



CROQUET

GAZETTE

Issue 402 | April 2023

**ASTON WADE
- 2023 WCF
U21 GC WORLD
CHAMPION**

**JAMIE BURCH
AWARDED REIGATE
AND BANSTEAD
SPORTS PERSON OF
THE YEAR**

**STUART M SMITH
AND DUNCAN
REEVE ARE THE
“BEST IN THE WEST”**

**SUCCESSFULLY
OPENING MORE
DOORS IN 2023**

Dropping jaws since 1893



Norway's Original Coastal Voyage

**12-day
Classic Round Voyage**

Flight-inclusive departures:
February – March 2023
October 2023 – March 2024

Northern Lights Promise**

Book now

5%

**Discount for
Croquet England
Members***

Hurtigruten was founded in 1893 to be a lifeline for communities along the Norwegian coast and we're just as much a part of the community today. We don't just show you the region, we invite you to become a part of it with us.

Experience the Original Spirit of Norway

Call 0203 131 6528 | Visit hurtigruten.co.uk | Contact your preferred travel agent



HURTIGRUTEN
Norwegian Coastal Express

*5% discount applies to new bookings only and will only be applied to the cruise. Cruise duration must be 5 nights or more to qualify, Promo code: HRG-CROQUET. See hurtigruten.co.uk/partners/hrn-croquet-england-discount/ for further details. **Northern Lights Promise: if the Aurora Borealis do not appear, we will give you a 6 or 7-day Classic Voyage free of charge – see hurtigruten.co.uk/coastal-offers/nlp for full terms and conditions. From prices quoted are in GBP and are per person, based on full occupancy of an inside two berth cabin, on a full board basis. Single supplements may apply. Prices are subject to availability. All flights and flight-inclusive holidays are financially protected by the ATOL scheme. Please note some excursions are not included in the per person price and will be an additional charge (subject to availability). Images: © Trym Ivar Bergsmo.



ABTA
V7545



The Croquet Association
Issue 402 | April 2023



Front cover:
Aston Wade is the
2023 WCF U21 GC
World Champion

CONTENTS

3	Welcome
4	Hibiscus
4	Tunnel of Time
5	Opening Doors on Croquet
6	Chairman of Council
6	Croquet England as a Charity
10	Short Croquet Soham
14	Letters
16	The Unofficial History of Croquet
18	Book Review
18	Local Award for Jamie
20	Tournament Regulations
20	Rules Committee - Refs
22	U21 GC World Championship
24	GC / AC 'Best in the West'
25	Presidents Selection Dulwich
25	Winter Croquet Hamptworth
26	Ipswich CC Reinvented
27	What happens to Trophies?
28	All-England Handicap Centenary
29	Counties Facebook Pages
30	Baltic Open 2022
32	Lawncare
34	The Coaching Pages
35	Guildford Local Giving Appeal
38	CA Contacts

The Croquet Association
Old Bath Road
Cheltenham GL53 7DF
E: gazette@croquet.org.uk
W: www.croquet.org.uk

DISCLAIMER The opinions expressed in the Croquet Gazette are those of the Editor and contributors. The Croquet Association is not responsible for statements other than those clearly defined as being made on behalf of the Croquet Association. Advertisements are not specifically endorsed by the Croquet Association, unless otherwise stated.

WELCOME



The 2023 season has commenced and many players will have already planned their tournament calendar and set their goals for the year. Of course, croquet is no different from any other sport. It's the preparation and practice behind the scenes that make the players who they are and the clubs proud to support them. Coaching courses have already been filling up with players keen to get back in the action. The Academies' coaching courses are now widely available

throughout the country. In the words of Frances Bacon, "knowledge is power"; so look out for the refereeing courses. If there's one sure way to learn what you should do, it's to know what not to do. Included in this issue of the Gazette are local stories from clubs, some early season tournament reports and a review of the new 'GC for Tournament Players' book by Ian Burrige. Wishing you good strokes for your season and hoop well.

CA Editorial Team



SOLOMON TROPHY TEAM AVAILABILITY

The USCA has invited the CA to send a team to compete for the Solomon Trophy, 7th-12th November 2023, at the Sarasota County Croquet Club in Venice, Florida. Players can register their availability via the CA website in the usual way. The match is followed by the USCA's AC open championship, should anyone wish to go for a longer trip.

Keith Aiton
International Committee



HIBISCUS COLUMN

Another new season and still fistfuls of bisques. Failure to progress does not reduce the sense of excitement as I plan my summer campaign. Established favourites will be revisited, starting with Cheltenham on Good Friday. New horizons will be explored. Will Tyneside add a blast of Geordie humour to venerable tradition? Will Sidmouth match a website that conjures up the English Riviera as it was a century before computers were invented? Factor in return visits to Bristol, East Dorset, Wycombe, Budleigh and Southwick. Already the entry lists include familiar adversaries on similar circuits. So much to look forward to...

So much more if I could expand my skill set. In GC, jumping is a familiar 'must have' weapon, usually the only way to score a hoop with an oppo ball stuck in the jaws. In AC, it's useful in circumstances I haven't yet explored. If you need to roquet a ball blocked by another one or by a hoop, you might jump the obstruction to hit your target. Or you might jump through a hoop marooned in mud on the principle that balls travel true through air, but not over gnarly turf. In GC, any jump shot divot is a foul; in AC, the rules are less specific: 'likely to damage AND do damage' is so open to interpretation that a

foul is rarely called. Or so I'm reliably told.

How to learn when jump practice is forbidden on every croquet court in England between October and April? Carol Wadsworth, a rising force on the southern GC circuit, told me I needed a small boy; her 9-year-old grandson Ed stepped up after school on a chilly March afternoon. His concise instructions put many professional coaches to shame: stand square with ball back between your feet, swing the mallet steeply up behind you, bring it sharply down on the ball at ten to two, follow through.

He demonstrated. It happened. I tried. It didn't. He repeated the instructions several times without a hint of irritation. And soon it did. A crisp click, a neat leap, a nice forward roll on the landing side. I moved to the narrowest hoop. Bingo. Indoors we had sausage sandwiches for tea. Thanks Ed. Croquet coach may not be on your list of life ambitions, but it is a highly paid sinecure with prime tip potential in American country clubs so don't cross it off yet.

Thinking like a winner is a long-term challenge. 'It's taken me a decade to sort out the mental side, to develop the self-belief to relax at critical moments rather

than fall apart'. So says Harry Fisher, fresh from team victory in last November's MacRobbs. While he prepares to improve on his 2020 AC World Championship quarter final at the 2023 renewal at Hurlingham in July, I have to overcome a depressing tendency to snatch defeat from the jaws of victory.

For a slow starter, the tournament warm-up window is painfully brief. That's because it's there for you to test the speed of the court and assess any hostile run offs, not as a last ditch arena to hone skills that should be engrained. All too soon the coin is tossed, balls scattered towards distant boundaries. Should I be patient, allowing my opponent to place pioneer and pivot, then break down, bequeathing his layout to me? Or should I blunder in, all bisques blazing, to do the hard grind myself?

Patience is the sane way, but risks an enemy clip on the peg. Break building underpinned by panic leads to desperation bisque squandering to correct careless errors - and another idiotic loss. Self-belief at critical moments equals calm in a crisis. When your opponent falls on his sword, you win....

I Minty Clinch



TUNNEL OF TIME

100 YEARS AGO

In the April, 5th 1923 Gazette

Editorial Notes - Some of the Costebelle onlookers seem to have formed the opinion that the new Alternative Doubles would make an excellent game for garden parties. Can it be that a form of Either Ball play has at last been devised to suit this type of player? Country house and private lawn were once the nursery for Club and Tournament. Much more than is now the case they served as a training and recruiting ground for the C.A. Either ball has undoubtedly placed a sad stumbling block in the way of the garden party enthusiast.

Other spectators, we are told, mentally classified the Alternative as a new form of Golf Croquet. This looks as though 'one turn one point' may have been the policy generally adopted by the players, in which case we are not surprised to hear of games taking 3 1/2 hours. This is difficult

to reconcile with the two hours average at Oxford.

Note: this Alternative was what we know as Alternate Stroke Doubles.

60 YEARS AGO

In the April 1963 Gazette (#65)

Mission fulfilled - The heartiest congratulations of all Associates go to our victorious team who have so decisively succeeded in the series of test matches against Australia and New Zealand. They are the first team of any nation to have won the MacRobertson Shield away from home, a further tribute to their prowess.

In Report of the Council 1963 - During the year a Special Committee was appointed to examine the present Handicap System. On their recommendation the upper limits for half bisques have been lowered from 10 1/2 to 7 1/2 and all clubs asked to experiment in Handicap Events for C and D players with the innovation that all

players play with their full complement of bisques.

30 YEARS AGO

In the April 1993 Gazette (#226)

Automatic Handicapping System - After a two-year trial period of the Automatic Handicapping System (AHS) the CA Council has ratified the recommendation of the Handicap Coordination Committee (HCC) that the AHS should be the principle method of adjusting handicaps for the time being.

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.

I 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

OPENING DOORS ON CROQUET

In the last issue, Director for Development Paul Brown asked for examples of how clubs are “Opening Doors” to make croquet more welcoming. He has received many inspiring responses from across England and Wales. Clubs have reported how they are reaching out to their local communities to attract and encourage fresh players from all walks of life and are creating social activities that retain and inspire their current members. Rosemary Birch, from beautiful Budleigh Salterton Croquet Club, reminds us of the “benefits of an open-air activity for good health, social interaction and a sport that promotes strategic and tactical thinking”. Croquet players know this, and it is good to hear from clubs determined to see others discover these benefits. Hopefully these reports will inspire other clubs and their members to take a fresh look at engaging with those around them and to become, or remain, at the heart of their local community.



PRESTON (BRIGHTON)

Club member Judith Lawson writes: I belong to a small club in the village of Preston which is near Brighton and in a picturesque setting next to the Preston Lawn Tennis Club. We are an open and welcoming club, and I would like to share how we apply this to everyone. We meet several times a week during the spring and summer seasons, usually playing thirteen hoop games of Golf Croquet and some of our members play Association Croquet, usually twice weekly. The club is open to all who wish; either to join us or play as visitors. We hold on to all old mallets, so we have a good store to lend out to newcomers and we have regular playing visitors from Italy and Devon. Our club hosts and coaches several local groups including BLAGS (Brighton Lesbian and Gay Sports), our local church (St. John’s), U3A and Girl Guiding groups; offering tea and sandwiches when requested. Considering we are a small club compared

to our neighbours at Southwick, we do our very best to be an open club and encourage new members to play and further the sport. In the winter months (when our competition lawns are resting) we play in full view of the public on the Victorian croquet lawn in front of Preston Manor. We have leaflets on display and available to all who enquire.



ROTTINGDEAN

From Club Treasurer Frances Low we hear that Rottingdean Croquet Club has long been a local attraction, as its one lawn is in the famous Kipling Gardens - a popular venue on the visitors’ trail. So a lot of people see what is going on. This provokes much interest and many questions which members answer, trying to explain in a few short sentences what they are playing! The annual Rottingdean Village Fair is held in the Kipling Gardens and the club has taken part for many years, with a short mat, balls, and hoops for children to try. For the last two years they have invited the public to pay £1 to play on the lawn, advised by members. This proved extremely popular and last season raised approximately £180 for local charities.

In 2022, the club started a University of the Third Age (U3A) group run by Frances, who is also a U3A member. The group played GC doubles, following an outline of the game, in six sessions of ninety minutes, on two short courts for eight players each week. They loved it and really found it fun – with more skill needed than they expected. The classes will be run again this year, as so many want to continue, and more want to learn. These events definitely bring in people who wouldn’t otherwise have tried croquet; around a dozen U3A members turned up to try the game and there is a list of over twenty for next year’s continuation and new course! One person signed up to join the club straight away and two others are keen. The village fair brings in about 30 people who have a go - including children! Frances adds her thanks to the coaches and helpers; these activities have been very encouraging for the club who just

wish they had more lawns!



BASINGSTOKE

Dr. Ian Harrison is the Secretary of Basingstoke Croquet Club (“BCC”) which is a “single court” club that shares a green with a bowls club. He explains that they welcome and encourage new members through a range of initiatives. For example, hosting five sessions a week for about fifty-five members of the U3A, led by club members, where people have an enjoyable social game at a specific session each week. Many have gone on to become full active club members. This arrangement also brings useful extra income.

The club publishes one or two articles each year in the local paper and “freebie” magazines extolling the joys of croquet and inviting folk to “give it a try” on one of the open days, in the early part of the season. This allows people to “try before they buy” and to meet members in a relaxed and welcoming atmosphere. They hold one or two BBQs during the season, usually linked to “fun” GC games such as “Pirates” and novelty games we devise. BCC has a welcoming website (www.basingstokecroquet.co.uk) that invites people on Saturday mornings to see what the game is about; they get one-to-one coaching initially and are then invited to attend group coaching sessions (AC and/or GC) through the season. The web site includes a series of homemade coaching videos (six GC and nine AC) which assume no prior knowledge of the game and which have become well known around the world.

Other clubs and social groups in the town are offered lawn time to have an exclusive event of their own, which includes the use of the lawn and equipment with enough basic instruction to have fun. It usually also includes a tasty afternoon tea. These events promote croquet, bring some extra income to the club and sometimes gain new club members.

...continued on page 8



CHAIRMAN OF THE CA COUNCIL

By the time you read this, the 2023 playing season will be underway. Whatever your playing level, you'll find a tournament for you. If that would be your first foray into such an event, don't worry!

My suggestion would be to see if your own club host such events, or whether you can join one of your fellow club members at an event at a local club. It's always easier with a friendly face. If that's not possible, just let the host club know that it's your first event and I'm sure they'll find someone to show you the ropes.

These tournaments all take a lot of work from a multitude of volunteers at clubs around the country. Within this issue you'll find plenty of news about some of the other work they've been doing over the winter to develop our sport. This has included creating our new "public face": www.croquetengland.org.uk.

This is aimed at those new to our sport, with all the detailed content you're used to still available at www.croquet.org.uk.

You'll also find a series of articles about how clubs are "Opening Doors" to make croquet more welcoming to a more diverse section of society. The benefits of making our sport more inclusive will be multiple.

If we can remove barriers, real or perceived, how many more members might we recruit? If existing members feel more included, how many more volunteers will come forwards when there's a job that needs doing? And it's simply the right thing to do.

If you're inspired by any of the initiatives you read about, I'm sure the clubs will be happy to share more details. And let us know how they go at your club.

Samir Patel
Chairman of Council



CROQUET ENGLAND REGISTERED AS A CHARITY BY THE CHARITY COMMISSION

On 22 March 2023, we were informed by the Charity Commission that our application to register Croquet England as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation has been accepted. Croquet England has been entered on to the Register of Charities with the Registered Charity Number 1202444.

The decision to register was based upon the Commission's assessment of the information supplied during the application

process and the declarations given in the trustee declaration forms and the Commission is satisfied that Croquet England is established for charitable purposes only for the public benefit.

The charity trustees will be meeting shortly to implement the Constitution and the Rules that have been formulated in draft.

John Reddish, Honorary Secretary
Samir Patel, Chair of CA Council



PHOTOGRAPH
Samir Patel



“FRIENDS NEXT DOOR AND HELP ALWAYS NEARBY.”

Move to a McCarthy Stone retirement property and you'll become part of a vibrant community where neighbours soon become good friends. You can also rely on us to make life easier, because we take care of the things you no longer want to do, such as building and garden maintenance. And, if you ever find you need it, there's extra help and support available 24/7*.

Join a thriving community.
Call **0800 310 0518** today
or visit **mccarthystone.co.uk**

McCARTHY STONE
Life, well lived

We have properties available nationwide:

BEDFORDSHIRE Ampthill,
Bedford **BERKSHIRE** Crowthorne,
Maidenhead, Thatcham, Twyford,
Wokingham **BUCKINGHAMSHIRE**
Amersham, Aylesbury, Chalfont St
Peter, Farnham Common, Milton
Keynes, Olney **CAMBRIDGESHIRE**
Great Cambourne **CHESHIRE** Audlem,
Bramhall, Knutsford, Macclesfield,
Malpas, Middlewich, Neston, Willaston
COUNTY DURHAM Darlington
CUMBRIA Cockermouth, Kendal
DERBYSHIRE Buxton **DEVON**
Cullompton, Ottery St. Mary, Topsham
DORSET Blandford St Mary, Bridport,
Dorchester, Poole, Wimborne **ESSEX**
Chelmsford, Colchester, Great
Dunmow, Saffron Walden, Waltham
Abbey **GLOUCESTERSHIRE** Bourton-
on-the-Water, Stow-on-the-Wold
HAMPSHIRE Alton, Basingstoke,
Hook, New Alresford, Romsey,
Southampton, Tadley **HEREFORDSHIRE**
Hereford **HERTFORDSHIRE** Baldock,
Buntingford, Hatfield, Hertford,
Knebworth, St Albans **KENT** Broadstairs,
Canterbury, Dover, Hawkhurst,
Southborough **LANCASHIRE**
Carnforth, Garstang, Lancaster,
Leyland, Liverpool, Poulton-le-Fylde,
Thornton-Cleveleys **LEICESTERSHIRE**
Market Harborough, Melton Mowbray,
Quorn **LINCOLNSHIRE** Woodhall
Spa **LONDON** Barnet, Croydon,
Isleworth, Upper Norwood **GREAT
MANCHESTER** Stockport, Wigan
MERSEYSIDE Maghull **NORFOLK**
Harleston, Norwich, Stalham
NORTHUMBERLAND Hexham
OXFORDSHIRE Chipping Norton,
Henley-on-Thames **RUTLAND** Oakham
SHROPSHIRE Market Drayton
SOMERSET Bath, Clevedon, Taunton
STAFFORDSHIRE Leek, Lichfield,
Stafford **SUFFOLK** Beccles, Ipswich,
Martlesham Heath **SURREY** Bagshot,
Banstead, Chipstead, Cobham,
Purley, Virginia Water, Walton-on-
Thames, Warlingham, Weybridge
TYNE AND WEAR Gosforth, South
Shields, Sunderland, Whitley Bay
WARWICKSHIRE Nuneaton, Rugby,
Stratford-Upon-Avon, Studley **WEST
MIDLANDS** Edgbaston, Shirley, Solihull,
Tettenhall **WEST SUSSEX** Goring by
Sea, Worthing **WILTSHIRE** Salisbury,
Swindon, Trowbridge, Warminster
WORCESTERSHIRE Redditch
YORKSHIRE Barnsley, Beverley, Bingley,
Bridlington, Brough, Burley in Wharfedale,
Cottingham, Filey, Harrogate, Ilkley,
Ossett, Ripon, Scarborough, Sheffield,
Swanland, Whitby

*Facilities vary depending on location and product type. Extra charges apply for personal, domestic and lifestyle support services.

...OPENING DOORS CONTINUED

PURLEY BURY

From Jan Overell, Secretary of Purley Bury Croquet Club we hear that the club takes pride in the friendly way it introduces the wider community to croquet by holding "Taster Days" and offering free coaching. It also offers a full social calendar for the members organised by the Social Committee and others. These activities, at least two each month, attract people into the club who cannot or do not wish to play and who pay a very modest subscription. But they may well find themselves with a mallet in their hands at a fun day of simple challenges with bats and hoops, followed by a strawberry tea with home-made cakes!

For many years a monthly walk led by volunteers has explored the local countryside, National Trust houses or areas of London. Most walks are followed by a pub lunch. Food features strongly in the social events. There have been breakfasts, bring and share or ploughman lunches, afternoon teas and fish suppers. The club holds bridge days and theatre visits. Especially popular are the visits to Hever Open Air Theatre with either a picnic beforehand or a cream tea to follow the show.

Mainly during the winter visits are arranged to places of interest, often with a guide. Members have been up the London Eye, down a tunnel at Mount Pleasant, on a boat and into museums, guildhalls, historic houses and churches. There were coach trips to Highgrove and Dover Castle. For years, a holiday was arranged in a hotel that offered sporting activities, including croquet. These brought all social and playing members together in a very friendly way. Social members are made to feel part of the club, which welcomes their presence and support. There have even been some who decided that we are a friendly lot and that they wish to play the game!



BUDLEIGH SALTERTON

Budleigh Salterton welcomes new groups with two well publicised Open Days; one weekday evening (for working

people) and one at the weekend, writes committee member Rosemary Birch. These are hands-on, friendly, fun and informal sessions. Visitors are made to feel welcome in many ways, including free refreshments! A personal guided tour introduces the benefits of an open-air activity for good health, social interaction and to learn a sport that promotes strategic and tactical thinking. If visitors accept a six-week coaching course then the welcome continues; they can join other starters to practice their new found skills and a "graduation" social event cements the group's experience. Social events throughout the year help integrate new members along with a full programme of coaching, matches and tournaments for all abilities.

During Gala Week the club opens to the public so that they can try the game and many families attend. A "croquet court for youngsters" attracts toddlers - with small sized mallets and hoops they could almost crawl through! The club is also open to visitors for the town's Open Gardens Event where they can "have a go" or just enjoy a cup of tea and cake whilst watching croquet.

In 2022 the club supported an initiative to get the public active and to use local open spaces by setting up a croquet court in a park in Exmouth and actively encouraging its use. Weekly bridge sessions are held and in summer both groups enjoy tea and cakes together. Other clubs and groups are encouraged to use the facilities and over sixty members of a Pilates group based at the club were encouraged to get off the floor and have a game! The club hosts a Tai Chi class and organises croquet try-out sessions for larger groups such as the W.I. A very successful Winter Craft Fair and a Christmas wreath making event welcomed people from the local community. All these events are designed to raise the club's profile in the local community and to increase the perception that croquet is fun, friendly and open to all.



LLANFAIRFECHAN AND NORTH WALES

The small community of Llanfairfechan on the North Wales coast is, for most

people, just a name on a signpost on the way to Anglesey from Manchester. Club Secretary Dr. Sarah Andrew comments on how fortunate the town is to have a thriving croquet club whose members range in age from ten to ninety-three. The ten-year-old is fascinated by the tales of the ninety plus year old's life in the early RAF. The club has two full courts and exclusive use of a clubhouse.

Llanfairfechan is a town with a great community, where people are caring and helpful, and the croquet club engages with many community groups, e.g. holding regular sessions for WI, Rotary and U3A. Being a coastal town, they have an evening for the RNLI each year. Consternation was caused last season when over enthusiastic booking meant that the Brownies were double booked with the WI. Fortunately, the two groups got along extremely well. Long ago the club bought child-sized mallets and now run sessions in the summer holidays for primary aged children. This has led to croquet being a skill taken up for the Duke of Edinburgh's Award.

Llanfairfechan Club is particularly eager to cater for the disabled and elderly and has successful members from the local sheltered accommodation. One of the stalwarts of the club in terms of lawn maintenance and GC play is registered blind with a severe congenital visual impairment. The club has given great experiences to those with dementia and learning difficulties and, aided by a top lawn that is wheel-chair friendly, the club's policy is to say, "Yes you can" to everyone and then find a way to accommodate their specific needs. Feeling lucky in the location of their club, the members work hard to engage with people across their community. Exactly what croquet should be about.



BOSTON SPA

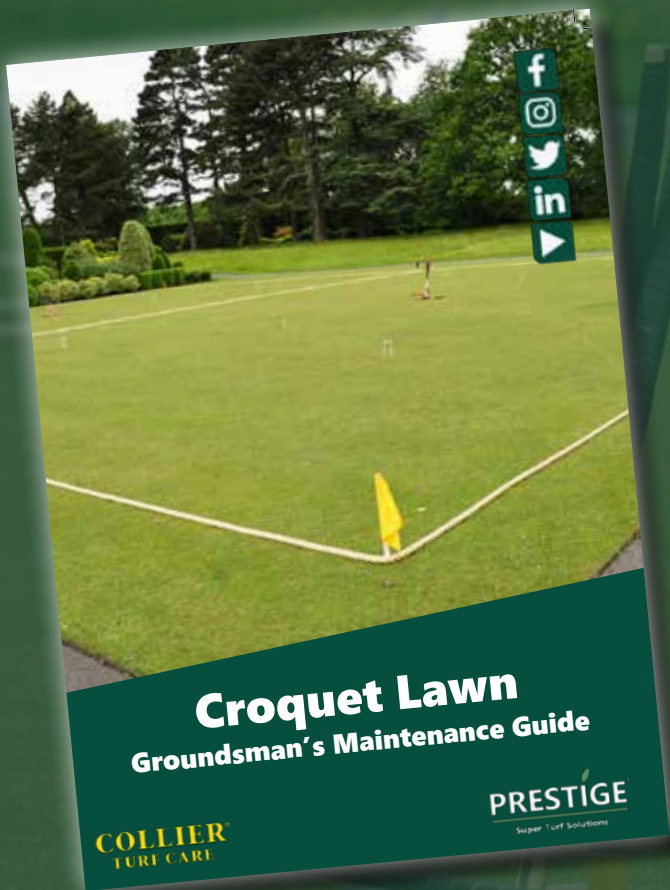
Gabrielle Childe is the Membership Secretary of a relatively new club in Boston Spa. It began in 2018 with loaned equipment on two afternoons a week at a tennis club. She reports that the members have been very busy since then with a series of actions to build membership. These include open days, free trial lessons, a window display of croquet in

...continued on page 10

COLLIER[®]
TURF CARE

'The Grass Guys'

NEW Croquet Lawn Groundsman's Maintenance Guide



Packed full of:

Maintenance
tips

Disease
Identification

Product
Recommendations

*And
more...*

To help keep your croquet
lawn in top condition!

Email marketing@collier-turf-care.co.uk or call
01328 700600 to get your **FREE** copy!



01328 700600



sales@collier-turf-care.co.uk



www.collier-turf-care.co.uk

the local library, posters in shops and on village notice boards, handing out leaflets on the street, articles for the local newspaper and parish magazine, contact with the local radio station and limited use of social media.

In the first three years they made lots of progress raising funds for new equipment and, despite natural wastage, maintaining a steady membership base supported by access to coaching.

Gabrielle comments, "There is a saying that 'If you do what you have always done, you will get what you have always got!' It was time to approach recruitment from a different angle and offer our members different experiences".

In 2022 York U3A Golf Croquet was approached and two days of games followed. A very social occasion!

One morning a week, the club offered free trials for new members and one-to-one basic coaching for those with unseen disabilities. Local organisations were offered a "Croquet Experience" in exchange for a donation. These proved great fun and highly successful. A charity asked for a donation of a "Croquet Experience" for their raffle and the winner will enjoy basic coaching and a game of

croquet. Who knows she may join the club!

Local social media has proved a brilliant way to reach their community and tell them what is happening. Through social media the club became aware that their sessions were not suitable for a working population and so they plan sessions in evenings and on Sundays. With a full programme for 2023, they intend to celebrate their fifth anniversary in style.



ST. AGNES

Jan Blewett from St. Agnes Croquet Club in Cornwall reports on the work that the club does to provide a croquet experience for a group of people who might have more challenges wielding a mallet successfully than many others. For several years their club has welcomed the Barncoose Limb Users Group (BLUGs), an inspirational group of amputees, for an afternoon of croquet. They are able to have sole use of the lawns and clubhouse facilities. Quite often the group and their helpers will bring a picnic lunch, and the club provides lots of tea and cake during the afternoon, which always goes down well. The BLUGs certainly are an inspiration; and whether they have one prosthetic limb or two, or even use a wheelchair, Jan reckons they put some of the more able-bodied club members to shame with their accomplishments and their smiles and laughter, whatever the weather. The croquet club members are more than delighted to help guide the group in the ways of croquet and feel this shows what a welcoming sport this can be for people of all abilities within the community.

Paul Brown
Sport Development Director



SOHAM CALORIE LOSS CROQUET

Soham indoor croquet is fast paced due to the use of time clocks with each team allotted just 25 minutes to complete a half game on a court that is a little over half size and incredibly fast. Events all take place in Soham under the auspices of the East Anglian Croquet Federation, but events are open to all, hence Lancashire and Yorkshire at the indoor Inter-Countries.

Handicaps are adjusted, with the best players losing 10% of their time and having to make as many as three compulsory peels in order to complete a 14 point game. Meanwhile, those with higher handicaps can find themselves with whole and half bisques. All matches are played as doubles association croquet.

A wheelchair user joined in January for one session. This entailed some rule variations to even the field, with the clock paused until playing first shot of turn and paused again on last stroke. There were three ever-present players David and Alison Maugham and Paul Hetherington. But 30 different players turned out at least once.

The season consists of one weekend every month from November through to March with one trophy available on each day of competition.

DAY 1 NOVEMBER 12TH

The season kicked off with the traditional Inter Counties event. A full complement of eight teams took part; the majority from within East Anglia but also including Lancashire and Yorkshire, allowing for the mouth-watering prospect of a Roses clash for which the honours went to the white rose county. This was quite probably the strongest ever field on show at Soham, with all but two teams incurring time penalties, all but one requiring peels, and a combined handicap across the teams of -3½. Ultimately Essex (David and Alison Maugham) retained their title, running out comfortable winners by being undefeated. Cambridgeshire

(Gabrielle Higgins and Debbie Lines) and Suffolk (Phil Eardley and Paul Hetherington) took second and third, both with four wins from five. Cambridgeshire ended ahead of Suffolk not only by virtue of who beat whom but also by winning more games within time and having a vastly superior points difference. Indeed, Suffolk managed a mere net +2 points from four wins and one loss, possibly a record low net points for such a high win percentage ratio.

DAY 2 NOVEMBER 13TH

The MLP Mallets saw day two of the winter programme at Soham with a much greater range of handicaps on display than the previous day, from -2½ to 18. Sadly only five teams were entered but it still all hinged on the last game to complete of Dunham (Duncan Hector and Peter Ross) v the Pros (Nick Mounfield and Gabrielle Higgins), with the final result only sealed by a peg out as time was called. The narrow +4 victory for the Pros meant that Socks (David and Alison Maugham) were the winners, having beaten Pros; whilst Dunham had had one win on time to relegate them to third. The table was propped up by Marketing (Annabel



Surfaces maintained with expertise and passion

Slitters



Dedicated Verticutter



Interchangeable Cassette Machines



Scarifiers



Spreader & Top Dresser



Dedicated Mowers



Seeder & Aerator



Aerators



DENNIS

sisis

Expert Surfaces

For more information or a no obligation demonstration call **01332 824777** or visit www.dennisuk.com or www.sisis.com



PROUDLY BRITISH



McDiarmid and Paul Hetherington) who did a great job at making the other teams feel good by losing all four of their matches within time.

DAY 3 DECEMBER 17TH

The Rose Bowl was the first of two pre-Christmas days. Several players took to wearing festive hats, including the runaway winners Alison and David Maugham. They drew one and won their remaining five games, leaving all other teams with a negative points difference. Adrian Kirby and Stephen Cornelius managed second place on account of inflicting that solitary draw, having shared games with third placed Jonathan Toye and Alex Lake.

DAY 4 DECEMBER 18TH

On the pre-Christmas Sunday, the Soham Trophy again witnessed an array of Christmas hats and jumpers and again a runaway victory for the undefeated David and Alison Maugham. Indeed, there was a neat spread of winning games that determined the placing of the five teams competing, with the mid-placed team also ending with a net zero points score though their final game was completed as a single (with adjusted handicap), versus Pinchbeck (Terrey Sparks and Ken Knock) since David Haslam had to retire after three hectic games, leaving Paul Hetherington to play solo.

DAY 5 JANUARY 15TH

The Belgian Cup, alternate stroke, saw some very competitive and close games, including a first round defeat for David and Alison Maugham at the hands of Terrey Sparks and Sarah Barley. However, the Maughams recovered well to win all their other matches and were once more triumphant, beating runners up Heather Bennett and Stephen Cornelius by +2 on time in the deciding match.

DAY 6 JANUARY 16TH

The Soham Trophy once more saw David and Alison Maugham triumph but only by virtue of hitting the peg to pip runners-up Duncan Hector and Peter Ross by +1 in a really close-fought game. In all their other matches, the above teams accumulated large wins with both having a total net points difference in excess of forty. It was, though, a great day to illustrate players of all ages and physical abilities competing on a level playing field. A huge shout out to Rachel Hanks making her Soham and AC debut in a wheelchair, in partnership with Adrian Kirby, pulling off several really great shots.

DAY 7 FEBRUARY 12TH

The Martins Trophies saw a strong field with the cut-off between high and low handicaps resting between 2 and 2.5 for a day of progressive doubles with every low bisquer playing with every high bisquer bar one. In the end, the last three matches decided the outcome of the two blocks - Alison Maugham winning the top block by drawing against Adrian Kirby and winning more games within time, 4 to 2. In the high handicap block Paul Hetherington defeated Sarah Barley whilst David Haslam lost his final game, meaning that Paul topped the block.

DAY 8 FEBRUARY 13TH

The Albert Lawrence Trophy saw some tight competition, with only the winners Alison and David Maugham not losing two or more games. Despite this, the final game between the Maughams and Nick Steiner and Paul Hetherington decided the destination of the trophy in a winner takes all contest. The day was also remarkable for the fact that just one game went to time despite two teams having 2.5 minutes deducted throughout.

DAY 9 MARCH 12TH

The Cornelius Cup saw a close fought contest which went to the final stroke of the final game with just seven seconds left on the clock. Gabrielle Higgins and Paul Hetherington defeated David and Alison Maugham by virtue of Paul pegging out from between corner one and hoop one, with Alison left just a few feet from the peg and sure to finish next turn. The win for Gabrielle and Paul seemed all the more surprising given that their first game was a +12 thrashing by Heather Bennett and Sarah Barley. This was the first event of the season where a Maugham was not amongst the trophy winners and also marked David's birthday (no comment).

DAY 10 MARCH 13TH

Normal service was resumed on the Sunday with David and Alison Maugham running away to victory in the Millennium Cup, ending the day as the only team with a positive net points score. It was also a day of three draws. Despite the outcome, it all hinged on the final game between Socks (the Maughams) and Nene (Nick Steiner and Paul Hetherington) where a Nene win would have seen them triumph at the Maughams' expense. But the result never looked in doubt, and the season ended with the Maugham household housing 9 of the 11 trophies, just missing out on the high handicap trophy from the progressive day (which would require an incredible entry for them to slip into that one) and the previous day's Cornelius Cup. An outstanding achievement at Soham in terms of trophies won.

Soham will be back in November 2023. Remember, it is open to all. Partners can be found for solo entrants. Plus, from next season, the peel penalties will be raised to four for really strong teams. And of course, if there ever was a case for sport being played to enjoy the taking part rather than the winning then indoor croquet at Soham is the shining pinnacle of the adage.

Paul Hetherington



Paul & Gabrielle

GET YOUR CROQUET LAWN READY FOR THE PLAYING SEASON

Why choose Lawntech to maintain your croquet lawn?



- ✓ Treatment programmes tailored to the lawn's needs
- ✓ Experts in caring for sports and larger turf surfaces
- ✓ Highly qualified technicians and top of the range machinery



Scan to head
to our croquet
lawn page

- SCARIFICATION - AERATION - SEEDING - TOP DRESSING -



LawntechTM

www.lawn-tech.co.uk

info@lawn-tech.co.uk

LETTERS

ADVANTAGE SYSTEM

Having had a year's experience of using the Advantage system in timed games in Division 2 of the North East GC league, one issue became apparent, which was that in an unfinished timed game no-one was really sure who had won until the outcome was reported to the match manager and the relevant percentages were calculated. In particular, players were complaining that they often did not know how they stood during the match relative to the other side.

This has clearly been an issue elsewhere as the CA has produced some advisory sheets to help players with this issue, but at first glance they look quite complicated and also require players to carry something extra around with them as they play.

There is, in fact, a much simpler method that most people could work out easily "on the hoof". I start from the point that each side has a target for the total number of hoops they must score to win, and at any point the total number of hoops they and their opponents have actually run. No negative numbers are allowed, so if your "starting point" is -1, your target is 8, because that is the total number of hoops you need to score to win. Similarly, if you start at -1 and run 3 hoops to get to a score of 2, your hoops made are nonetheless 3 for the following calculation. On the other hand if your "starting point" is +1, your target is 6, and again your hoop number is the actual number you have made, not that number plus the 1 of your starting point. Proceed as follows:

Multiply the number of hoops you have made by the target for your opponents and do the converse for your opponents (their hoops multiplied by your target). If your product is greater than theirs you are ahead, if less you are behind, and if equal you are tied.

Using the above example, if the player who started on -1 is currently on 2 points (having scored 3 hoops of their target of 8), and their opponent (starting on +1) is on 3 points (having scored 2 hoops of their target of 6), the first player's product is $3 \times 6 = 18$ and the second player's product is $2 \times 8 = 16$. Therefore the first player is actually in the lead at that time, despite the score being 2-3 against them. Note that the targets in these calculations stay the same throughout the game, only the number of hoops scored changes, thus changing the product(s).

The mathematical proof of this is just an exercise in calculating the difference of two fractions. I can provide a 2-line proof for anyone who wishes to see it.

Nigel Martin. Croquet Durham

Reference to this method of calculations can also be found on the Croquet Association Members' website: <https://www.croquet.org.uk/?p=/games/golf/advantage>

NO ADVANTAGE

Some players believe that the current system of extra shots in handicap GC works against a lower-handicap player, especially when playing an experienced opponent. Actual match statistics show the opposite. Either way, perhaps we could do better. Advantage croquet has been devised to even up the odds, so that the results of Advantage games are evenly balanced between the higher- and lower-handicap players. If they are, then the system is seen to be fair, and will be superior to the status quo. Much brain power and heartache has gone into devising the system, and understandably there are high hopes that it will be widely accepted. But we mustn't brush aside the downsides, and the significant harm that will come to the game if Advantage is widely adopted.

The fundamental objection to Advantage is that it takes out a higher-level skill. Holding extra turns doesn't just give you a better chance of running the next hoop. Having a sense of when to use them, and when to hold on to them, is part of the psychological warfare that lies behind a good player's shot-to-shot tactics. And playing against them can require you to change your game as much as playing on a poorly maintained court. It would absolutely be a backward step to throw all this away. For that reason alone, the Advantage system should be vociferously resisted.

Compare the development of AC, which has gone in the opposite direction. Over its long history the general standard of play has improved, and it became difficult to distinguish between players at higher levels. The answer has always been to add a layer of difficulty, which is how we have arrived at the super-skilled, highly tactical game that we have today. How can we then consider taking away tactical skills from GC?

For novices, using extra shots is difficult because there is just too much to think about. They will have been through an introduction where they learn the shots, the faults, and some simple tactics. Most are quickly able to join in roll-ups, novices tournaments and perhaps inter-club high-handicap 'friendlies'. They know about extra shots, but, more often than not, they don't use them effectively, or forget them completely. Until eventually it 'clicks' - there is a tactical weapon available that they can get to grips with. Their game goes to a different level. In fact after a while they find themselves playing against extra shots. There is usually some dismay at this, until they accept that there are ways of countering, which opens yet another avenue for development. That is a brilliant position for the game to be in. Advantage replaces all this progression with a gift from on high of some free hoops - a gift which comes with major costs.

- Games in roll-ups and in club competitions are often timed. It's necessary. We have to fit in coffee and lunch breaks, and in competitions fit six or seven games into a day. In Advantage, the results of unfinished games are not immediately apparent, they must be calculated. For each team multiply the number of hoops they have scored by the number of hoops their opponent had to score at the start. The team with the biggest resulting number has won. (You may have to read that again.)

- Do you play differently depending on whether you are winning or losing? Want to know if you're winning? Same calculation as above. (Can you still remember why you put your ball just there? Oh, your opponent has run a hoop, perhaps you were distracted by the arithmetic.) This spectacularly fails the stated requirement of being transparent - during the course of play - to both players and to observers.

- Even just getting started involves taking the mean handicaps of the two teams, looking up the handicap table (of course you'll have it on your phone), and putting clips on the centre peg and on an

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.

Advantage post.

So yes, there's a problem to be fixed but the way we're going about it could be better. No doubt the powers-that-be have already considered other possibilities, but anyway here are some starters for 10. There are two approaches: reducing the number of extra shots, or reducing their effectiveness. Reduce their number - by adopting some form of tapering to the numbers:

- If the difference is 1 or 2 then ignore it and play level, and/or
- start with the handicap difference, the first one (say) counts in full but above that they only count for a half – to be rounded up, or
- to weight the effect towards the lower handicap: 'A' level differences get 1 point, 'B' level 2 and 'C' level 3. Divide by three and round the result.

(Examples: 1 plays 5, at present giving away 4. Counting up, 2=1, 3,4,5 = 2 each. Total 7. Divide by 3, rounded = 2. Or 4 plays 9, currently giving away 5. Counting up, 5,6=2 each, 7,8,9 = 3 each. Total 13. Divide by 3, rounded = 4.)

Reduce their effectiveness - this could add to the complexity of the decision, i.e. increase the tactical skill levels in the game:

- A ball put in the jaws with an extra shot can only 'go halfway' on scoring the hoop, so is prevented from being first at the next hoop, and/or
- A ball put in the jaws with an extra shot will not score if peeled by its partner ball (or by any ball), or
- Extra shots can only be used on hoops 1-6. Or, they lapse after the hoop corresponding to how many there are (that is, if there are four extra shots they have to be used by hoop 4), or
- A player cannot win the game in their next turn after an extra shot. If they run a hoop it does not score. So an extra turn cannot (directly) win a 13th or golden hoop. Extends the rule that extra shots may not be used in an 8-shot end game, or
- An extra shot must be announced before the first shot is taken and cannot be revoked.

CONCLUSION

The chances of a win in a GC handicap game should be 50:50, so that, as we say, 'The handicap system in GC means that a weaker player can play a stronger one, and both will enjoy the game.' The current system of extra shots doesn't seem to be achieving that requirement.

The Advantage solution of adjusted starting positions may achieve statistically better outcomes but is short-sighted. Over the longer term it will prove positively harmful, because it discards a wide range of tactical skills which are currently acquired over years of playing. At grass-roots level it reduces enjoyment of the game by introducing complications that have nothing to do with actual play. In timed games it makes it impossible to judge the current state of play, or even the result, without resorting to some mental arithmetic. A far more satisfactory solution could and should be found by making an easily understood adjustment to the current extra-shot rules. Some possible ideas are given above; of course there may well be better ones.

Team captains say 'You have extra shots – use them wisely'. We must not take that wisdom out of the game.

David Haddrell

RESPONSE:

The World Croquet Federation approved Advantage Play for inclusion in the 6th Edition of the GC Rules as an alternative to Handicap Play using extra turns as it felt that the latter was not generally regarded as the best way of allowing players to compete on equal terms. The aim of both systems is to have players winning 50% of their games.

David sees the further dimension of extra turns in Handicap Play as involving a higher-level skill and an additional challenge. Other players will be only too glad to lose the complication of either when to use their extra turns or how to defend against them. No doubt some players will prefer Handicap Play, other players will prefer Advantage Play. Advantage Play is still new to many players and does take some getting used to. It is vital that players announce the score after each hoop and if this is done keeping track of the score is simple. Announcing the score after each hoop should be done in any game whether Level Play, Handicap or Advantage. For 2023 charts will be available on the WCF and CA websites to help players determine the winner of Advantage games, which will be particularly helpful when games are time limited. Both variants are in the Rule Book and it is up to Tournament and League organisers to choose which version is to be played. Whichever is chosen, it must be used in all the games. The two versions can't be mixed.

*Ian Cobbold
GC Rules Committee Chair*

PICTURE PERFECT

Long standing Bury Croquet Club member Jean Oldfield, who is also a member of Bury Art Society has recently completed an excellent painting entitled "Practice Day". Jean has kindly donated the picture to the club and is on display in the club pavilion. Needless to say members are trying to spot themselves!



Roy Spencer, Chairman, Bury Croquet Club

STRANGE OBJECTS

While tidying the club's "hoop setters" hut we unearthed 6 strange objects (picture attached). They are made of wood and hand painted and would appear to be some sort of score recording device but for what? Asking the longer serving members of our club has drawn a blank and I wondered if anyone in the wider membership could solve the mystery. Over the years we have had Bowling, Tennis and Archery sections but none of the current local clubs can offer any ideas as to their use.

I wondered if you could find space in the next issue of the gazette to put the question out there?



Tim Spores, Budleigh Salterton CC

THE (UNOFFICIAL) HISTORY OF CROQUET

There is no reference in Genesis to croquet having been played in the Garden of Eden, but that did not deter the sculptor Tullio Lombardo from creating his Renaissance masterpiece depicting Adam taking croquet.

The first known reference to croquet having been played in antiquity is a carving in an obscure corner of the temple of Kom Ombo in Upper Egypt, which depicts croquet being played in a form that is still recognisable today. In fact, croquet seems to have been a popular sport in ancient Egypt and was played by the pharaohs, some of whom had mallets, hoops and balls entombed with their mummified remains so that they could play croquet in the afterlife.

There are references to croquet in classical Greek literature in the writings of Homer and it may even have been played in the ancient Olympics. There are also references to croquet in Cicero's letters, which intriguingly refer to the difficulty of playing while wearing a toga. However, no record exists of croquet being played in Britain before the Norman Conquest, suggesting that the Romans did not export the game to Britannia.

The Normans introduced croquet to Britain, as depicted in two of the panels in the Bayeux Tapestry. This shows the game being played on foot and on horseback, the latter possibly being the precursor to polo. The mounted version appears to use larger hoops and balls. The mallets had handles made from yew with oak mallet heads, while the balls were

also made from oak and painted, although the colours, which relied on the availability of natural dyes, were more muted than the modern day equivalent. Yew trees are poisonous to livestock and were therefore grown in churchyards, being the only fenced area in the village, but they were in demand for making bows in the medieval period and the source of wood for mallets subsequently died out. There is an intriguing reference in Anglo-Norman literature to their favourite mid-game meal comprising melted cheese on toasted bread, called croquet monsieur, as croquet was an exclusively male preserve at the time. This was later abbreviated in the medieval period to the more familiar name that we know today.

The game appears to have disappeared until it re-emerged in the 17th century as pell-mell or palle-malle, which was played in what is now Pall Mall. This is often cited as the beginning of croquet in Britain, ignoring its 11th century origins.

David Graham

NOTE ON IMAGE COPYRIGHT

The original Egyptian photograph is my own. The original Classical Croquet image is from the Metropolitan Museum of Art website which states: As part of the Met's open access policy you can freely copy, modify and distribute this image, even for commercial purposes.

There are numerous versions of the original Bayeux Tapestry images. The ones used were unattributed, with no reference to copyright and the modified versions are significantly different to the originals.



Early booking offer

39
YEARS
EST. 1984

on 2024 river cruises

Rhine • Danube • Moselle • Main • Rhône • Douro • Seine • Saône • Dutch Waterways

Book early and SAVE 10% when you book a middle or upper deck on a classic European 2024 river cruise of 8 days or more

All river cruises include:

- Return regional travel from the UK
- Full board with exceptional cuisine
- All excursions
- A dedicated Riviera Travel cruise director and concierge
- Checked luggage

BOOK NOW
offer ends
28 February



To find out more, request a brochure or to book

01283 742304 | rivieratravel.co.uk/cqe

Quote-Croquet England

RIVIERA
TRAVEL

Forever Curious

Riviera Travel booking terms and conditions apply. ABTA V4744 ATOL 3430 protected. Images used in conjunction with Riviera Travel. *Offer period is between 30 November 2022 - 28 February 2023, and applies to new bookings made on 2024 classic European river cruises of 8 days or more, on all middle and upper deck cabins. See the website for full terms.



BOOK REVIEW

BRAND NEW AND AVAILABLE
TO BUY NOW AT:
CROQUETENGLAND.ORG.UK/SHOP

Ian Burridge is an International golf croquet player and a previous winner of the English National Singles, English First Eight, Welsh Championship and New Zealand Doubles titles.

Golf Croquet for Tournament Players is a manual aimed at taking players through the development journey of a competitive player. At every level of play sound decision making is a vital component in being successful and winning games. The book aims to ensure that the reader is armed with the necessary understanding to confidently make the right decision in whatever situation they face.

A series of Golden Rules set out the basics for those just beginning their journey, these are backed up with more detailed explanations as experience and understanding increases. Once the basics have been mastered the book advances into the more detailed elements of strategy that permeate the sport, as the standard of play increases, providing the reader with the insight they need to make the most of their own ability and to counteract their opponent's.

Book Review by Raouf Allim:

This is the book which will help you transition into comfortably playing in Golf

Croquet tournaments, all the way up to A class. International player Ian Burridge has written a thorough and accomplished account of the tactics and strategy of the game. So sit comfortably, with your favourite beverage at hand, put your feet up, and get stuck in.

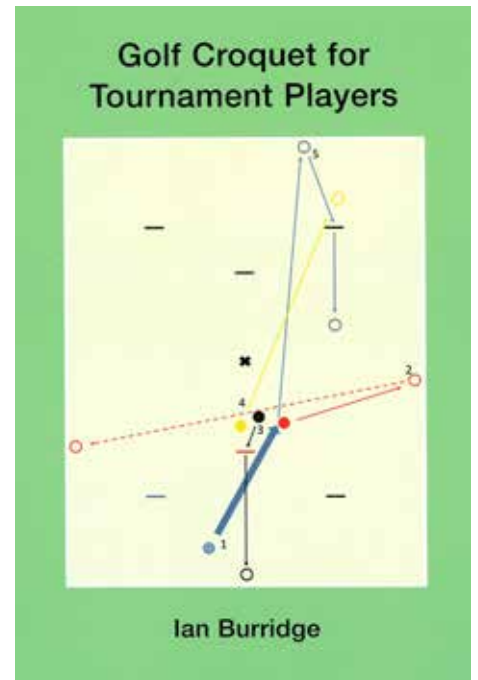
Players of all levels will benefit from the coverage of skill-sets and common tactical scenarios in the first two sections. Good players will find this a useful fine-tuning of ideas. Developing players will already be into study mode.

Following this the author offers his unique insights into the strategy of the game, on literally a hoop-by-hoop basis, and after this comes 'Part 4: The Battle'. This is the meat of the book and these sections are not intended to be read in one sitting. Rather, they are a study guide to be returned to as your game develops. If you've ever been disturbed by how often you go two hoops down at the beginning of the game, or puzzled over how best to play hoop 5 against a strong hitter, then you will be dipping into those sections straight away!

The highlight for me was the masterly account of how to counteract the various game strategies - the power players, the positional gurus, the irritating (for me)

mid-paced clearers, jawsers and hoopers etc, etc. There's a lifetime of tournament knowledge in this section alone.

I once heard the author comment to an opponent after a game "I had all the luck and you still won." Ian has a generous spirit, and this book is the true gift of his knowledge. Buy it.



LOCAL AWARD FOR JAMIE

Reigate Priory croquet club are delighted to announce that Jamie Burch was awarded the Reigate and Banstead Sports Person of the Year at a ceremony on 1st March in the Harlequin Theatre in Redhill, Surrey. Two members of the club had independently nominated him following his exploits in the MacRobertson Shield in Australia last year, being not only part of the winning team but also winning all his individual matches both singles and doubles. This was sufficient not only for him to be shortlisted but also to hold off local rivals from England Hockey and the Boxing Board of Control to win the Award. At the ceremony he was supported by his family, including his father who is also a member of the club, and four other club members who enthusiastically applauded the announcement.

The club are generally delighted that Jamie has had such success recently; all the more so because he is often to be seen on our lawn and is supporting



our centenary celebrations this year. He was in the last leg of a relay effort to play doubles GC from "Dawn to Dusk" on the anniversary of our founding in early March 1923 and ran over a century of hoops during the day, and will be taking part in other events later in the year.

Simon J.Ling
Hon. Secretary
Reigate Priory Croquet Club



YOU ARE CORDIALLY INVITED TO OUR



CORONATION TEA PARTY

FRIDAY 5TH MAY | 2PM - 4PM

AT LEWIS CARROLL LODGE

ST MARGARET'S ROAD, CHELTENHAM GL50 4FH

TO CELEBRATE KING CHARLES III'S CORONATION



If you'd like to attend, please RSVP to Julie:

📞 01242 807720

✉ lewiscarroll.lodge@crl.co.uk 🌐 crl.co.uk/lewis-carroll-lodge

Open Tuesday - Saturday, 10am - 5pm



TOURNAMENT REGULATIONS

The Tournament Regulations have been updated for the 2023 season and apply to all Calendar Fixtures. The changes of substance made since the 2022 edition are as follows:

- C1(a)(1) and C1(b)(7) have been re-written to reflect the new CA Tournament Levy. The change is intended to implement the following changes: No Levy payable for one day events; No levy for Under-25 Premium Members; Levy to become a flat rate fee of £6 per calendar fixture; The additional rate for non-premium members to be increased from £5 to £6. This change is intended to encourage the creation of 1-day events, simplify administration and allow clubs to innovate with tournament format (as an example to consider all-inclusive events).
- C3(a)(3) The adjustment of grades for allocation purposes of players who have played few or no games in the previous 12 months or longer has been removed for AC events. For GC events it has been reduced from 50 to 30 points per calendar year, with the maximum reduction reduced from 400 to 240 points.
- C3(a)(6) Players who do not secure a place in a full tournament are now automatically placed on a reserve list. The Tournament Entry System will inform reserves, who can then choose to withdraw their entry for a full refund or stay on the reserve list (and be refunded when the event takes place if not promoted into it).
- F1(a)(3)(A) The adjustment of grades for seeding purposes of players who have played few or no games in the previous 12 months has been removed. Seeding, where relevant, should now be identified based on the most up-to-date ranking grades available at the time of the draw.

- P2(c) new regulation to prohibit smoking and vaping while on the court during a game. The previous regulation P2(c) is renumbered P2(d).
- Variation L2 of the Refereeing Regulations has been re-written to replace the concept of a Sequence Umpire by a duty on players to intervene in GC games they are watching if they observe that wrong ball play is about to or has occurred.
- Variation L4 of the Refereeing Regulations has been amended to add a power to use video proactively when adjudicating faults in GC games. The video taken is to be available solely to the referee taking or requesting it, until after the game, and may not be used as evidence in any appeal.
- Variation L5 amends Rule 21.5 of the 6th Edition WCF GC Rules (Doubles Advantage Play) so that it works satisfactorily for pairs with non-integer average handicaps exceeding 12. Many other changes have been made for clarity or to remove typographic or formatting errors, but without any change of intent. These include:
 - Regulation R - a clarification of wording in the definition of Qualified Referees. The new wording better recognises the role of Assistant Referees, and also those with equivalent qualifications from other national bodies.
 - Removal of references to the (printed) Fixtures Book, and greater consistency in referring to Calendar Fixtures.
 - Additional hyperlinks to other parts of this website to aid navigation.

The full tournament regulations can be found at croquet.org.uk/?Service=TournamentRegulations

I Samir Patel



RULES COMMITTEE

MORE GC REFEREES ARE NEEDED

The GC Rules Committee encourages more players to qualify as GC Referees. Its aim is for there to be a qualified GC referee in every club and for referees to be available at every tournament and match.

At present there are some 220 clubs and 167 qualified GC referees. As some clubs have more than one referee this means that around 100 clubs do not have the advice and support of a GC referee.

Referees are essential to the fair playing of our sport. Becoming a referee brings its own rewards. You will become a key member of your club, helping other members to understand the Rules and to play by them. Officiating at tournaments and matches helps players play to the GC Rules and to resolve issues. Extending your understanding of the GC Rules will also improve your confidence as a player.

Qualification as a referee is normally undertaken by attendance at a 2-day course which includes a written exam and on-court test. Experience shows that most candidates pass provided that they have undertaken suitable pre-course preparation. There is an increasing amount of material being made available on the CA website and by Examining Referees in the run-up to courses. The Academy at Southwick, the Chiltern Academy and the Northern Academy all have courses available this year and further courses can be arranged at different locations if there is demand. Efforts are also being made to develop more remote-learning modules in conjunction with the WCF. The fee for a course is normally £50 but this is subsidised by the CA to the extent of £25 for a first course provided the candidate takes the exams, and some Federations and clubs give additional

financial assistance.

If you are interested in becoming a GC referee please contact one of the Academies or the Chair of the GC Rules Committee.

NEW GC REFEREES

Congratulations to the following who have passed the written exam and on-court test to qualify as GC Referees -

Ivor Brand	Cheltenham
Richard Brand	Cheltenham
Ron Carter	Ealing
Steve Durston	Nailsea
John Garnett	Blewbury
David Green	Dowlish Wake
Julia Green	Phyllis Court
Tony Green	Swanage
Bob Hart	Bath
Colin Lovell	Exeter
Felicity Owen	Cornwall
Neil Stewart	Eynsham
Roger Stroud	Leighton-Linslade
Brian Wilson	Camerton and Peasedown

ADVANTAGE CROQUET

A revised version of 'How to play Advantage Golf Croquet' is now on the CA website. The changes include an updated starting scores chart to reflect the new Dgrade/handicap link; a set of scales to assist with the determination of the winner in a timed Advantage game; and how to calculate doubles

handicaps when a pair has an average handicap above 12. The latter is now included in the Tournament Regulations (L5).

SEQUENCE UMPIRES

The use of Sequence Umpires has been trialled for several years. Their use has now been normalised for GC tournaments in the 2023 Tournament Regulations (L2) and extended, unless the Tournament Manager or Organising Body directs otherwise. Accordingly, a player competing in a tournament or event should forestall play in a game they are observing if they believe that a wrong ball is about to be played or may have been played in the last stroke. This extends the requirement for players involved in a game to do so under Rule 10.2. The change does not permit spectators other than the players in the tournament to intervene. The use of Sequence Umpires may not be appropriate in tournaments below A grade.

USE OF VIDEO TO ASSIST REFEREES

The Tournament Regulations have allowed the use of video to assist referees in making decisions, but it has rarely been used. It is now being promoted by the WCF and the Regulations have been amended (L4) to encourage the use of video recording in order to extend the experiment. A referee may either make use of video evidence which exists to assist in making a decision about an incident that has already occurred, or make,

or arrange for someone to make, a video recording of a stroke to assist the referee in adjudicating the outcome. The use of video recording is at the discretion of the referee and is not mandatory. The player may ask to see the recording after the match. A Tournament Referee may decide in advance of a tournament that the particular event will not be part of the trial. Referees will be given advice on how best to use video recording and are encouraged to practice before using it in a tournament. The Committee would like to receive feedback on any situation where video evidence has been used in GC tournaments.

APPOINTMENT OF TOURNAMENT REFEREES AT A GRADE GC TOURNAMENTS

Tournament Referees are often appointed on the day of the tournament and expected to answer any refereeing queries and to settle any refereeing disputes. The Committee considers that the Tournament Referee at A-level tournaments should also be responsible for ensuring that hoops had been set, and the courts laid out, correctly. Tournament organisers are encouraged to appoint the Tournament Referee sufficiently far in advance that they can arrange for any necessary assistance with carrying out the checks.

Ian Cobbold
GC Rules Committee Chair

OBITUARIES **BOB JACKSON 22.01.23**

Taken from Croquet New Zealand: "It is with great sadness that we share the passing of Robert Vernon 'Bob' Jackson. Bob passed away peacefully on Sunday morning at the age of 91. Bob is survived by his wife Mary and his three sons. Bob's croquet achievements include representing New Zealand in both Association Croquet as well as Golf Croquet. Bob was selected for nine MacRobertson Shield teams playing in seven events, as well as playing in three Trans-Tasman Golf Croquet Tests. Bob also represented New Zealand in Singles World Championships in both Association and Golf Croquet. Bob won a record 14 New Zealand Singles Open Championships in Association Croquet between 1975 and 2003 and 10 New Zealand Doubles Open Championships between 1972 and 1990.

Bob also won three national singles as well as three national doubles titles in Golf Croquet.

He won 13 New Zealand Men's Championships and 2 Mixed Doubles Championships playing with his wife Mary. Bob also won many titles overseas and there are too many to list them all. Bob was arguably the best croquet player in the world during the 1970's and 80's being the first player to complete an octuple peel, not once but twice in consecutive games.

Before taking up croquet Bob was also a New Zealand Champion in table tennis. This is a sad day for croquet around the world and our thoughts are with Bob's family."

Many readers will have known and remember Bob Jackson well. But know him or not, one cannot help admire and perhaps aspire to such achievements.



DAVE NICK



David Nicholson, known in the croquet world as Dave Nick died quite suddenly on Sunday 19th February from a heart attack. For many years, he was the Chairman, Captain and leader of Crake Valley Croquet Club. He organised and managed the tournaments at the Club as well as setting out and mowing the lawns. He was for many years a member of the Lancashire County Team and with a handicap of minus 1.5 and a platinum badge to his credit was one of the stalwarts of the team. He was a

natural, no nonsense player who assessed the situation, chose his shot and hit the ball without any preamble or "casting" - as his record shows, very successfully.

He stopped playing croquet a few years ago due primarily to bad health.

He will be remembered most for his sense of humour around the Northern Circuit and his willingness to help and coach other players. He was a great friend to many and will be sadly missed.

Bob Burnett

2023 U21 GC WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP

Following the cancellation of the previous U21 GC Worlds due to Covid, NZ were eventually able to host this event at the Mount Maunganui and Tauranga clubs. Thirty-two players from 6 countries took part in what was one of the most open events for some time.

The region had suffered heavy rain prior to the event and the lawns were in pretty good condition considering. They increased in speed from 10 to 11 seconds until finals day.

Block A was won by Nathan Bullen who beat top seeded Aston Wade. Nathan was clearing well and hitting a lot of 6 yarders in the middle to retain control. In third place was Aly Elzainy and Callum McKinnon was fourth. Amy Gust made a promising debut and won three matches.

Block B was won by Fawzy Helmy who did not drop a game. I was impressed with the stability of his body and I think he will continue to improve and become a force in future open worlds. Paul Kaiser was second, Mikey Lauer third and Timothy Wright from Australia did really well to take fourth place. Unfortunately, Sam Cuthbert suffered a serious spinal injury whilst swimming on the evening of the first day. He has undergone successful surgery and I wish him all the best for a full recovery.

Block C was dominated by the Cashmere boys with current NZ Champion Levi Franks winning the block from Josh Winter and Myles Duggan doing really well in third. Another Kiwi, Te Kiri King from Park croquet club came fourth. Strong performances from Addison Matthews (Aus) and Alfonso Morales (Spain) were not quite enough to qualify.

Block D was won by Kiwi Joel Steele who beat Blake Fields (USA). Blake was one of the strongest players physically and has an excellent technique with limitless power, but needs to develop more balance to his game to improve his consistency. There were too many times during the event when his overly aggressive lines of play saw him lose three consecutive hoops. I expect him to become a key competitor in future U21 and open events. There was a three way play off for 3rd to 5th with Robbie Spooner taking third, Jana Mohamed Saaid 4th and Ashton Sharp the unlucky 5th. I was impressed with Jana who was the best positional player in the event and expect her to win medals in future Women's Worlds if she continues to improve. The first round of the knockout saw an upset when Te Kiri beat Nathan 7-2, 7-4. In the same section Aly beat Josh 7-2, 7-5. Josh hasn't found his form from the past two seasons and will need to try and correct his swing which has become overly crooked since I last saw him play in order to reduce inconsistency.

Te Kiri continued his giant killing in the quarter finals, beating Aly 7-4, 7-3. Aston Wade beat Levi Franks 7-6, 7-4 in a match where he was finally able to control the inside position and put increased pressure on his opponent. Playing in NZ with Quadways is different to playing in easier conditions in the UK. To try and expand on this, if we take a position where blue has a 4 yard 10 degree hoop and red has a 2 yard straight hoop, in the UK, blue is probably slight favourite whereas in NZ red is clear favourite. It is these types of variations that players need to build into their strategy to decide how to play as conditions change.

In the bottom half we had a massive match between Fawzy and Blake. In the end, Fawzy controlled the match and won easily 7-5, 7-2. It was a great example of balanced play against aggressive play.

The final quarter final was also won in straight games with Joel beating Paul 7-3, 7-4. With cyclone Gabrielle on her way, it was decided to play the semi-finals on the penultimate day as well. The first semi was an absolute thriller. Te Kiri won the first against Aston 7-6. Aston had control of the second, but Te Kiri fought back to 5-5. Aston built a strong position at 11, with a ball





straight in front of the hoop, and his other blocking Te Kiri on the North boundary. Te Kiri needed to jump over both balls to run 11 and played a fantastic shot that got into the jaws only to be spat out – less than half a millimetre from taking a crucial 6-5 lead. Aston was able to run the hoop and eventually equalised 7-6. The third was another thriller which once again went to hoop 13. Aston showed his experience to take his place in the final. The other semi was a fairly comfortable win for Fawzy although Joel did become the first player to take a game off him 7-3, 6-7, 7-4.



Having enjoyed warm, sunny, breezy conditions for the first four days of the event, the final day was very different. The temperature plummeted, the wind increased to gale force and the final was played in occasionally very heavy rain that threatened to flood the lawns. Whilst the playing conditions were the same for both players, I cannot believe that Fawzy has ever played in anything like these conditions and I thought it gave a big advantage to Aston.



The first game of the best of 5 was a high quality encounter with both players performing extremely well. Aston won 7-4 which was somewhat flattering. As playing conditions deteriorated, the standard of play also dropped and Aston was taking better position on the slower lawns than he had been able to on the faster lawns earlier in the event. Once again, as the weather worsens, having inside position becomes increasingly important. Aston took the second 7-4, but once again, I didn't think there was much to choose between the players and wasn't surprised when Fawzy won the third 7-5. Aston generated a lead in the fourth but Fawzy fought back and took the game to the 13th hoop. With Aston straight in front, Fawzy hit his last shot and after many more rotations, including much more hitting from Fawzy, Aston's patience paid off and Fawzy eventually missed to give Aston an easy hoop, a 3-1 win and his first World Championship. It is tough to travel 12,000 miles with the pressure of being favourite and Aston once again showed his maturity to work at his game and improve as the event progressed.



The Shield was won by Levi Franks, the Bowl by Josh Winter and the Plate by Inigo Castanon from Spain.

It was an excellent event with a group of really nice youngsters, many of whom have great potential. It was genuinely wide open despite the top two seeds reaching the final. Congratulations to the winners and to those who exceeded their own expectations. The next event is scheduled for the USA.



| Chris Clarke



STUART M. SMITH - GC 'BEST IN THE WEST' 2023 WINNER

From its post covid conception, the third, and very popular, GC 'Best in the West' took place at Budleigh Salterton Club on Sunday 12th March. The 'all play all' format is an opportunity for the best eight players in the

Southwest to gather for a pre-season friendly tournament.

The players were : Stuart M. Smith; Jonathan Powe; James Galpin; Tim Jolliff; Steve Leonard; Stephen Custance-Baker; Ryan Cabble; and James Goodbun. We enjoyed a bright start to the day, and a trail of spectators, but by 3pm the drizzly rain set in much like conditions for the AC event on the Saturday. Stephen Custance Baker was welcomed back after a successful 2022 season, regaining his minus handicap status. Stephen got off to a good start beating last year's winner James Galpin and his previous National Doubles partner Jonathan Powe within his opening games.

Tim Jolliff also had a strong start, with his first five games all golden hoop results, four of which he took 7/6. Tim finished in 2nd place overall with 5 from 7.

Ryan Cabble also put in an impressive performance. A very controlled approach was taken over each game giving Ryan 4 wins from 7. He was pipped into the final 4th spot by Steve Leonard on hoop difference.

Steve won all 3 of his first games until he met his doubles partner Stuart M. Smith in the fifth. Although closely fought, Stuart had first approach to 13, a position from which he rarely concedes a game. Two further losses to Tim and Ryan followed, but a win over James Goodbun, gave Steve third overall place. Jonathan Powe was slow to start with three opening losses, but then found some form. A final tally of 3 wins from 7 games, and overall 6th position.

Meanwhile, the two James's were having very different fortunes. James Galpin put in a great performance but was pipped on the 13th on four occasions, leaving him with just one victory. James Goodbun started very strongly with a win over Stuart in the opening game and further wins over Stephen C-B and James Galpin throughout the day.



After his opening game loss, Stuart M. Smith remained composed and demonstrated some excellent long hoop runs and centre ball clearances we have come to expect from him. Stuart completed the rest of the tournament with 6 straight wins and a hoop difference of +9.

Crowned GC Best in the West for 2023, Stuart shared the sweets from the sugar bowl trophy with his fellow competitors. Once again, huge thanks to Budleigh for hosting and in particular John O'Gorman and Tim Spores for the excellent preparations and hoop setting.

| Louise Smith

BEST IN THE WEST AC - MATCH REPORT

Inclement weather led to a seriously depleted entry to the inaugural AC Best in the West competition in Budleigh. In the end only two locals braved the wind and rain: Duncan Reeve and David Warhurst, who contested a best of three final.

Game 1: Duncan discovered it was too early in the season for sextuples, his attempt ending after only one peel. David took a ball to 4-back, Duncan replied with a break to peg. Hitting well, David then took his hoop 1 ball to peg, pegging out Duncan to leave a three ball ending: with Duncan on 3-back against peg & 4-back. Immediately following the peg out, David separated his balls to maximum distances for the ensuing lift shot. Duncan took this from b-baulk to the west boundary ball...hitting the 17-yarder centre ball. He then took off diagonally across the lawn to the ball on east boundary, getting a rush to 3-back.

He made the hoop and finished the game with a controlled two ball break!!

+5 to Duncan

The second game proceeded more to convention. Following a super shot opening, David took a ball to 4-back. Duncan missed the lift leaving David with an excellent delayed triple opportunity. Clearly it was too early in the season and David put his chance down at hoop 2 with a simple approach spoiled by a lapse of concentration. Duncan responded with a TPO. David took the contact but failed to make any progress. When, one long shot later at Duncan's corner one leave, David missed and Duncan executed the 3-ball 12 hoop break to win.

+16 to Duncan and the match.

Duncan was awarded the brand new "AC Best in the West" trophy superbly crafted by Stuart M. Smith.



THE PRESIDENTS SELECTION 2023 - DULWICH

What a weekend... The 8th running of the Presidents Selection certainly fulfilled all expectations from the previous years. Playing for the Christopher Robin Cup for the winner, and The Croquet Butter Dish in the Plate. This year's guests were: Louise Smith, Michelle Leonard (replaced by Andy Hobbs on day 2), Stuart Smith, Steve Leonard, Lionel Tibble and Simon Williams.

Taking on the formidable Dulwich 6 of: Guy Scurfield, John Spiers, Jonathan Claxton, Peter Haydon, Simon Carter and Pierre Beaudry.

Saturday saw cross block games being played. Challenging (wet) conditions meant that 2 of the 3 main lawns were out of action, so a 2nd (full length lawn, but only about 1/3 wide) was brought in to keep matches ticking over. In the end 4 & ½ of the 6 rounds were completed that day.

A lively party was held on Saturday night at Guy's place (it was also his birthday), much enjoyed by 20 plus people. Sunday saw a complete change, bright blue sky, with very cold weather. While the remaining 9 games were played out, the manager was working out what could be done for the knockout. In the end, inter block quarter finals were played, BO3 7pt games, with the "Bamford" start to remove first approach advantage.

QUARTERS: Pierre vs Simon C; Guy vs Jonny; Stu vs Steve and Lionel vs Simon W.
Pierre prevailed over Simon, and Guy over Jonny. Stu took out Steve and after a long battle, Lionel beat Simon. The final qtr took so long that the semi-finals reverted to single 13pt games.

SEMIS: Pierre vs Guy and Lionel vs Stu.
Pierre started very strongly – getting to 4-1 up quickly – but Guy got back into it by running hoop 6 from corner 4, and with the same ball ran hoop 7, and then hoop 8 with a jump, 4-4. Then 5-5 and onto hoop 11. Guy jumps it from 6 yards, and the ball ran down to 12, wired from Pierre. Guy took on the shot, and was through to the final 7-5.
The other semi saw a cagey affair, back and forth, much "luck" being called.... before Lionel managed to win out at hoop 13, 7-6.
Lunchtime saw both players and spectators share in some fabulous Indian street food starters – Chickpea pakoras & chicken tikka, followed by a simple, hearty, and very tasty BBQ of steak, sausages and venison burgers.
The remaining players took part in a boundary shoot out to decide the Plate. Each player had 4 shots at hoop 1, if 1 ball

went through, they were in the next round, if not then out. Then moved to hoop 6 and the same again. Back and forth, there could be only one. Steve Leonard coming out as shoot-out champion.

THE FINAL – 19PT: GUY VS LIONEL

Lionel got off to a sparkling start, 3-0 up in no time, then Guy started to fight back. Many spectators watching from inside the clubhouse were very vocal in their support, with "oohs and ahhs" as some great shots played. Guy got back to 6-4 ahead, and then the lead to win 10-7, to the delight of the home crowd – The President finally winning his own event after 8 attempts! Appropriately too, as Guy is stepping down as President in Nov '23. What will happen to this event? You will have to wait and see...

Another marvellous January weekend, with some great croquet, and fabulous guests who put up with a pretty miserable Saturday to ensure the event was completed. Thanks, and please come again.

Guy Scurfield President of Dulwich CC



WINTER CROQUET AT HAMPTWORTH - IT'S BEEN GOING FOR NEARLY 20 YEARS

Back in the day the club had two lawns, a wooden shed for a pavilion and played with Barlow balls. Then circa 2006, the balls had to be replaced with Dawsons... where to find the money? Someone came up with the idea of running croquet days over the winter to raise the funds and James Tuttielt took on the mantle of organising monthly AC weekends.

Apart from fundraising the other important factor was to exchange information regarding break play, tactics and other ideas. As there cannot be any coaching or other form of education during a game that goes on cards, the games were

kept 'off card'. This practice has continued to this day, thus accommodating a large range of handicaps from beginners to those practising their QP's. and everyone learns from comments as a game unfolds.

In August 2009 Richard Jenkins suggested that GC should also be run in the winter – he received various comments from within the CA and the club to the effect that it was an idea but the club committee agreed to give it a go. Thus, in November 2009, GC was launched with 8 players on the 2 lawns. The early weekends that winter received a great deal of support from Roger Barnacle and others from Dogmersfield, which

...continued on next page

HAMPTWORTH CONTINUED...

really helped get them off the ground. In 2010, the club opened 2 more lawns putting it on the map as a major club. Since then, GC has been fully subscribed and run throughout each winter with 16 people playing on the 4 lawns every month between October and March, and Richard Jenkins has organised all 134 of them! Until 2017 all days were handicap (with extra turns) latterly competing for the Des George Trophy. Since 2017 October and March tournaments have been run as level play and in both formats all games go on cards.

AC continued to be run by various organisers 'off card' playing 3 or 4 shortened games each day to fill all daylight hours. Depending on the handicaps and the number of the players (which can vary between 6 and 16) the format can be Advanced, Level or Handicap with the occasional doubles. Since 2021 Short Croquet has been introduced on 2 of the 12 days – the handicap system works well giving players of all abilities good games – we just need to convince more people to give it a go. The most important thing is that everyone has fun, from the person attending their first event to those competing in international events – the only trophy is the occasional bottle of wine!

Support for both AC and GC has been from far and wide – the most well-known being Des George who came regularly from Switzerland to play GC. Over the years more people tend to play for one day rather than coming for the whole weekend – a reflection of people's busy lives and the expense of staying away. Since it started, Hamptworth has run around 300 days of winter croquet. Inevitably the weather plays its hand and on average about 25% of the days get lost to bad weather each year. Hamptworth's experience has shown that there is no reason not to run tournaments all year round, however many lawns you have. All you need for a great day's croquet is 4 (or maybe 6) people!

■ Ann Beard and Richard Jenkins



IPSWICH CROQUET CLUB REINVENTED

DOUBLE TROUBLE

On 23rd March 2020 England went into pandemic lockdown, and on 9th December 2020 Ipswich Croquet Club (ICC) received 12 months' notice to vacate its home at Fynn Valley.



...CONTINUED

A SILVER LINING

ICC saw an opportunity to turn a potential disaster into a bonus. With unexpected Covid grants and the words of Ranulph Fiennes “life is too short for second-class ambition; go for the big one” ringing in the ears of its committee, it produced a comprehensive business plan - the objective to create a championship facility and a vibrant and inclusive club fit for the 21st century.

This is a large and ambitious undertaking of two halves which will be spread over 5 years – site construction and club marketing. The latter is a subject for another day.

ICC has split site construction into 3 phases; lawn construction, irrigation, and club amenities.

A SLOW START

In September 2021, after much searching and several disappointments, the club was offered a 1.6 acre meadow at Trinity Park (Suffolk County Showground) on which it has now secured a 25 year lease. Trinity Park is well located with excellent road connections not only to East Anglia but to the rest of the country.

Here ICC will have 4 full sized courts, clubhouse, toilets, equipment store and plenty of parking.

Acquiring the necessary planning permission took 6 months, and finalising the lease took a further 7 months.

Construction phase 1.

At last, in August 2022, the contractors moved in. The site was cleared of all vegetation, laser levelled, prepared, fertilised and rabbit proofed with a 300M fence.

A tip when creating lawns from scratch. Rather than dig in the foot of the rabbit fence, heap the waste from the clearing and levelling process on top of it. This will save many man hours and also the considerable expense of disposing of the waste.



In September the grass was sown and 8 weeks later it received its first mowing. Mains electricity and water are now connected and this completes Phase 1 at a cost of £30,000.

MANY THANKS

ICC is immensely grateful to the EACF and the CA for their belief in and help with this ambitious project, and for the CA's financial support – a £5,000 grant towards creating the new facility and a further £5,000 interest free loan.

CONSTRUCTION PHASE 2.

In March ICC's members will install the watering system provided by Duncan Hector Turf Care. This DIY system will save the club several thousand pounds.

1ST APRIL - NO KIDDING!

The club will move to the new site on 1st April. Initially play will be restricted to two courts while construction phase 3 (improving the club's facilities) gets under way.

FUTURE FUNDING

It is estimated that a further £35K will be needed to complete this 5 year project. ICC is actively pursuing a range of possible funding sources to help achieve its objectives.

GRANTS

Sports England, Local Councils, Corporates' community funds

SPONSORSHIPS

Local companies, firms, organisations, suppliers of associated equipment, products and services

CLUB MEMBERS

Donations and competitions

CROWD FUNDER

Scheduled for early summer
Already secured in principle
A £5K grant from Suffolk CC, £2K from the District Council and £12K from Valencia (landfill communities fund).

| Martin Brown

WHAT HAPPENS TO CROQUET TROPHIES SINCE DEPARTED FROM TOURNAMENTS?



Last September The Croquet Association Office alerted The Pinchbeck Club that in Grantham there was an Edward VII Silver Presentation Bowl up for auction that had belonged to the Former Sleaford Croquet Club and was the Pinchbeck Club interested in purchasing it? Sleaford being a market town in mid-Lincolnshire. The item was an Edward VII Sterling

Silver Presentation Bowl with 'The Sleaford Croquet Club Lincolnshire Challenge Bowl' of Semi Fluted form, embossed with foliate scrolls and shell motifs, engraved with an armorial and the years and names of the winners from 1907 – 1937. It was cast by Atkins Bros, in 1902 and registered at the Sheffield Assay Office and comprised of almost 29 ounces of silver.

It appears that the 1935 winner a Mrs J. R. Elliott was a founder member and long-time Chairman of the Nottingham Club. The club was indeed interested as it was obvious that if it did not step in then the bowl, being Sterling Silver, was destined for the smelter bearing in mind the current high price of sterling silver. However, Pinchbeck being a small club situated in Southern

Lincolnshire close to the Market town of Spalding had very limited resources, so it was decided by half a dozen of the members to voluntarily contribute the required amount to acquire and preserve a valuable piece of Lincolnshire Croquet history. The bowl was known as 'The Sleaford Croquet Club Lincolnshire Championship' but was not the Lincolnshire Championship proper. That was originally held at 'The Lincoln Club' but fell into abeyance during the war. (WW1). The trophy, was eventually (mid 1920's) given to 'The Sleaford Club' and became 'The 'A' Class trophy, with the Sleaford trophy relegated to 'B' Class. It was competed for annually up to 1937 when it is reported that the tournament ceased due to lack of numbers. A Miss Ada Harrison being the last winning recipient. Since, then nothing is recorded.

I have established that the club along with the local bowls club was situated at the Recreation Ground, Boston Road where it had four good reasonable lawns. In its later years, due to lack of members, it merged with the bowls club and eventually ceased to exist in 1949. So one asks where has this bowl been for the last 83 years and why has it suddenly re-appeared? One can only surmise that either the last winner or an officer of the club took the trophy home and

it has passed down through the family since. It is in very good condition and looks as if it has had nothing but a superficial clean with no chemicals used. This would indicate that perhaps it has spent some years in a glass display cabinet.

It would help if we knew the identity of the vendor but are precluded from this due to data protection. However, our understanding is that it is an elderly lady in care with serious dementia; so we suspect a house clearance by the family. Despite a letter via the Auction House to the Vendor requesting the outstanding information, to date nothing has been heard but hopefully this might be forthcoming sometime in the future.

However, after research by the C.A. Archivist Chris Williams, it has recently come to light that there is a letter from a past member Toby Jessel of the Hurlingham Club in the Gazette dated 1966 in which he writes: 'Recently when driving north I stopped for lunch at Market Deeping near Peterborough and was served with soup from a magnificent bowl inscribed "Sleaford Croquet Tournament 1906"'. One wonders what usually happens to challenge cups and bowls since departed croquet tournaments. A soup tureen seems as good as any – as long as the soup is good'. One wonders whether this was the bowl? The fact that it was still located

in Lincolnshire during 1966 would indicate that it might still have been in the hands of the descendants of a former member. Unfortunately, Toby passed away in December 2018 so is not available to clarify the position. The search goes on.

Looking to the future, it is the Pinchbeck Club intention that during 2023 (after some minor repairs) to re-introduce the bowl back for an internal club croquet competition and compete for it annually at a 'B' Class Handicap/Advance Level event. It is also planned to introduce a silver ring around the base for future winners' names. The Bowl will be still known as 'The Sleaford Bowl'.

I Terrey Sparks



ALL-ENGLAND HANDICAP CENTENARY

2 023 marks one hundred years since the first holding of the All-England Croquet Handicap Competition, or as it was known in some quarters at the time "The Grand National". The proposal to hold a season-long British Isles Handicap event had been made two years previously in a letter to the Gazette by the northern player George (GC) Branthwaite and appears to have been supported by Rev. WJ Limmer Shepherd. The event became a reality in 1923 following the enterprise of HJ Whittle, who managed the first event. The final of the first event was held at Roehampton and ten of the thirteen area winners took part. J.P. Hubbard (4 ½) from Sleaford defeated P. Newton (5) from Tunbridge Wells in the final. The report of the final

notes "That the finalists were non-Associates and had never played in a London tournament is a matter of congratulation and should impart a stimulus to croquet in the provinces". For the first event the area winners were awarded a Silver Medal and a prize order for a sovereign, whilst the club winners were awarded a Bronze Medal and in some cases a prize order for thirty shillings. Following the success of the first event in 1923, when over 500 players took part in the club heats, Branthwaite suggested in a letter to the Gazette in August 1923, that the event be recognised as an annual event and that the area winners should meet for the finals at a different Croquet centre each year. Branthwaite's suggestion of holding the final stages

at a different venue each year did not find favour with Council, but the event nonetheless regularly attracted over 400 entries from up to 40 clubs and he himself won it in 1932 off a handicap of 2. The format of the event has changed little in the one hundred years it has been in existence. Players play an initial round in their clubs and the club winners are then grouped into convenient areas to play an area final. The area winners then meet in the National Final. In recent years the National Final has been expanded to include more players from the area finals than just the winners. In 1967 to mark the Centenary of the Croquet Association the National final was brought forward to the end of July to coincide with the visit of Her

Majesty Queen Elizabeth II to the Hurlingham Club. Her Majesty watched the final between Lt. Cdr. R.D. Sinclair (5) from Edinburgh and Hugh Carlisle (7) from Hurlingham with Sinclair triumphing by five points.



Her Majesty presenting the bowl to Lt. Cdr. Sinclair R. N. Winner of the All England Centenary Handicap.

Prior to the mid 1980s the event was generally won by

a player with a lower single figure handicap with Nigel Aspinall's win in 1972 off -5, being particularly impressive. Since the mid 1980s there has been a significant change in that the winner more than likely has a double figure handicap. David Goacher being the last A-Class winner in 1987 off ½.

GEORGE (GC) BRANTHWAITE

Born in Lincolnshire in 1865 and later moving to Manchester, Branthwaite was a leading light of croquet in the North West and secretary of the croquet section of the Northern Lawn Tennis Club at Didsbury (the 'Wimbledon of the North') for many years. He was also closely involved in the establishment of the Lancashire and Cheshire Croquet Union, eventually achieved in 1934 after an abortive attempt in 1922, and was on Council in the mid 1930s – and a keen student of the operation of the handicap system, on which he annually compiled detailed statistics. Branthwaite himself won the 1932 All England Handicap off 2. Branthwaite died in 1941 at the age of 76.

Chris Williams (CA Archivist)
with help from Ian Bond

COUNTIES FACEBOOK PAGES

The Marketing committee presented a new series of county Facebook pages to attendees on a webinar on Tuesday 14th March. The webinar is still available to watch on the Croquet Association YouTube channel.

The purpose of the newly created Facebook pages is to provide a central place for players to share stories, achievements and events, within their local area. With the help of the word-of-mouth nature of Facebook, the pages will allow all players to support and encourage their fellow team-mates, whilst also being a platform for the general public to find more information about our sport. For a full list of the counties Facebook pages please visit the Croquet Association website and search National Croquet Week. The campaign has been developed in conjunction with National Croquet Week, which culminates with the AC Inter-Counties Championship. Therefore, all teams entered have a Facebook page plus those who have entered a team for the GC Inter-Counties. It will be suggested that each of the teams have players to administer the Facebook page, delivering stories from the event itself. In the lead up to the event, we are looking for volunteers to help maintain the Facebook pages, this will include sharing local club events and player achievements.

The pages will also be used to share announcements made by the Croquet Association and promote the sport's activity to a wider population. We encourage you to find, like and share your supported county and look forward to the friendly rivalry that emerges throughout both the AC and GC counties every year (ie. search Surrey county croquet using your county name in place of Surrey). Search the CA website for more information about making yourself available to play for a county or come along and support the teams.

The AC Inter-County Championship 2023 will be taking place at Sussex County Croquet Club (Southwick) and Compton Croquet Club (Eastbourne) between 27-30 May 2023. Later in the year the GC Inter-County Championship 2023 will be taking place, with Division 1 at Cheltenham Croquet Club (Cheltenham) and Division 2 at Sussex County Croquet Club (Southwick), from 19 - 20 August 2023.

If you would like to volunteer to be an administrator of your county Facebook page, or you would like the Marketing Committee to share your local club and players stories through your county Facebook page, please contact us at communications@croquet.org.uk

Marketing Committee





BALTIC OPEN 2022

20 players gathered to contest the 11th Baltic Open, held for the second year at Ikšķile Croquet Club, with three new courts, and at Sigulda Croquet and Chess Club which boasts one very flat and beautifully manicured court. Normunds Zelcans is the main lawns manager at Ikšķile while the Sigulda court is in the garden of Viktors and Sandra Harlinskis with the ground floor of their house forming a luxuriously appointed clubroom. The Ikšķile club was the brainchild of Roberts Stafeckis and his colleagues in the Latvian Croquet Federation and offers excellent croquet on the banks of the Daugavas river.

Four Finnish players and two Brits, in the form of Stephen Mulliner and Steve Leonard, the 2021 runner-up, provided the international element and joined 14 Latvian players. The event began with four blocks of five playing 19 point games. Three of the top four seeds, Stephen Mulliner, Steve Leonard and Normunds Zelcans (the 2021 champion) headed their blocks but Janis Steins, the other block top seed, lost to Henri Hagelberg, a new Finnish player whose main experience had been provided by garden croquet. However, armed with a smooth Irish style, he proved himself to be a very competent performer and won all his block games.

The top four in each block proceeded to the best-of-three knock-out and although the original top four seeds made it to the semi-finals, there were some very close games along the way. Stephen Mulliner was taken to the 13th in game 2 by Maris Kalnins and Normunds Zelcans in both games by Rolands Dundurs. Janis Steins and Henri Hagelberg shared the first two games 7-6 before Janis broke free with a 7-1 win in the third. Henri did not let this reverse upset him and he beat Maris Kalnins and fellow-countryman Lars Boman to win the Shield consolation event. 11 wins from 13 games in your first ranking tournament is quite an achievement.

The semi-finals pitched Stephen Mulliner against Janis

Steins and created a repeat of the 2021 final between Steve Leonard and Normunds Zelcans. Stephen won 7-4, 7-1 but the first game contained a spell of superb single ball play by Janis. Steve gained his revenge for last year's final by 7-4, 7-4 but only by countering Normunds' highly accurate play. The final had an interesting texture. Steve shot away to a 4-0 lead in game 1 aided by superb shooting and, although pulled back temporarily to 4-2, was a worthy winner by 7-3. Game 2 was more tactical and interactive and Stephen eventually pulled away to win 7-3.

Game 3 started with angled hoop 1 failures by both players and then a really unlucky 3 yard peel of Stephen's ball by Steve which handed Stephen a 2-0 lead. This became 3-0 but Steve fought back to 3-3. The best way of describing the prolonged battle for hoop 7 is to say that the hoop was too good for both players and the matter was only resolved by a stop-clearance by Stephen which caused his ball to run the hoop as an afterthought. Steve unluckily glued a ball to hoop 8 which Stephen could jump to lead 5-3. Stephen then ran hoop 9 from the boundary almost up to hoop 10 and was eventually able to close out the match 7-3.

All the consolation events were played to an enthusiastic finish with Janis Steins, Henri Hagelberg, Roberts Stafeckis and 15-year old Ivo Boznieks winning the 3/4th play-off, Shield, Bowl and Plate respectively.

The prize-giving was preceded by the lighting of a birthday cake candle to celebrate Stephen's 69th birthday and was followed by an excellent buffet meal. Roberts Stafeckis and his wife Yolanta had also masterminded a well-attended tournament dinner on the Saturday night at the nearby Spadrops Hotel where most of the visitors stayed. The enthusiasm and friendliness of the Latvian croquet community is an excellent reason to consider making the trip for next year's Baltic Open.

I Stephen Mulliner





Where stories begin

in partnership with



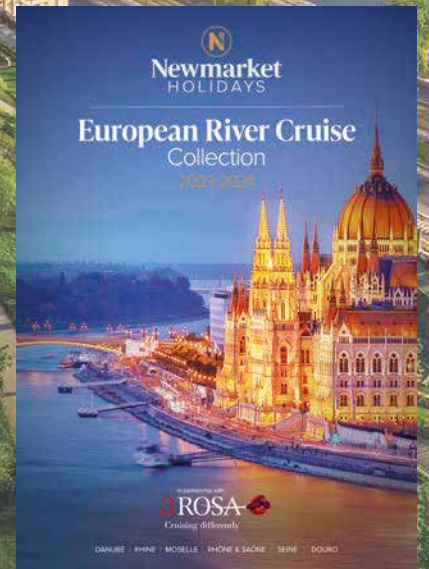
Cruising differently

Premium *All-Inclusive* River Cruising



SAVE
UP TO
£800 PP*
BOOK BY
30 APRIL 2023

New brochure
out now!



Proud partners of **Croquet England**

Priority Booking Line **0333 344 0282**

Book Online newmarketholidays.co.uk/river-cruises

*Discount applies to a limited number of late availability sailings, see website for details.



WINNER
10 YEARS
IN A ROW!

Duncan Hector Turf Care and Irrigation

My personal service: I advise clubs on all aspects of lawn maintenance. My fertilisers work biologically to break down thatch and eliminate the need to scarify. As used on over 100 croquet lawns in the UK. Superb lawns to national standard.

Fertiliser Programmes £412

Quick, Easy and Effective.
The cost is about £412 per lawn per year.

Irrigation Systems £4500

Designed for easy DIY with my guidance.
Guide prices 1 - £4.5k 2 - £7.5k 3 - £8.5k 4 - £9.5k

Brilliant 24" Mowers £3385

The cut quality is equal to a £7000 mower.
14 blades 207 cuts per metre - trailing seat £210.

Atco 24" Mowers £1550

Reconditioned, with new engine and bed knife.
76 cuts per metre - trailing seat £210.

SportTurf B20 Sprayer £32

Broadcast Sprayer £644
4 yard spray width, treats one lawn in 10-12 minutes.

Lots of info and advice on my website
www.duncanhectorturfcare.co.uk

Email: duncan@duncanhectorturfcare.co.uk

Call me 01328 700 537 or 07710 601584

Online Lawn Care Shop - Credit given



*Croquet Player
Turf Specialist*



Easy Croquet Lawn Maintenance - in a nutshell - Using my methods, there is little work and no specialist knowledge required to maintain a croquet lawn to a high standard. Apart from mowing, maintenance takes about 4 hours a year per croquet lawn. Some clubs do it themselves, others employ a gardener or contractor.

Biological Nutrition - My Biogran fertiliser is applied with a spreader in April, June and August. It takes about 10 minutes per lawn each time. The annual cost is £372 per lawn plus shipping.

Moss - Moss is controlled by spraying Soluble Iron. The B20 knapsack sprayer featured in my online shop (£32) is ideal. It takes 4 minutes to spray 100 sq metres at a cost of about 50p for the iron. Within a few hours, the moss will turn black. The dead moss can be raked out or just left to let the grass grow through.

Weeds - Use Weedol Verdene which is available from Garden Centres. If you have a few weeds, a hand applicator is best. Otherwise, buy a bottle of concentrate. This can be diluted in water and applied using the B20 knapsack sprayer mentioned above.

Worms - Worms are controlled using a special Soil Conditioner (in my shop). This is applied with a fertiliser spreader.

Disease - There are several fungal diseases that can affect fine turf. They are all controlled with Soluble Iron in the same way as moss.

Dry Patch - This is easily cured by spraying a liquid curative (in my shop).

Mowing - The summer cut height is 5mm to 7mm. In winter increase the height to 8 to 10 mm. Mowing every few weeks in the winter is important. It helps to thicken the sward, encourages a dwarf habit and discourages coarse grasses.

No Scarifying - My biological system eliminates the need to scarify
More info - For in-depth information, visit my website and Turfpedia

█ Duncan Hector

MC Percival Mallets



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

The heads are anodised (hardened) and will be available in natural and black.

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

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

Michael Percival 07780 677943
michael@croquetmallets.co.uk



Our retirement villages are home to people who really value their peace of mind... people who moved safely during lockdown, to enjoy a closer kind of community, with more reassurance for them and their family.

In line with government guidance you can still make the move during lockdown.

Visit safely. Complete swiftly. Move securely.

Buy or rent an Inspired property, get in touch today! Call **0808 301 9887** or visit inspiredvillages.co.uk

Inspired Villages
The best years of your life?

2023 TRULY ALL-INCLUSIVE RIVER CRUISES

Exclusive Offers for Croquet England Members

Whether it's a holiday, a celebration or an anniversary with friends, why not book a group river cruise with Scenic for 10 guests or more, and take advantage of exclusive offers and savings for Croquet England Members?

Call our dedicated Groups Team today on **0808 258 7075** and start planning an incomparable journey that's in a class of its own.

GROUP OFFERS

Exclusive saving for every group member*



COMPLIMENTARY SUITES

Groups of a certain size can qualify for complimentary suite credits*



FREE

Private Door-to-Door Transfers*

8 Day Treasures of the Rhine

Amsterdam > Nuremberg | Departing July & October 2023

Cruise from Amsterdam and witness the true beauty of the Germanic landscape over eight wonderful days, on board a floating boutique hotel.



Day 1 UK > Amsterdam
 Day 2 Amsterdam
 Day 3 Cologne
 Day 4 Rhine Gorge > Rudesheim
 Day 5 Miltenberg
 Day 6 Würzburg
 Day 7 Bamberg
 Day 8 Nuremberg > UK

CALL US FOR SPECIAL GROUPS PRICING



It's All Included... ○ Return flights from up to 16 UK airports ○ Spacious Balcony Suites with innovative Scenic Sun Lounge ○ All meals and complimentary beverages all day every day* ○ One exclusive Scenic Enrich experience ○ Personalise your cruise 20 included Scenic Freechoice activities ○ Return airport transfers *And all tipping and gratuities*

Call **0808 258 7075** | Visit scenic.co.uk/group-travel | Contact your local Travel Agent

THE COACHING PAGES **JOHN HARRIS**

NEW COACHING QUALIFICATIONS

Warmest congratulations to two new Examining Coaches:

- Raouf Allim, High Wycombe
- Alison Maugham, Surbiton

They join a small group of players empowered to assess new coaches and recommend them for formal appointment. Congratulations too to the following two new Club-Level Coaches:

- Des Taylor, Newport
- Adrian Seabrook, Newport

New guidelines are now on the CA website, setting out the qualities and experience looked for in coaches at all levels. The aim is to bring consistency to croquet coaching qualifications, and to ensure that new coaches of all grades have the help and training they need to fulfil their role – guiding and supporting players from their first experience of the game and on through their croquet journey.

Prospective Club-Level Coaches attend a recently-revised Coach Training Course, led by an Examining Coach. The course itself is preceded by pre-course study pack, and followed up by candidates leading coaching sessions at the 'home' club and writing them up. Successful candidates are then accredited to coach at their 'home' club and are covered during their coaching by CA insurance.

Grade 1 Coaches are qualified to coach outside their own Club. Work is underway on a new course for existing Club coaches looking to move up to Grade 1: watch this space for developments.

MERIT AWARDS

Congratulations to Aston Wade, the winner of the Ricki Savage Memorial. This achievement earns him a GC Platinum Merit Award.

Remember that Merit Awards are up for grabs in both AC and GC.

For GC players, it's about winning a qualifying game at the appropriate level for the first time. A first win in one of the C-Level Series events wins a Bronze Award. For the Silver Award it's a B-Level Series event, for the Gold an A-level event. Other games also qualify: for the full picture, including for the Platinum Award and the fine print on conditions, simply enter Croquet Association Merit Award Scheme into Google.

For AC players, a Bronze Award can be claimed the first time you complete 10 hoops in a single turn, using bisques if needed. For a Silver it's 12 hoops without bisques, for Gold it's a triple peel, for Platinum a sextuple peel. You need to be competing in a full lawn game listed in the CA Fixtures Calendar and you need to go on to win. For the full story, key Croquet Association Merit Award Scheme into Google.

The message is simple:

- check out the Fixtures Calendar;
- enter a qualifying event;
- and, if you are lucky enough to make the grade for an award, make sure you claim it. Several Merit Awards from 2022 are still to be claimed: there's still time to do so.

Tournament Managers should be able to help with making a claim. If you need to set the process in motion yourself, there is a simple claim form on the CA website which works for both GC and AC Merit Awards.

You can claim in both AC and GC, go for it – and good luck!

Pegging out in AC

The principle behind pegging out to finish a game is simple enough: with both your clips on peg, croquet your partner ball onto the peg, then use the continuation shot to hit your ball onto the peg, and so win the game.

The challenge of course is to line up the two balls accurately enough to get partner ball successfully pegged out, and, for this, different players take different approaches, so it's as well for the good coach to have a range of solutions on hand.

- **The crescent moon method** – look low over both balls towards the peg. The partner ball should appear as a thin crescent with its points down towards the lawn and centred exactly on the peg. Adjust the position of the striker's ball until the downward points of the crescent are exactly even.
- **The two edges method** – look low along one side of the balls towards the peg, then the same along the other side of the balls. Check that, looking from both sides in turn, the full width of the peg is completely hidden behind the balls.
- **The backward stare method** – walk to the other side of the peg and look back towards the two balls. The striker's ball should be exactly behind the partner ball, with, on the striker's ball, the downward points of the crescent the same length.
- **The antenna method** – place your mallet almost touching the partner ball and pointing from it directly down the centre line to the peg. If the mallet is lined up exactly it can help you judge whether you have an accurate position for the striker's ball.

The further the distance the partner ball has to travel to peg, the greater the care needed. If in doubt combine more than one of these approaches to be as sure as possible.

Three other simple tips may also help students who are struggling to achieve a good peg-out. First, make sure that the roquet to place partner ball ready for the peg-out



Shelley Hennell, Church Stretton CC, adjusts Yellow for a perfect peg-out at the York Viking Challenge

does not drive partner ball onto the peg. That would peg it out, leaving you nothing to take croquet from, and, instead of a win, would mean the end of your turn with your opponent returning to the lawn.

Secondly, when lining up the croquet shot, if the striker's ball is reluctant to stay in exactly the right position, try pressing your thumb gently into the lawn and popping the ball into the tiny dip. The lawn will quickly bounce back. Finally, strike the ball positively to reduce the chance of small variations in the lawn surface disturbing the line of travel.

The basic rule for pegging out is easy enough to remember: a ball must have its clip on peg before it can be pegged out or can peg another ball out. There is a small adjustment for handicap games to make sure the less experienced player has a fair chance: both your clips need to be on peg before you can peg out either of your balls. Alternatively, one of the opposition balls needs to be already pegged out and in the box before you can peg out your striker's ball.

Pegging out both balls is a satisfying way to win a game, so to get it right, don't be afraid to encourage students to spend a little longer than usual on a shot. Under normal circumstances it's important to "play with reasonable despatch", but, when pegging out, the opponent will have been in the same position and should fully understand.

SHORT CROQUET CORNER

The 2023 Short Croquet season - Short Croquet continues to grow in popularity, and this season brings more opportunities than ever to get involved in this absorbing form of the game.

Several Federations run Short Croquet leagues, tournaments or competitions, many of them well established. For first timers away from the 'home club' and seasoned players alike, these are a great way to meet other players, experience a wider range of tactics, and see how other clubs work.

This year sees more Short Croquet events than before in the CA Fixtures Calendar. For one-day tournaments, try Blewbury (Oxfordshire, 13 May or 5 August) or Hamptworth (Wiltshire, 4 July). Meanwhile, two-day tournaments give players of all handicaps an in-depth opportunity to develop their game: check out the Midweek Short Croquet Tournament at Bowdon (Cheshire, 1-2 August), or the well-established Viking Short Croquet Challenge at York on 9-10 September.

In all these events you'll find a good gender balance and an easy, friendly atmosphere, ideal both for experienced players needing to work in their mandatory peels and those looking for a tournament that will welcome first timers in a friendly atmosphere.

Short Croquet opening moves - Why not experiment with different openings in Short Croquet friendlies? The usual AC openings are all worth trying to see which work for you and what might happen next. If your opponent comes up with an unexpectedly strong riposte, you won't have invested in a long game. Of course, some strong players can hit in from almost anywhere on the lawn, so hiding places are few.

A favourite opening move of mine if playing second is to stop just off the east yard line, near hoop 4. I like to aim for a particular spot, if only to see how well I've gauged the lawn speed at the start of the game. If my opponent shoots and misses, a bisque may be unproductive with only three balls on the lawn. If it hits, there may still be little an opponent can do.

If I now shoot and hit, partner ball can go to hoop 2 as a pioneer, and striker's ball towards an opposition ball, to set up a four-ball break at once. If I miss, it's time to take a bisque, either to aim immediately for the four-ball break, or, if the balls lie favourably, I may have a ready-made rush to hoop 1.



The National Short Croquet Competition Final at York: eight players, two teams, one purpose!

GUILDFORD AND GODALMING LOCAL GIVING APPEAL

Visitors to Guildford and Godalming will have a pleasant surprise this year. No more scorched courts with unforgiving hoops, set as if in concrete. Instead we will welcome you with lush lawns and open arms!

We are installing an automated lawn watering system to irrigate our 4 lawns. Hopefully both members and visitors alike will be able to appreciate conditions that are consistent with those at the best clubs.

As we do not have access to mains electricity, the lawn watering system will be powered by a generator. An added bonus will be that the generator will also provide power to the clubhouse.

We have allocated £12,000 from club funds towards the estimated costs of £21,000. Grants have been applied for from the CA and the SECF, and we have launched a Local Giving Appeal.

<https://localgiving.org/appeal/.guildfordgodalmingcroquetirrigation>

Our members and friends have responded superbly to the appeal, and we are well on the way towards achieving our target. Gift Aid will further benefit us.

So, hopefully the future will look more like this.....

Hilary Bird
Secretary GGCC



ULTRA HOOPS ARE THE FUTURE



www.croquetassociationshop.org.uk

The Ultra Croquet Hoops are made from stainless steel with a natural width between the 16mm (0.63") wires of 93.3mm (3.67") giving a clearance of 1.2mm (just under 1/16"). It has 40mm (1.57") wide carrots tapering down over their 240mm (9.45") length. Being stainless steel there is no paint to chip off, no sandblasting and repainting required. The hoops are identifiable by the coloured tape on the crown: red, white, or blue. With longer carrots than many standard hoops, they should hold in the ground better making it harder to run with inaccurate shots. Set of 6 - blue topped, red topped, white topped: £600.00



NEW CROQUET JEWELLERY RANGE

ESPECIALLY CREATED
FOR CROQUET ENGLAND
BY SIMON CARTER



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

Simon Carter

VISIT THE CA SHOP ONLINE AT:
www.croquetassociationshop.org.uk



DAVID BARRETT

The maker of db croquet mallets



The DB3 'Hybrid' Mallet offers the best of both worlds with its high vision sight lines and beautifully rounded top which then flows into a conventional square/ flat base:

£260

All db mallets are sculptured by computerised machinery from a solid composite to create wonderfully balanced mallets that are extremely strong and durable. The Aerotech 'wing holes' in the SP6 lead to even greater end weighting which reduces twist and improves accuracy: **£286**

Each mallet is fitted with the exclusive Powerflex shaft that can help improve distance shots and avoid problems with aching wrists and fingers.

Prices from £225 for the SP1 & SP4 'Classic' range. UK postage + £19, worldwide upon request. Contact David on T: 01706 368214 or M: 07957 103417 E: davidbarrettcroquetmallets@gmail.com • www.burycroquet.com

PHC Mallets



Beautifully crafted mallets from South Africa.
Aluminium or carbon shaft, peripherally weighted.
Ex stock or bespoke. You choose.

A delight to play with From £155 including postage.

Contact Marie Stuchfield

01392 757672 07929 940893

mlstuchfield@gmail.com

Dave Trimmer Mallets

Precision Engineered Carbon Fibre & Kevlar Mallets

The Champions' Choice - 4000 S

- Re-engineered for greater accuracy, playability and durability.
- Used to win innumerable Championships, including Worlds, Europeans, Presidents Cups, etc. 10, 11 and 12 inch.
- From £440 with standard carbon shaft; composite faces £30

Airline Travel Shaft £115. Engraved Ferrules £14. UK postage £20. Rest of the World upon request.

For details or discussion, contact Dave Trimmer
T: 01747 824822 E: davetrimmer@talktalk.net
www.davetrimmermallets.co.uk



Made in Australia



PFC HOOP MAKER MALLETS

World leaders in 21st

century technology and mallet design. Now

with newly developed Spring Alloy mallet heads combined with

unique Zelatron striking faces which have produced considerably increased

benefits to both AC and GC players worldwide.

COMPETITION Mallet & BRASS STRIKING FACE



PRECISION FABRICATED TO GIVE YOU RELIABLE ACCURACY

Australian PFC Hoop Maker mallets have become the World leader in modern croquet mallet design.

Intelligent application of 21st century technology by a croquet playing engineer who developed a unique alloy head and followed up with equally stunning striking faces has made a massive contribution to the sport.

- In 7 years we have evolved to show the way to the World in Mallet design -it must be good as it's been copied - but without the sophistication of Hoop Maker's critical alloy compound and percussion chamber design.

- In 2022 development of an upgraded alloy was finalised - we proudly introduce Spring Alloy - further increasing the multi benefits of PFC Mallets to both AC and GC players.

A NEW Mallet CAN BE WITH YOU IN 21 DAYS VIA

Tom Dewar in the Midlands North T: 07967 984927 E: pfcmalletsuknorth@gmail.com
or Richard Carline in the South T: 07876 227165 E: hoopnallet@gmail.com

FABRICATED BY COLES-ROICE AUSTRALIA

CA CONTACTS

Mark Suter

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



Patricia Duke-Cox

President

dukecox@gmail.com



Samir Patel

Chairman of Council
020 8892 2172
croquet@patel500.co.uk



Peter Nelson

Vice-Chairman of Council
07815 610134
peter@nelson01.eclipse.co.uk



Beatrice McGlen

Chairman of Executive Board
01777 248187
beatrice@mcglen.co.uk



Ian Burridge

Hon. Treasurer
01400 283157
burridge.ian@googlemail.com



John Reddish

Hon. Secretary
01603 502103
jreddish@btinternet.com



CA WEBSITE

www.croquetengland.org.uk and
www.croquet.org.uk are fabulous resources
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>

CHAIRS OF CA COMMITTEES

Sport Development **Paul Francis**
paulwfrancis@icloud.com

Funding **John Reddish**
jreddish@btinternet.com

Handicap **Christopher Roberts**
info@kickphoto.co.uk

ICT **Andy Dibben**
andydibben@yahoo.co.uk

International **Keith Aiton**
kmhaiton@msn.com

AC Laws **Peter Death**
peter.j.death@gmail.com

GC Rules **Ian Cobbold**
ianmccobbold@hotmail.com

Marketing **Annabel McDiarmid**
annabelmcd@yahoo.co.uk

AC Selection **Sam Murray**
sam.h.murray@icloud.com

GC Selection **Chris Clarke**
chrisd4clarke@hotmail.com

AC Tournaments **Brian Havill**
brian.havill@outlook.com

GC Tournaments **Richard Bilton**
richard.bilton30@talktalk.net

Coaching **John Harris**
jharrisnet@gmail.com

EXEC. BOARD MEMBERS

Chairman **Beatrice McGlen** 01777 248187
beatrice@mcglen.co.uk

Development **Paul Brown** 07826 742463
p_h_brown@icloud.com

Marketing & Communications **Paul Hetherington** 07732 158128
paulhether65@outlook.com

Infrastructure **Andy Dibben** 020 83911929
andydibben@yahoo.co.uk

Performance & Competitive **David Openshaw** 07737 007148
davidopen123@gmail.com

Standards **Roger Staples** 07778 841625
staplessteeples@live.co.uk

Coaching & Grass Roots **Rich Waterman** 07900 607543
richcroquet@gmail.com

Honorary Treasurer **Ian Burridge**
burridge.ian@googlemail.com

Operations Manager **Mark Suter**
caoffice@croquet.org.uk

Secretary to the Board **Andrew Willis** 07951 275076
andrew@eastbournevillas.co.uk

HYPERLINKS

If you are reading the Gazette and would like to make
use of the hyperlinks, visit the online gazette on the
CA website at: www.croquet.org.uk/?p=press/gazette

VOTING MEMBERS OF CA COUNCIL

South East **Samir Patel (Chairman)**
020 8892 2172
croquet@patel500.co.uk

Southern **Peter Michael Allan**
01367 718721
peter.allan@stfc.ac.uk

South East **Carol Driver**
020 8668 3061
driverdriver@msn.com

East & West Midlands **Patricia Duke-Cox**
01526 354878
duke-cox@hotmail.co.uk

East Anglia **George Collin**
01582 458665
gkcollin@yahoo.co.uk

South West **Brian Wilson**
07970 922867
brian@europaassociates.co.uk

South West **Peter Nelson**
01395 578487
peter@nelson01.eclipse.co.uk

North East & Yorkshire **VACANCY**
Enquiries welcome

South East **Andrew Stewart**
07866 024875
andrewkstewart@btinternet.com

North West **Robin Tasker**
07710 771843
robin_tasker@btinternet.com

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.

The Croquet Gazette is designed and
printed by Osprey Media -
info@ospreydelivers.co.uk

hayloft

rare | unusual | exciting

Dazzling Dahlias

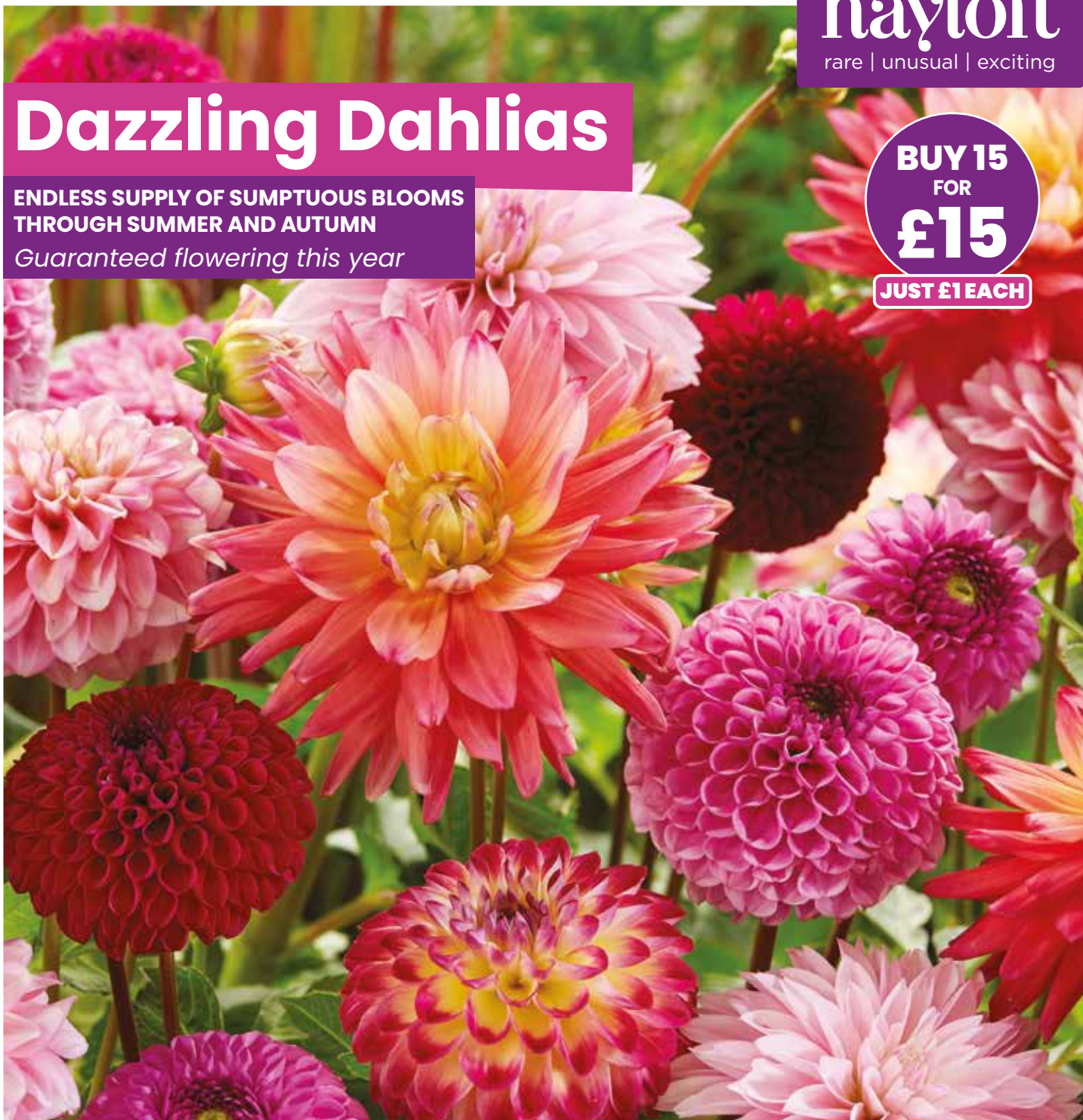
ENDLESS SUPPLY OF SUMPTUOUS BLOOMS THROUGH SUMMER AND AUTUMN

Guaranteed flowering this year

**BUY 15
FOR**

£15

JUST £1 EACH



Vibrant, vivacious and exciting! This dazzling mix of single and double blooms will liven up the garden with an eye-catching floral display. Ideal for filling the border where they will unceremoniously mingle together and sway with the gentle summer breeze. A brilliant addition to the cutting garden for armfuls of blooms which will last up to 10 days in a vase. Alternatively, grow in large pots on the patio if space is limited. Growing to a height of 70-90cm and spread of 60cm. Prefers moist, well-drained soil in sun or part shade. Easy to grow tuberous perennials that can be left in the ground over winter in well-drained soil. Your order is covered by our No Quibble Guarantee and will be confirmed together with a copy of our latest catalogue. **Your bare roots will be delivered within 14 days.**

HOW TO ORDER

ONLINE: HAYLOFT.CO.UK/CQHY

CALL: 0333 358 2006
Order Line 8am to 8pm, 7 days

POST: COMPLETE THE COUPON
AND SEND TO: HAYLOFT PLANTS,
FREEPOST RTGR-JAGJ-JETG,
WR10 3HB

QUOTE CQHY

★ Trustpilot

EXCELLENT ★★★★★

Name

Address

Postcode Tel

Email

Please Send	Item Code	Price	Qty	Total
DAHLIA x 5	BRDM05-CQ0423	£10		
DAHLIA x 15	BRDM15-CQ0423	£15		
P&P (UK only)				£6.95
			Total	

Please debit my Visa/Mastercard
 Card no | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
 Valid from | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
 Expiry | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
 CV2 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

I enclose cheque/PO for _____ made payable to Hayloft Plants Ltd
 Please write your name and address on the reverse of the cheque

THANK YOU, WE WILL CONFIRM YOUR ORDER
 Your details are kept securely and not shared with third parties. You will receive a catalogue, welcome email and special offers, if you prefer not to receive them please call 0336 562999. For T&Cs - see hayloft.co.uk

PLEASE COMPLETE IN BLOCK CAPITALS

CQHY

HARTLEY BOTANIC

HANDMADE WITH PRIDE SINCE 1938



Hartley 10 Glass to Ground Glasshouse (6 Pane), West Yorkshire, UK

Visit us at the RHS Chelsea Flower Show 23rd - 27th May 2023 - Stand No: SR143

Discover the secret of Hartley Botanic by calling 0800 783 8083 or visit www.hartley-botanic.co.uk



NOTHING ELSE IS A HARTLEY

The only aluminium Glasshouses and Greenhouses endorsed by the RHS

© The Royal Horticultural Society. Trade marks of The Royal Horticultural Society (Registered Charity No 222879/SC038262) used under licence from RHS Enterprises Limited.