk/?p=games/tech/jargon>  
GC <https://www.croquet.org.uk/?p=games/golf/gcJargon>

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## PUBLICATIONS

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 contact them directly.

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 can be acceptable.

Please send digital jpeg or tiff format files and accompany all images with a description of the subject. If you require any material to be returned, please enclose a SAE.

Queries regarding the delivery of the Gazette to members should be directed to the CA's Operations Manager.

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\*All bookings are subject to Fred. Olsen's (FOCL) standard terms & conditions, available on our website & on request. All prices quoted under the Croquet Association members discount offer are exclusive to qualifying members & their travelling companions only, members must quote their discount code at time of booking. Membership discounts cannot be applied retrospectively. Bookings must be made via the booking hotline number 0800 0355 108. Croquet Association membership Number will be required at the time of booking. Offers cannot be extended to any unrelated third party, are subject to availability and may be withdrawn or amended at any time without prior notice. From time to time FOCL may run special offers which cannot be combined with this discount, including selected group travel deals Fred. Olsen Oceans members are entitled to a 5% Croquet Association discount. Subject to the same terms & conditions, to be applied after the standard Oceans discount, where applicable. In this instance, Oceans terms & conditions apply. New to Fred. Olsen guests can also save 5% through their Croquet Association membership, subject to the same terms & conditions. Flights are excluded from any discounts. Offer ends 31/12/22. E&OE.

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