

The

Issue 382 November 2019

CROQUET

Gazette

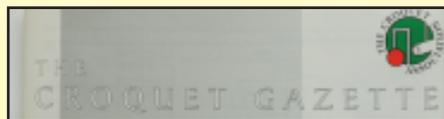


GB beat USA in Solomon Trophy



From our files researched by Frances Colman

10 years ago - 2009



Casting v 'hitting the bloody ball'

- I feel I must write on a subject that has concerned me for some time, the practice of swinging (I believe it is also called casting) over one's ball when taking aim.

This is so dreadfully boring to watch that I suspect that it must put off potential converts to the game. I have on occasions had to restrain myself, after about the eighth swing (and I have seen up to fifteen) from shouting out "For God's sake hit the bloody ball" . . . *John Solomon*

~

Long distance refereeing - . . . I was in the middle of a game (at Cheltenham) when I was called upon for a ROT (Referee of the Tournament) decision. However, this turned out not to be from a player on another lawn but from someone on the telephone! On taking the call, I was even more surprised to be informed that the caller was ringing from Tangiers in Morocco! . . . *Geoffrey Taylor*

~

Old Adversaries - Recently I was pleased to discover that the first 26-point game I ever played was against an opponent born in 1881. The lady in question was a renowned folklorist and author, Miss Violet Alford, and I am indebted to her great-nephew, William Ormerod, for helping me to establish the year of her birth.

Prichard's 'History of Croquet' informs us that in 1948 John Solomon played against Miss Lydia Elphinstone Stone, an opponent who had been born in 1866, the year before Walter Jones Whitmore is credited with becoming the first ever croquet champion.

It would be interesting to learn whether any Associates can claim earlier born opponents. *Laurence Latham*

~

The President's Cup - returned to East Dorset for the first time in seven years, as part of the Club's centenary year. In 2002, Jonathan Kirby was making his Pres debut, and struggled to make an impact, while everyone failed to make an impact on Robert Fulford, who won all 14 games. This time, Jamie Burch was making *his* Pres debut and again the field struggled to make an impact on Robert, who ended the winner on 12. *Jonathan Kirby*

50 years ago - 1969



Australians - have a happy knack of inventing nicknames and expressions to fit the man or the occasion.

We learned that Tom Howat had christened Roger Bray "the Pawnbroker" because he won so many games with three-ball breaks.

There was another he called a "Strip-tease" artist because he kept taking-off. . .

"We have got to double-bank so bring out the lollipops" one might (*also*) hear - and out will come the White, Pink, Green and Brown balls.

What more fitting appellation?

from 'Notes by Rover'

~

Ryde Tournament - Victorian spires, Osborne House, not a factory to be seen; the Isle of Wight typifies the nostalgic douceur of a less strident and hectic age than our own.

What more perfect ambience, then, for a croquet tournament?

Why do they not have to close the entries weeks in advance, as at Compton and Budleigh Salterton?

Certainly Associates who have never supported this delightful tournament are missing a rare and most special experience, while those who have been, return year on year and are not jaded or disappointed with their stay.

~

Challenge and Gilbey Tournament (at Budleigh Salterton) - the first (C&G) to be held outside London was fortunate in its weather and surroundings that it would have needed very captious competitors to fail to enjoy themselves.

~

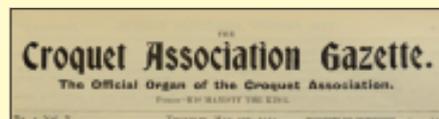
The Champion of Champions - Nigel Aspinall won the Open Championship and the President's Cup and therefore had the honour of challenging the reigning Champion of Champions, John Solomon.

They played three games which kept a large audience spellbound; Solomon the final winner, doing a spectacular jump over the Rover hoop and hitting the peg.

The normally staid croquet spectators rose to their feet and shouted.

~

100 years ago - 1919



More frequent Gazettes - We continue to receive suggestions that the "Gazette" should be issued more frequently.

With these we heartily concur, and every effort is being made in order that Associates may receive one every fortnight. But they must remember that pre-war conditions have not returned with the signing of Peace.

Before the war we used to get our "Gazette" printed for nothing, or rather in exchange for the income from advertisements: now this source of income is insufficient for the purpose, and, indeed, the goods are really not here to be advertised up to now.

Therefore, we have to pay for the printing, and the cost is raised to as much as £30 an issue at times. *from Editorial Notes*

~

The Mixed Doubles were won by Mr.C.F.Barry and Mrs.W.H.Hope.

One would have liked to congratulate the winners, but their exhibition was not inspiring.

It was a dreary and depressing performance and a prolonged agony, and hardly calculated to inspire an onlooker with the wish to become a croquet player.

When partners in Champion Doubles indulge in five minute conferences, in the middle of the lawn, over easy and obvious strokes, the result is not stimulating.

~

Uninteresting tactics in Championship games - Probably everyone who has been at Roehampton this last week will deplore that it has been found to pay - for top players of championship class - to go to the peg with the first break.

This results in the dullest croquet, whether as a game or a spectacle, being without peeling or anything to arouse the slightest interest in the play itself.

A four-ball non-peeling break on a perfect lawn by a high-class player is universally admitted to be the acme of dullness . . .

The remedy is, however, quite simple - compulsory peeling and I would urge the Council to consider if this might be applied in some important tournament, such as the Gold medals or Champions Cups. . .

Yours, etc, O.T.

Editorial

The CA AGM a couple of weeks ago heralded in the new era of governance for our sport with the newly elected and slimmed down CA Council taking office.

Good luck to them, and indeed thank you to them, for the period of service that they have already started to give, as they develop the policies that will take croquet forward in the years ahead.

One of their first actions was to appoint an Executive Board (EB), who are also introduced in this issue, and they will, through the committees that report to them, deliver Council's policies.

The Chairman of both Council and the EB have written their first Gazette columns, which are placed a little further back in this issue than has been the norm, and that will

be addressed in the next issue.

Missing out this time, due to space constraints, are a good number of articles (including the GC Inter-Club and Veteran's Championships and two interesting game ball-by-ball analysis pieces) all of which will be carried in the next issue.

Lead story this time, and commanding the centre pages, is Great Britain's exciting AC win over the USA, to win the Solomon Trophy, which beat England's GC triumph at the recent Home Internationals to the top billing. The AC and GC Eights and many other end of season tournaments and finals also feature large.

Congratulations to all the winners, noting that female players won three of the four GC Series titles.

Chris Roberts

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Front cover:

Ian Burridge pegs-out for a game, match and AC Test Match to GB against the US in North Carolina (photograph by Samir Patel)

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The President's thanks

I am amongst the first to welcome and congratulate the new Council members.

At the same time I know that we will all want to thank, wholeheartedly, those past Council members, some of whom have served on Council for very many years, who are now standing down.

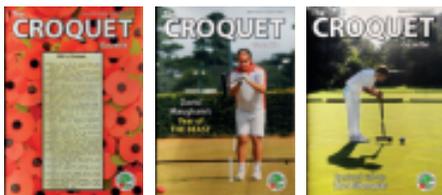
Add up the years they have contributed to croquet administration in England and it will be in the hundreds.

On behalf of all our members, I say a very

big thank you to: Bill Arliss, John Bowcott, Roger Bray, Brian Fisk, Anna Giraud, Mick Haytack, Andrew Hope, Colin Irwin, Tim King, Strat Liddiard, Ian Lines, Beatrice McGlen, Stephen Mulliner, Sam Murray, John Reddish, Chris Roberts, Brian Shorney, Roger Staples, Lionel Tibble, David Trimmer, Charles Waterfield and Brian Wilson.

The good news is that many of them have said they will continue to help the CA to implement future policies. We will value their experience and expertise.

Quiller Barrett, President of the CA



- Important Changes -
Free paper Gazettes for Standard Members to end



As announced on page 4 of the July edition, from 1st January 2020 automatic entitlement to a free copy of the Croquet Gazette in paper form for Standard Members comes to an end.

Standard Members will then only get a paper Gazette until the end of the year in which they join, or if they join after 1 August, until the end of the following year.

As a Standard Member, if you no longer get the paper Gazette, you will remain entitled to access the Gazette on our website, and will be notified by email when a new edition is published (unless you opt out of receiving the notification).

This will initially affect Standard Members who joined before 1st August this year. If you are affected and would like to continue to receive the Gazette in its paper form, you can do so by becoming either a Supporter Member for £18 p.a. or a Premium Member for £38 p.a. (both are the discounted rates for Direct Debit payers).

The latter category is really for those who wish to play in tournaments that are in the CA fixtures calendar, as it gives you both cheaper entry and a higher priority.

Joining either category now will give you membership until the end of 2020, so there is no advantage in waiting until next year!

We hope you have enjoyed getting the Gazette and will want to both continue to do so and support the work of your Association, at the same time taking out the appropriate subscription.

You can do this easily by logging in to the CA website, and then clicking on your name in the top right of the screen. Select the 'Memberships' tab, and then click the 'view' button against the CA membership line. There is then a 'Change Membership/Options' button.

Jeff Dawson

Chairman of the Membership Changes Implementation Group



The Croquet Association Council Election results . . .



John Dawson
- North-West -



Derek Knight
North-East & Yorkshire



Patricia Duke-Cox
- E & W Midlands -



Brian Havill
- East Anglia -



Rich Waterman
- East Anglia -



Frances Colman
- Southern -

The above are the 12 voting members of the new CA Council, which also has three non-voting members: the Honorary Secretary, **Ian Vincent**, Honorary Treasurer, **Peter Death**, and the Chairman of the Executive Board (who it appointed), **Roger Staples**.
- Ian Vincent, Hon. Secretary -

John Dawson

I came late to croquet after many years of cross-country, cricket, golf and orienteering (where at least you can find the North boundary by a compass).

In between, I had a long career in HR with ICI in many jobs and locations. In retirement, I led walking holidays and was a JP.

I have been secretary of Chester CC for six years and the North West Federation representative for three.

I have been on the AC Tournament Committee, chaired the Publishing and Management committees, was a member of the Governance Changes working party and also arranged for croquet to be at the BBC CountryFile Live.

I play much AC league croquet off a scruffy 3 handicap and some social GC.

Derek Knight

I am a member of Beverley and East Riding CC, where I was secretary and treasurer for many years. I am also a member at York CC. I have been active in the Yorkshire Federation since starting to play, representing my club and acting as Development Officer and Coaching Officer. Currently I am Federation Chairman.

I have always taken a keen interest in coaching, and am a Grade 2 Coach.

I play an active role in the Northern Academy, delivering a couple of courses each year, and do lots of ad hoc coaching at my own clubs and others in our Federation

I believe Federations must enthusiastically encourage competitive play in both codes.

My professional career was as an agricultural consultant specialising in cereal production and business management.

I also enjoy photography and local affairs.

Patricia Duke-Cox (Vice-Chairman)

My interest in croquet began in 1990 after a visit by the National Development Officer who hosted a introduction to croquet aimed at WI members in my local village.

I was a founder member of a local club in 1992 and became a member of the CA in 1997, its centenary year.

In 1999, I was elected as the Federation representative for the East Midlands (FEMCC) and joined the CA Council where I served twelve years, two as chairman.

I am currently the chairman of the FEMCC and have served as Secretary, Coaching and Development Officer.

I was appointed a Vice-President of the CA in 2018.

Brian Havill

I have had a varied career since qualifying as an accountant in the mid-80s with major accountancy firm PricewaterhouseCoopers.

I was with HI-TEC Sports Shoes, first as Group Financial Controller and then as Chief Operating Officer, and then moved to director-level general management roles during four years with Pentland.

In 2000, I became Chief Financial Officer of the ECB (cricket) and I'm now Deputy Chief Executive of Swim England.

In a voluntary capacity: in tennis I was vice-chair of the LTA's Professional Tennis Board, and I am now on the Ethics Commission of the ITF; and in cricket I am on the main committee of Kent CCC.

I took up croquet in 2012 at the age of 50 after a series of knee operations. I became a member of the CA Council in 2017, and a year later was asked onto the Management Committee.

I also chair the Publications Committee.

Rich Waterman

After University, I had a long break from croquet and resumed playing competitively again in 2013. In 2015, I had ran some one-day croquet psychology courses for the Croquet Academy and have delivered them at a number of locations since.

I became a member of the International Development Squad for AC and provided 'mindset' expertise for both the AC and GC Development Squads. In 2019, I was appointed AC International Performance Director and look forward to helping the England team regain the MacRobertson Shield in 2021. This year I had the great privilege of captaining the Essex at the AC Inter-Counties and I also represented Wales in the Home Internationals at both codes.

Outside of croquet, I am a business coach and enjoy helping organisations to create their vision and strategy, which I hope will also benefit the CA.

Frances Colman

I play both AC and GC and am a qualified Coach and a CA Handicapper for both codes, Championship GC Referee, and an Assistant AC Referee. For the Southern Croquet Federation, I was GC Leagues Manager for six years and the representative on the former CA Council.

I was elected to the CA Management Committee in 2018 and a year later was asked to become Chairman of the CA Handicap Committee, where I have overseen the formalisation of handicaps for AC One Ball and Short Croquet, and am currently working on a set of skills-related benchmarks to provide uniformity of handicap grades throughout the country.

I also sit on the GC Tournaments Committee and am Director of the new GC Federations Shield. In 2017, I was awarded a Croquet Association Diploma for Services to Croquet. I believe that with my experience and energy I still have more to give.



. . . introducing your elected representatives



Ian Cobbold
- South-East -

Jonathan Isaacs
- South-East -

Samir Patel
- South East -

Peter Nelson
- South-West -

Dave Kibble
- South-West -

Klim Seabright
- South-West -

Ian Cobbold

My career was spent in the Bank of England, latterly specialising in banking supervision, and when the Financial Services Authority was brought into being, I was one of those who transferred to the new organisation.

I have been Chairman of Cheam Croquet & Bowls Club since my wife and I set it up in 2011. I later also joined Sussex County and now play GC for them and AC for Cheam.

Eighteen months ago I became the Development Officer for the SECF and so a member of the CA Development Committee.

I am an Examining Referee and Championship Referee for GC and a Grade 2 coach. I was Tournament Referee for the recent GC World Championships.

Jonathan Isaacs (Chairman)

My background is in the food industry where I held several senior management positions in a large group before creating a successful food sales and marketing company.

In the croquet world, I held several positions on the governing body, including Chairman of Council and chair of several CA committees, before being appointed a Vice President.

At club level, I became Chairman of Sussex County CC, and to secure a strong long term future for the club, I developed a strategic plan to make the club a leading national and international venue for croquet.

This included the creation of the Croquet Academy and various fund-raising initiatives, the proceeds of which have been re-invested in upgrading the club, including re-laying all their lawns.

In 2017, I was appointed Chair of the CA's Governance Changes Working Group and gained the agreement of Council and the Association to implement the new governance structure.

Samir Patel

I have been playing croquet since taking up the sport in 1994 as a student at Oxford University. I am now a member of Surbiton CC, with Ac and GC handicaps of -2 and -3 respectively.

In support of croquet administration, I joined the Publishing Committee in 2002, with an initial focus on the CA website.

I have since joined multiple committees, including International, ICT (Information & Communications Technology) and Tournaments; the latter has included responsibility for maintaining and improving the CA Tournament Regulations.

I also manage several tournaments each year, ranging from Handicap Weekends to the Open Championships.

Internationally, I have been a member of the World Croquet Federation's Management Cttee. since 2015, and as part of this role I created, and now run, the WCF Facebook Page (@WorldCroquet), and have been the event lead for several AC and GC individual and team World Championships.

Peter Nelson

I have been playing croquet for eleven years, have been an active member of Sidmouth CC during that time, and have been club chairman for the last six years.

I play Association Croquet (my handicap is 1.5) both in the UK and overseas.

I am particularly interested in promoting Short Croquet and developing competitions in which players from both codes can compete, for this maybe a vehicle through which more players may be encouraged to transition and enjoy both forms of the game.

I am relinquishing my role as club chairman and, having more spare time, wish to contribute to making the Croquet Association a more effective organisation.

I am retired from a career spent in civil engineering consultancy.

Dave Kibble

This is an exciting time to join the CA Council: when the main topics are what the CA does, how it does it, and how it can better serve its members. I want to take that further - my vision is of an inclusive croquet community that shares and executes great ideas to improve the croquet scene. A community that supports and nourishes its fellows through a simple, well-functioning organisation that is open and transparent.

I'm responsible for most of the CA website's many systems, including the tournament entry system and the new membership database. I coach both AC and GC at all levels (holding all coach qualifications), help train referees and coaches, and competitively play both codes.

My professional life included many years in process improvement: analysing organisation working practices and structure, and recommending successive manageable change. I'm really looking forward to getting on with the job!

Klim Seabright

I am keen to retain a link through the Federations and to encourage young people to play our sport.

I have been working on giving croquet a higher profile within sport and have recently led a team pressing for inclusion in the Commonwealth Games 2022.

I was Secretary of the CA for three years, implemented significant cost savings during my tenure and also a wide range of publicity. I also served as Secretary of Cheltenham CC for eight years.

I am a qualified coach and particularly enjoy coaching those new to our sport, have also coached British and Chinese politicians, and was selected by the WCF to coach in India. I have led the CA Team against other national Associations.

In 2018, I was awarded the Croquet Association Diploma for services to croquet.



The Annual General Meeting of the Croquet Association

Chairman's report

John Bowcott gave the report from Council to the AGM, starting with the governance changes that would see the Council replaced by a considerably smaller one of just 12 voting members as from the end of the meeting.

The Council will focus on 'high-level' policy and strategic initiatives whilst delegating the running of the game to an Executive Board, whose delivery, through its committees, it will scrutinise.

He emphasised that structures can only go so far and that the outcome will depend on the people who volunteer to fill them: responsiveness, consultation and transparency will be key to success.

Members with issues to raise can help the structure work well by doing so with the right person initially, only escalating them if necessary.

He moved on to review successes both in play, such as the victories over the USA in the Solomon Trophy and in the first test match against Spain, and in organising the championships and many other tournaments that had been run throughout the season. The introduction of live streaming and our presence at a second Countryfile Live event had both helped raise the profile of the sport.

Much had also been done behind the scenes, though a number of challenges remained.

He concluded by thanking the many people who had contributed so generously to these activities and for the support he had received, not least from the President.

Jonathan Isaacs then gave a report from

the Governance Changes Implementation Group, which he had chaired, about the transitional arrangements that had been made to give the new Council a flying start.

Questions to the Chairman

From the floor, Stephen Mulliner suggested that we should seek advice from other croquet governing bodies that had restructured in recent years and Hugh Carlisle raised the shortage of referees at all levels. Bill Arliss welcomed the new structure but felt that it lacked objectives: the general feeling was that it must be given space to set them and that the proof of the pudding would be in the eating.

Tony Salem queried the lack of choice after winning the toss in golf croquet and John Reddish announced that National Croquet Day would be extended to a week next year, from 11 -17 May.

The President wound up this item by thanking John for his exceptionally busy year in office and the retiring members of Council for the hundreds of years that they collectively served the Association.

Treasurer's report

Peter Death reported that the 2018 accounts had shown a significant deficit, of £15K, even after a transfer from the Development Fund to meet the costs of employing a National Development Officer.

Commercial income had been unexpectedly poor and sending paper copies of the Croquet Gazette to Standard Members had been costly. Both these were being addressed, though Tony Salem expressed surprise and concern about the former. It was too early to predict the

outcome for this year and 2020 would be the last year of above-inflation increases in subscriptions from clubs.

Peter then gave notice of his intention to retire, due to failing eyesight, but hoped to be able to continue long enough to give a good hand-over to his successor. He was warmly thanked for his work and re-elected for a final time, along with the Independent Examiner, David Boxell.

Award presentations

Presentations then followed to Daniel Gott and Stuart M. Smith (*see below*), and Stephen Mulliner the magnificent Beddow Cup on behalf of Surbiton, which had won the AC Inter-Club competition for the fourth year in succession.

Lilian Holdsworth accepted the Millennium Award on behalf of the Littlehampton Club and CA Diplomas were awarded in person to Chris Roberts, Simon Hathrell, Tony Thomas and John Wallace, and will be sent for later presentation to 14 other recipients (*all of which will be covered in the next Gazette*).

Dave Kibble was awarded the Council Medal for his many years of work developing the website (*see opposite page*).

Hugh Carlisle requested sponsorship for the AC World Championships to be hosted here in 2022, and Stephen Mulliner was told that it was hoped to publish the successor to Wylie's book before the end of the year.

In closing the meeting, Quiller Barrett noted the tremendous amount of voluntary work done in clubs, the importance of communicating best practice by them, and wished the new Council well.

Ian Vincent, Hon. Secretary



The Most Improved Players of 2018 receive their awards

The Most Improved Players awards were presented by CA President Quiller Barrett

The Apps Memorial Bowl
(Male AC)
- Daniel Gott -

The Spiers Trophy
(GC)
- Stuart M Smith-

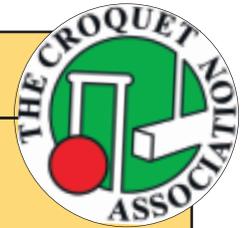
The Steel Bowl (for the most improved Female AC player) was not awarded for 2018

Photographs by Chris Roberts





The CA awards a Council Medal to Dave Kibble



The World Wide Web is 30 years old this year, and Dave Kibble has supported and developed the CA's website for more than half that time.

The site was established by Bill Arliss in 1998 as a collection of static pages.

In 2001 Dave wrote a visionary paper about what the website might become, and set about implementing it. After an initial re-structuring and re-design of the public content, his focus turned to developing personalised applications.

Log-in to the site was offered in 2007, and with it the ability for committee members to upload meeting papers: Dave has always been keen that CA Council and Committee papers should be available to its members.

Online tournament entry and payment came in 2010, initially for CA events, but it is now used for most club tournaments as well, and CA Members have Dave to thank that they no longer need to write cheques and post off their entries.

The vision was finally realised in 2016, with the launch of what is effectively a content management system, which provides the ability for committee members to edit pages relating to their own activities.



Whilst still supporting the site and its applications, Dave then turned his skills to developing a new membership database, to allow the expanded CA membership the ability to maintain their own contact details.

Despite the many thousands of hours spent on website development, Dave was also an active member of Council between 2002 and his retirement last year, serving on the Publishing, ICT, Coaching, Marketing and AC Selection committees.

As many Chairmen could testify, he could always be relied upon to analyse the details of any proposal and advocate the high standards to which he thought the Association should aspire.

He has also been generous with the time he has given to coaching in the South-West.

All that aside, the Council Medal would be a richly deserved tribute to his exceptional contribution in developing the infrastructure to administer the sport in the electronic age.

Dave Kibble was presented with the Council Medal by CA President Quiller Barrett (photograph by Chris Roberts)

Treasurer Wanted

A new Honorary Treasurer of the Croquet Association will be nominated for election at the 2020 AGM following Peter Death's retirement.

The post is honorary but there is a modest honorarium. The Honorary Treasurer is responsible to the Association through Council for providing independent leadership and guidance in financial matters, encouraging the highest standards of integrity, effectiveness and openness, and ensuring the CA's regulatory compliance.

The Duties

- Manage the CA's financial assets and systems and keep records of its financial activities.
- Monitor the financial activities of, and audit the financial reports produced by, the CA Office.
- Process a limited range of transactions such as salaries, staff pension payments and HM Revenue & Customs returns and payments.

- Prepare and present regular management accounts and reports including budgets.
- Draft financial statements and prepare records for annual independent examination.
- Advise on a broad range of financial matters including systems, salaries, investments, insurance and subscriptions.

The Person

- The following attributes are desirable:
- An innovative and proactive team worker, preferably with experience of financial management of a complex organisation.
 - Good verbal, written and interpersonal skills with the ability to work to tight deadlines and to a high standard.
 - Education to degree level or equivalent, with competency in computer literacy, including a working knowledge of Sage 50 Accounts or similar software, Microsoft Word and Excel. Familiarity with Visual Basic for Applications (VBA) would be useful.

Applications

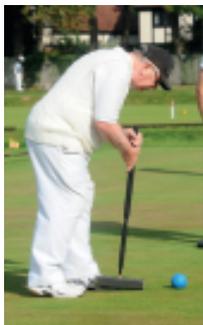
For further information please contact Peter Death (pictured here at Nottingham CC) on 01827 251738 or at peter.j.death@gmail.com.

Interested candidates should forward a CV and a letter detailing their suitability for the role, by 30th November 2019, to Jonathan Isaacs at jonathanisaacs@btinternet.com, copied to Ian Vincent at ian.vincent@cantab.net.



Chairman of the CA Council's column

Jonathan Isaacs



By the time you receive this copy of the Croquet Gazette, the CA's New "slim-line" Council will be in place and will have held its first official meeting.

Following the results of the

elections, those elected met informally to appoint a Chair and a Vice Chair.

I am delighted that Patricia Duke-Cox will take on the position of Vice Chair.

Both Patricia and I chaired the old Council in 2006/7 and 2008/9 respectively.

Having both worked on the Governance Changes Working Party, we are confident that we can deliver improvements to our governance.

Council's aim is to concentrate on Strategy, Policy and Scrutiny.

The day to day management of the Association is empowered to the Executive Board which will replace the old Management Committee.

Since the Council elections, the new Council team have now started to consider the future strategy of the CA and once developed and agreed this will be implemented by the Executive Board and its committees.

In developing our strategy we will be looking at ways that we can raise the profile of croquet and attract many more people to join our clubs.

How many times have we heard relative newcomers to the sport say "I wish I had discovered this game years ago"?

We will also be questioning how we can make the CA more efficient and meet the needs of all its members.

We are looking for increased diversity and

skill sets on our committees to take croquet forward in a modern and progressive fashion.

The new Council will be responsible for the development of policies.

The implementation of those policies will be the responsibility of the Executive Board and its committees.

The other responsibility of the new Council will be to scrutinise the performance of the Executive Board and its committees.

The Executive Board are responsible for the effective day to day management of the CA. Council are responsible for ensuring this happens.

I would like to express a personal vote of thanks to John Bowcott, Chair of the old Council and its members for all their hard work in taking the new Governance Structure through to implementation.

The work of making the new structure work effectively now begins.

The first meeting of the new CA Council

The new Members of Council are introduced on pages 4 and 5 of this Gazette.

The formal business needed at the first meeting of the new Council was conducted expeditiously, being uncontested thanks to extensive consultations beforehand.

~
Jonathan Isaacs was elected to chair the new Council
with Patricia Duke-Cox as vice-chairman.

~
Roger Staples will chair an Executive Board
with John Bowcott, Eugene Chang, Tim King and Beatrice McGlen as its other elected members, and Peter Death, Mark Suter and Ian Vincent as ex-officio ones.

~
A new set of standing orders and practice book were adopted on a temporary basis, which stripped out much of the formality required for larger meetings, and introduced procedures for more extensive decision-taking between physical meetings.

This freed up the bulk of the time for a brainstorming session facilitated by Rich Waterman, to start the process of setting the CA's strategy and objectives, following a method advocated by Simon Sinek.

This starts by asking **Why?** the organisation exists and its motivation for action, followed in broad terms by **How?** it is to achieve that and **What?** specific initiatives or actions are needed to do so. Many ideas had already been contributed on a Trello software board (think electronic post-it notes), which had been arranged into logical grouping by Rich.

Those for Why? were categorised into three groups labelled emotional, outcome and role.

After discussing these, we agreed that our overall aim would be **"To get more people playing more croquet in more places, by promoting, developing and administering the sport"**, having decided that "better" was a subsidiary objective to "more" croquet.

We then moved onto the Hows? and found that they largely, but not exclusively, mapped on to the existing committee structure. Ones that didn't

included Recruitment and Retention, Communication, Membership Management and Fundraising.

Communication was felt to be a key one, both to and from individual members, clubs, federations and CA committees.

It was left that each of the Hows? would be examined in more detail outside the meeting, to agree the specific objectives in each area.

Committees themselves are to be encouraged to engage in a similar process, but it is recognised that autumn meetings will generally not have time for that.

~
Breaking to complete the agenda, Brian Havill offered to write a paper addressing the question of the legal structure of the Association, and a sub-group was set up to make policy recommendations to address the shortage of referees, which was raised at the AGM.

~
A final session considered the metrics that would be needed to assess progress in meeting our objectives, but with the warning that it was all too easy to focus on what could be measured, rather than more valuable, but less tangible, goals.

Ian Vincent, Hon. Secretary

Chairman of the CA Executive Board's column

Roger Staples

'Croquet a la Carte'

Starters

Croquet Association members will be aware of the seismic shift in the governance of the CA that was agreed by the membership at the Special General Meeting last March.

A new Council has been elected and the Management Committee has morphed into the Executive Board with a dynamic team of Board members and CA Officers.

The Executive Board has its first meeting at the end October.

Main Course

Congratulations to the England AC Team on their Solomon Cup win over the USA in a tight test match that went to the wire.

Our national team competitions are coming to a close and congratulations to the known winners so far: Bowdon in the AC Mary Rose, Letchworth in the AC Longman Cup and High Wycombe who won the inaugural GC Federations Shield handicap competition.

In the Eights, Jose Riva won the AC top tier President's Cup, and Stephen Mulliner won the GC equivalent Musk's Cup, so congratulations to them and to all the other individual winners.

Dessert

Croquet would not exist without its stalwarts and my thanks go to all those who spend many hours supporting their clubs in a variety of roles. Croquet needs these efforts, both to keep clubs sustainable, as well as creating new ones in those areas of the country where there are few, and supporting the Federations in their sterling work providing regional support for our sport. The CA is largely a volunteer organisation and sub-committees that organise and maintain our sport are always looking for help and new blood – could that be you? If so, please get in touch for a confidential chat.



Roger Staples (Chair)



John Bowcott



Eugene Chang



Tim King



Beatrice McGlen

Ex-officio Board Members

Ian Vincent
Hon. Secretary

Peter Death
Hon. Treasurer

Mark Suter
CA Office Manager

Photos on page 30

Roger Staples

I have been playing croquet since 1979, originally with Norton Hall Croquet Club. I have been an active committee member of Croquet North since the late 1990s, and have served them variously as Coaching and Development Officer. I am a member of Middlesbrough CC and Pendle CC.

I am now retired, and helping to serve the cause of croquet by serving on some of its Committees. I was Chairman of the Coaching Committee from 2011 until October 2015, and Chairman of the Development Committee from 2016 until Oct 2019. I was a member of Council from 2011-2019. My current role is Chairman of the Executive Board.

John Bowcott

In 2003, I took up croquet at Hurlingham. I played 'quite a bit' but focussed more on helping club members to enjoy both forms of the game.

Since 2008 I have been a member of the GC Tournaments Committee and was its Chairman for four years.

During that time I also served on the Management Committee. Since 2012 I have been a member of Council and its Vice-Chairman and Chairman over the past three years.

I have played a large part in the development of the new governance model.

Eugene Chang

I started playing croquet in 2000 as a teenager and have slowly improved my handicap as I balance my croquet with studies, hobbies and commitments that seem to take up too many summer weekends. I am a regular on the AC tournament circuit and first got involved in the CA through the AC Schools and Junior Championships. I now lead the Marketing Committee and am passionate about promoting croquet to a wider audience. In my day job, I am a data analyst at the Department for Education, with a background in computational biology. It is an honour to join the new Executive Board and I am always open to feedback.

Beatrice McGlen

My croquet career began at British Coal, where I was employed as a geophysicist, and where I was introduced to the game that has hooked me for the last 30 years. I have been a committee member at Nottingham CC for a number of years and Chairman since 2017. I have been a member of the CA Council since 2016. I have served on the Development, AC Selection and International committees, and I was appointed Chairman of the AC Tournament Committee in October 2018. My first love is actually playing though and I hope that, as a member of the Executive Board, I can do my little bit to ensure everyone enjoys their croquet.

Tim King

I have been active on the national croquet scene since joining Ashby CC in 2000. I initially played a balance of AC and GC, but currently lack the free time to play much AC. I began my administrative contribution to the CA in 2005 on the then GC Committee. Having risen eventually to the heights of Chairman of Council, I am not absolutely sure whether I am part of the solution or the problem but, in the first instance, I will contribute continuity in the Executive Board as we adopt our new governance structure. I have visited many clubs as player, referee and manager.

I am committed to the CA supporting all levels of our sport.



Fixtures Book 2020 Pre-order now from the CA Shop

This year's fixtures calendar was the busiest in the history of the CA and over 90% of tournament

entries were completed via the online entry system. Early next year, details of the 2020 fixtures will once again be published online. In addition, it will be possible to review and/or print off a PDF copy of the Fixtures Book.

A hard copy of the Fixtures Book will continue to be printed and will be sent to CLUBS free of charge.

However, as an environmental and cost-saving measure, **it will not be sent routinely to Individual Members.**

Those who want a hard-copy can place a pre-order via the CA Shop at a cost of £5

Go to CASHop.org.uk and click on the button at the top of the menu list marked 'pre-order FB 2020'. Simply add to cart and proceed to checkout.

Your Fixture Book will be delivered to your door as near to the 1st February.

The closing date for pre orders is the 31st December 2019.

Mark Suter, CA Manager

AC Laws Announcement

The World Croquet Federation's (WCF) AC Laws Committee (ACLC) has developed a consultation draft of the 7th edition of the AC Laws and, following a period of review by national laws / referees committees, is now releasing this consultation draft for public comment.

The draft and other documents are available on the AC Laws section of the WCF website (WCF Home > Croquet information > Association Croquet > The Laws of Association Croquet).

Accompanying the consultation draft are three other documents:

- a summary of the principal changes proposed for the 7th edition;
- a document summarising the suggestions for change extracted from the Official Rulings (ORLAC) document that accompanies the 6th edition;
- summary minutes of a meeting of the ACLC that took place in Palm Springs in Apr 2017, which produced additional proposals for changes to the Laws.

The latter two documents are the drivers for change that began the ACLC's work on the 7th edition, but as that work

progressed it became apparent to the ACLC that other issues also needed to be tackled. A new edition of the ORLAC will be produced in due course to accompany the 7th edition.

The ACLC proposes a two-month consultation period on the new draft.

Following the end of this period, the ACLC will review the comments received from croquet players generally and from national laws / referees committees.

It is the ACLC's intention then to produce a new draft, to be submitted to the WCF for the formal consultation with WCF members required under the WCF's statutes.

The ACLC requests that, so far as the Nottingham lists are concerned, discussion on the draft Laws should take place on the Laws list (croquet-laws@nottingham-lists.org.uk, which you can subscribe to here) rather than the general list. ACLC members will monitor the discussions that take place and respond as appropriate.

Comments or questions may also be sent directly to ACLC members, copied as appropriate to national laws / referees committee chairs.

Graeme Roberts

Chair, WCF ACLC on behalf of the members of the ACLC:

Elizabeth Fleming ~ Australia

Stephen Mulliner ~ W.C.F.

Graeme Roberts ~ New Zealand

Martyn Selman ~ U.S.A.

Ian Vincent ~ England



Peter Moore refereeing Stephen Custance-Baker at Budleigh
Photo by Chris Roberts

Letters

John W. Simon Where is he now?

Dear Editor,

The 'From our Files' article from 50 years ago in the last issue (*Gazette 381*) reminded me of my long forgotten doubles partner John W. Simon, last heard of at the Bristol Cathedral School (headmaster Cecil Rich), then to the Royal Army medical Corps in Malaysia.

Does anyone know where he is now?

Nigel Aspinall, Roehampton CC

Nigel tactfully doesn't say that he pointed out that there was a typo of my own manufacture in the piece to which he refers; I misread 'Simon' as 'Solomon', which I am happy to correct here – Ed.

Racing Croquet demo at Surbiton

Dear Editor,

Further to Richard Lewin's letter in the July issue (*Gazette 381*), an inaugural demonstration of Racing Croquet took part on Sunday 25 August at Surbiton CC.

The weather was fabulous and augured well for this first trial of a completely new slant on croquet (where speed of play is all-important).

The first demonstration was a best of three 12-hoop match between members Bruce Moxley and Pete McCambridge (with timekeepers Sue Pendry and Alan Borley) which Pete won 2-0 with times of 3 minutes 11 seconds and 2m. 47s.

A second match between the four youngest players, Louise and David Pendry v Jack and Lucie McCambridge won 2-0 by the former with times of 2.53 and 2.49.

At this stage everyone agreed it was too hot for 12 hoops and the challenges that followed were all 6 hoop games.

Liz Cheam and Jane from Surbiton C.C. took on Carole and Bud from Ealing and these ladies put up a good show, showing that running was not out of the question and they recorded best times of 1.38 and 1.41, which I found incredible.

Lots of other games followed, including most notably Mike and Nikki Pendry clocking-up the fastest time of all at 1.27.

All in all, it was an interesting, thoroughly enjoyable experiment.

Where it goes from here we will have to wait and see.

Bernard Pendry, Surbiton CC

Eye injury caused by flying GC peg *Is this common or a one-off accident?*

Dear Editor,

We have recently hosted a part of the WCF Simon Carter Golf Croquet World Championship and Division 2 of the Golf Croquet Inter-Counties Championship at Compton Croquet Club in Eastbourne.

Several players remarked on our supply of scoring clips rather than clothes pegs for indicating who had won each hoop.

Some even described them as AC clips.

At Compton this is a Health and Safety issue because some fifteen to twenty years ago a clothes peg flew off the top of a hoop and one of our members sustained a serious and permanent injury to his eye when the peg penetrated between his eyelid and his eyeball.

Attendance at hospital was required and he has to apply ointment to the affected eye every night.

The next day Mavis Buist, who was the

secretary at that time, ordered sufficient CA clips, both primary and secondary colours, to ensure that clothes pegs would never be used again on hoops at our club.

This also freed the up pegs for use as extra-turn tokens in handicap play.

Please will you encourage clubs through the Gazette to insist that "eye safety matters".

I would like to see that clips that are designed to be fixed firmly onto hoops become standard issue and if clothes pegs must be used, I think that they must always be attached to the side of the hoop and never to the crown.

I understand that some clubs will balk at the expense of two extra sets of clips per lawn for each set of balls.

However, what price would they consider reasonable for the loss of an eye?

Hilary Smith, Secretary, Compton CC

Dear Hilary,

Pretty well every club that I have been to uses commonly available clothes pegs for GC scoring and it is true that some are better than others at staying put when a hoop is struck firmly.

My visit to Compton this season was my first encounter with 'AC clips' being used to indicate GC hoops scored; I did wonder why that was and now I know!

Your report of the injury caused to your member fifteen years ago is most unfortunate of course, however it is the first and only report that I have heard of along these lines and I will be interested to hear from any other readers who have experience of injuries having been caused in this way.

I have no expertise in H&S or risk assessment, but a sensible and easy precaution is to remove clothes pegs from hoops before going at them hard.

It is a good practice undertaken by many tournament players as a matter of course, in case a ball runs over a clip that becomes unattached due to a firm stroke and in the case of attempted jump strokes especially.

And the potential injury risk is surely only to the striker (and possibly a referee) because nobody else should be close-by of course. – Ed.

Does anyone know about this Bury Pendant?

Dear Editor,

I am hoping that you will reproduce this picture of a pendant in the Croquet Gazette.

I would love to know more about it, if any readers have any knowledge.

It was awarded to AA and AMA from Bude Croquet Club in 1927 as the first prize for a doubles tournament. It is made from 9ct gold with a centre Cornelian with graduated seed pearls around the outside.

The actual inscription reads: BUDE CROQUET TOURNAMENT 1ST PRIZE DOUBLES AUG 1927 AA & AMA.

Jeannie Cording, Dowlish Wake CC



Middlesbrough like their corner spots

Dear Editor,

There was a deafening silence when I made a proposal in the October/November 2018 issue (*Gazette 376*).

I was suggesting that the four corner spots should be marked one yard in from each boundary.

This would be both time-saving and back-saving: AC players would no longer have to measure two mallet lengths every time we put a ball in a corner.

Ian Vincent replied with some concerns, and there was no further comment till the September 2019 issue (*Gazette 381*), when Stephen Parish made a similar suggestion, drawing a comparison with the penalty spot in football.

May I commend the idea for further consideration and comment by your readers?

We have been marking the white spots in the corners of the Middlesbrough CC courts for the past two seasons; feedback from club members and visiting players has been positive.

Andrew Killick, Middlesbrough CC

I can't get away from croquet, even in Bermuda!



Dear Editor,

Your travelling croquet correspondent here - I've just found another one!

Further to my discovery of a sports shop called 'Croquet Club' in Columbia a couple of years ago, I've just found this croquet lawn outside my hotel window in Bermuda!

It's at The Cambridge Beach Resort.

Bermuda is great, one of the nicest places I've ever been.

If you can arrange a croquet tournament here, I recommend it.

Geoffrey Odds, Sheffield (and the world)

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More Letters to the Editor

Jim Kirby's Cup inspires his grandson

Dear Editor,

Back in the 1970s and 80s onwards until his death in 1990 my Grandfather, Jim Kirby, was a keen AC player at Loughborough.

He later played at Ashby, then I believe Nottingham.

He was always concerned by the lack of new blood joining and made it his business to encourage beginners.

He tried several times to arrange coaching sessions at National Trust properties but drew a blank at all but the Museum of Childhood at Sudbury Hall.

As a child I remember watching him coaching a group of young farmers whilst my family went one day to support him and even remember joining in!

Turning 40 this October, I still have his mallet with his initials JAK on.

Whilst at Loughborough University in 1999 I decided to look up the old croquet club but was very disappointed to find a derelict building and overgrown lawn; it has since been developed into housing.

After my Grandfather's death, one of his team mates contacted my Grandmother Betty Kirby and asked if a trophy could be named in his honour; she agreed and so the 'Jim Kirby Cup for Beginners' was made, and it ran as an annual event ever since.

It was several years before I investigated as to the whereabouts of the trophy and in 2017 an internet search and a few telephone calls to various clubs located the cup at Nottingham Croquet Club.

Unfortunately, I was away that year for the tournament but offered to sponsor the lunch and a few prizes through my design company in8 ltd based in Henley-on-Thames.

Last September I was proud to be invited again to play in and sponsor the Beginners Tournament and my Mother (Jenny Hargreaves) was pleased to present the trophy.

Until I found the time to learn some of the many rules and regulations, I had no idea what a mentally stimulating and skilful game AC is.

I have joined Caversham CC and have been given excellent tuition by John Wakeford in the hope that his strategy and techniques will help my game in the future.

I am looking forward to sponsoring and competing in this year's tournament, my last chance as a beginner!

Ben Hargreaves, Caversham CC

The last words on GC wrong balls

Thank you to all the writers of GC wrong ball letters in this and the previous two issues (*Gazettes 380 – 382*) and especially to Stephen Mulliner for his time and considerable contribution in replying to all of them. The letter below concludes the publication of Gazette correspondence on this subject – *Ed*.

Dear Editor,

There is no doubt that we should be grateful for the inordinate amount of time that Stephen Mulliner has given to Croquet generally over the years and now in answering letters in the last issue (*Gazette 381*).

His explanations are very interesting but when he writes "*Nick expresses his scepticism that Rule 10 was not designed to deal with this rare occurrence. As someone who was involved in the drafting of Rule 10.1 I can assure him that it was not designed to cope with this situation or other rare possibilities.*" then he creates a problem.

By implying that we need to be privy to the drafting process, or perhaps in the CA Domain, a member of the private forum of referees in order to understand and apply the Rules correctly, he is undermining the status of the Rules.

Surely, once published, Golf Croquet's Rules should stand alone and not depend upon "privileged knowledge".

In the circumstances that Stuart Smith described, if it is possible for me to find Rules that are fit for purpose and provide a justifiable answer that restores the game to the position it was in before the error

then these should apply and not 15.3 as Stephen claims using his "privileged knowledge" gained by being on the WCF Committee. As I see it, 10.5.4 is in fact subject to 10.1.5 which tells us that 10.2 and 10.3 do not apply.

So when play is stopped after a wrong ball has been played in the last stroke and it is discovered that the previous stroke was played with an opponent's ball, we know that all strokes played in error with the opponent's balls before the previous stroke are not to be treated as valid (10.2.1).

We also know any points scored in those strokes are not counted for the owners of the balls that scored the points (10.2.2).

In addition we know we do not restart the game with either "Replace and Replay" or "Ball Swap" as listed in 10.3. If points are not to be counted whilst playing strokes in error with the opponent's balls in this case, it follows that play has to return to a position after the last validly scored hoop when 10.5.4 restarts the game with a 'Penalty Area Continuation'.

I would suggest that it is here that 15.3 can be used to invoke 7.5 and not before.

Nick Harris

Stephen Mulliner, Chairman, GC Rules Committee, replies -

Whether or not a particular rule was designed to cope with a particular set of circumstances is a matter of fact, best answered by someone involved in the design of the rule. My reply to Nick Harris ("NH") in Gazette 381 at page 24 was a simple statement of fact that Rule 10.5.4 was not designed to cope with rare possibilities. That is as far as it went. I do not agree that this implies that rule users need to be privy to the drafting process before they can apply Rule 10.5.4. This rule, like any other, should be read as it is written. Whether or not Rule 10.5.4 or any other rule is actually able to cope with a situation for which it was not specifically designed is a separate question which will depend on what the rule actually states.

The situation described by Stuart Smith in Gazette 380 involved a rare combination of the players exchanging colours and a player scoring points for the opponent's balls during a period of the game and then the players jointly committing a Rule 10.5.4 error after which play was stopped. There is no doubt that Rules 10.1.5 and 10.5.4 applied, that any points scored in the last two strokes had to be cancelled and that the game had to be restarted by a penalty area continuation. There was no need to apply Rule 15.3 to this aspect because Rule 10.5.4 gives explicit directions.

There is also no doubt that Rules 10.2 and 10.3 did not apply to the situation because of Rule 10.1.5(d). It is worth noting that Rule 10.1.5 disapplies Rules 10.2 and 10.3 in six listed cases, for clear reasons. In (a), (b) and (f), a wrong ball is either not played or is to be ignored. In (c), there is a specific remedy applicable to the start of a game. In (d) and (e), in contradiction to Rule 10.2, the relevant Rules specify that a stroke before the last strokes is or may be cancelled.

Continued on page 28

First Eight President's Cup

It was by 10.30am on the glorious warm autumn morning of Thursday 5th September at the Sidmouth Croquet Club, that I and the other spectators realised how lucky we were to be at this prestigious event, **writes Alison Maugham**.

With beautiful views of the sea in the background, the players had started their first-round games at 9.30am, and we spectators had prepared ourselves with tea and biscuits. Although one spectator had armed himself with a notepad and pen instead of a mug and snack like me, where he recorded all of the game openings, to hopefully equip himself with some new-found knowledge of top-level croquet.

The other spectators were not just members of the Sidmouth club; some had travelled from other clubs in the South West region to come and watch. This is testament not only to the standard of play which was obviously going to be displayed, but also to the welcoming environment and exceptionally prepared lawns and festivities offered by our hosts.

In the closing speeches Christian Carter made sure that the members of Sidmouth knew how much their efforts were appreciated, by noting that he would be delighted if they would bid for many more events in the future.

If there is one thing croquet players like to do other than play croquet, it's talk about croquet, and boy did we all get chatting.

Types of grip were a hot topic as we watched James Death with his usual 'croquet with ease' pencil grip style, as he made fairly short work of his first game against David Maugham, after the latter failed to run 2-back during his quadruple peel. This allowed Death to finish off Maugham's peeling turn by cleanly peeling his yellow ball through Rover on the way to 2-back and pegging him off. Maugham did have another chance at the win, but took

off the lawn, and Death went on to win.

To my amusement it was rumoured that a spectator who perhaps didn't know the quality of players before him was overheard saying "If that chap [Death] got a new mallet he could be quite good".

Meanwhile, in the distance we could see Jose Riva on lawn 4, attempting his first sextuple peel of the tournament in game 1 – quite naturally, setting the bar high for himself. Riva made sure it was obvious from the beginning that he was here to win, and with style! Unfortunately his peeling turn was also not meant to be, since it was to finish with a straight triple-peel, and having promoted the peelee just south of Penult, he then failed to get a northward rush into peeling position.

Harry Fisher, our first debutant of the tournament, put up a good fight, and after rolling up to Rover leaving himself a rather long shot, pinged out of the hoop and left Riva with a short lift shot to hit and win.

The second round brought more excitement, where it was reported that a very cross Fisher had 'stuck' in Rover on his finishing turn against Death. However, it was then Death who actually confirmed and informed his oppo that his ball did in fact 'stick'. With enough jam to be confused with the inside of a sticky donut, the hoop was reset and the shot replayed, and Fisher then recorded his first win of the tournament.

Duncan Reeve, our other debutant to the President's Cup, also gained his first win in the second round, over Stephen Mulliner. Reeve had lost his first game to Mark Suter, who played a faultless game, judging the lawns perfectly and showing off his superbly accurate shooting skills.

By the end of Day 1 there were two



players with three wins, four players on two, and two with one win each.

Debutant Reeve had also beaten Maugham to show that he was also here to mean business.

Day 2 brought some damp and chilly weather,

which provided extra challenges for the players who had familiarised themselves with the lawns' slight decline from south to north, but all now struggled to judge the uphill pace well enough in the newly changed conditions.

Positions were not met with ease, and angled hoop runs became a familiar sight.

Although many peeling turns had been attempted, and indeed many peels had been made, the crowd were entertained by quite a few mishaps over the four days, meaning that by the end of play on all four days, only half of the games had resulted in scores with letters.

Riva continued to impress throughout, maintaining a lead of two wins from Day 2 onwards, and he was always the one to beat. He secured his tenth win, in round 13 against Maugham with a Quadruple Peel finish in front of a good gathering of spectators, including CA President Quiller Barret, who had arrived to watch the final day's action before presenting the trophies.

We were also joined by members of Jose's family (pictured) who were delighted to witness their nephew winning the President's Cup for a second time.

Riva's performance was nothing short of consistent and stylish Association Croquet, to which we can all aspire.

Finishing order:

Jose Riva (11 wins/14 games), Christian Carter (9), Mark Suter (8), James Death & David Maugham (7), Stephen Mulliner (6), Duncan Reeve (5), Harry Fisher (3).

Riva regains the top prize

Second Eight Chairman's Salver

Ian Lines was the clear winner of the 2nd Eight tournament held at Cheltenham, **writes Chris Roberts (from afar)**.

He scored 11 wins from the 14-game programme that formed the 'double round

robin' format for this event, which was

two more than his nearest rival Jonathan Powe. Pete Trimmer who, along with three others on five wins, brought up the rear, could boast achieving the only sextuple peel (and that was one more than in the 1st Eight), with the icing that it was against

winner Lines. Elsewhere there was one 'OQP' from Jeff Dawson in his loss to Powe, and a total of 26 triple peels (including those on opponents) from the field.

Finishing order:

Ian Lines (11 wins/14 games), Jonathan Powe (9), Daniel Gott (8), Robin Brown (7), James Hopgood (6), Jeff Dawson, David Goacher & Pete Trimmer (5).



Third Eight *Spencer Ell Trophy*

O mied Hallam pegged-out with a resounding crunch, completing his triple-peel and clinching the Spencer Ell Trophy, **writes Mark Ormerod**.

This was followed by what had become the obligatory victory jig, to the accompanying ripple of applause from follow competitors and local Pendle and Craven CC members.

The Ell had returned to Pendle and Craven after a five year gap, and the small band of dedicated club members had made sterling efforts to provide well-set courts and to cater for the players' every needs. Their work was supplemented by the two local cats that patrolled the lawn boundaries, as well as Paul Rigge, who was an indefatigable source of activity (despite a long commute), from hoop setting through to catering.

Mike Town demonstrated his astute management skills, the four rounds completed on Day 1 providing the buffer that enabled the event (and all games) to be completed by early afternoon on the final day, despite some heavy rain causing lost lawn time as well as requiring some double banking.

Returning to the games, the players stuck to ordinary advanced play, and only Hallam and Rigge successfully completed triple-peels. However, play was generally brisk and somewhat muscular, and was regularly accompanied by cries of "give it some more wellie!"

By the end of the first series Mark Ormerod had established a one game lead (plus one pegged-down game), with Eugene Chang, Rigge and Hallam all tied in second place with five wins each. Shortly thereafter Raouf Allim scored his first win, beating Ormerod and demonstrating his victory jig, to everyone's delight.

Annabel McDiarmid and Rich Waterman also successfully pegged-out against Ormerod, and by the final morning, the event was Hallam's to win, and he did so with style, leaving Ormerod and Chang tied in second place, and Rigge one win behind in fourth place.

Many thanks to our hosts for their hospitality and for an enjoyable event.

Finishing order:

Omied Hallam (11 wins/14 games), Mark Ormerod (9), Eugene Chang (9), Paul Rigge (8), Annabel McDiarmid (8), Rich Waterman (6), Mike Town (4), Raouf Allim (1).

Fourth Eight *Treasurer's Tankard*

If the clearance for pocketing a snooker ball is 3.25cm, and for sinking a golf putt 6.5cm, why then for croquet is it only 1.19mm?

This rhetorical question was asked many times, often in the ripest of language, by Cordingley, Davis, Gale, Hawkins, Lamb, Marsh, Vincent and Wilkinson, as they stuck in hoops at the Treasurer's Tankard, **writes Jonathan Lamb**.

The wizards of Nailsea had been at work on these hoops, which were magnificent, rhadamanthine, pitiless: grounded in clay of the utmost Bristolian solidity and set with fiendish skill to 3/64ths by sadists who looked on with straight faces (just) as player after player came to grief.

It was the clay that did it.

You could be four inches right in front of a hoop, stroke the ball through...then stare in disbelief as it turned to rubber in the jaws.

With interactivity like this, who needs super-advanced? The only triple was done on Day 1 by Hawkins before he realised that tripling was impossible.

In a game of Scrabble in the clubhouse, he produced the word 'blart', which is Northern for 'bleat' or 'blare'. Out on the killing fields, blarting at blobbing was going on all the time.

It took the form of 'Oh WHAT?!' (Cordingley), '****!£**&%****!' (Wilkinson), 'Oh for God's sake!' (Gale), "No-er!" (Vincent) or 'By 'eck!' (Davis).

One player, with a three-inch hoop to run, took to grounding his mallet, sighting along it and then praying briefly.

The lawns were great, bedding in after resurfacing, speed between 10 and 11 Plummers, still a bit bobbly for some rushes, but set to be top class.

For the record, manager Phil Cordingley took home the Tankard, after five fine days with not much rain.

His knee was clearly giving him trouble, and he'd been up all hours doing the managing, but there were some turns reminiscent of the old international days.

Wilkinson and Lamb came second.

Marsh had a grim start but got better and better.

Vincent showed great courage by trying a straight triple that was doomed by the implacable uprights.

Davis was the nattiest, with his cream-coloured cap; Lamb the nuttiest, occasionally playing the wrong ball at the wrong hoop in the wrong direction.

Luckiest was Cordingley, who missed a very long roquet and only realised he had actually made it – by bouncing off something nearby – when he asked why the spectators were cheering.

Acknowledgments can be tedious to read, but Nailsea were fantastic. Five days is a long time to host a tournament and there was constant attention to both lawns and players from an army of expert volunteers, clearly drilled to perfection.

They had had a workday with a mass turnout to get the clubhouse ready, and even trim all the hedges.

Loads of interested club members were on hand throughout the day; there was plenty of home-made food and a good stock of booze; and as Phil Cordingley said at the end, it was impossible to lift a finger without someone offering to lift it for you.

Nailsea is also heaven for gizmologists: they have developed every known gizmo, like ball barriers made of netting that gently roll the ball back to you.

So when a Tankard team won the pub quiz at the tournament dinner – largely because Hawkins knew even more obscure stuff than 'blart' – it was a pleasure for the manager to donate the booty to Club funds as a token of thanks and admiration from all eight players. Even down to the precision of its hoop-setting, this place is clearly, as the saying goes, serious kit.

Finishing order:

Phil Cordingley (11 wins/14 games), Jonathan Lamb (9), Robert Wilkinson (9), John Davis (7), Graham Gale (6), Ian Vincent (5), James Hawkins (5), David Marsh (4).

Photos: Winners Omied Hallam and Phil Cordingley (by Chris Roberts)





GB win The Sol

by Ian B

During the heat of the day rushing was problematic as the Dawson balls heated up and hoop running, particularly at an angle, became more tricky.

Doubles

On paper the teams appeared relatively evenly balanced and the doubles is often key on such occasions.

The untested pair of Mark Suter and Duncan Reeve won all three of their matches, whilst the established Ian Burrige and Alain Giraud won two with one unfinished.

Captain Samir Patel and Jonathan Powe were less fortunate in not winning a match, never managing to fire together at the same time.

The doubles went GB's way 5-3 (with 1 unfinished) and the two key matches both involved Ben Rothman and Stephen Morgan.

In round 1, Rothman was tempted into a TPO in the third game against Reeve and Suter when he unintentionally jawssed his peelee mid-break, but a failure at 2-back left Reeve an easy break to seal the match after he had hit his six-yard lift shot.

In round 2, Rothman managed to complete his TPO of Giraud in the decider but Morgan struggled to get going in the TPO game, and after a piece of triangulation, Burrige was able to generate a three-ball break which came to grief at Rover, but was able to finish shortly afterwards and seal the win.

This year's Solomon Trophy (the 25th) was held at Pinehurst, North Carolina. It was shoe-horned between the AC and GC Inter-Club finals, allowing team members to play in all three.

The five-day event began with the President's match, played under American Rules, where the GB team acquitted itself admirably securing a 6-6 draw. In what was to be the key to success throughout the week the focus was very much on completing breaks rather than any of the tactical intricacies of the American game.

The Solomon Trophy itself was played over four days following the standard best-of-21 Test Match format - A team of six, all play all best-of-three doubles and two singles matches per player.

Playing conditions were essentially easy (the courts were playing at 11 seconds) although the SuperHoops were set tight enough to catch out the overly careless.

However, that was without factoring in the greater than 35 degree playing conditions experienced in the heatwave which blanketed the area for the week.



- Great Britain**
- Samir Patel
 - Mark Suter
 - Jonathan Powe
 - Ian Burrige
 - Duncan Reeve
 - Alain Giraud
- USA**
- Ben Rothman
 - Matthew Essick
 - Danny Huneycutt
 - Stuart Lawrence
 - Stephen Morgan
 - Zack Watson

The Challenge and Gilbey returned to Sussex County CC, with greatly reduced numbers, having been played at Budleigh Salterton CC for the last two years. Eight of the twenty players had travelled from the West Country.

Block A - The Roehampton Cup was won by **Dave Kibble** (Bristol) with 6/7 wins on his first appearance at this tournament and he also won the peeling prize. Jim Field (Nailsea) was the runner-up.

Block B - The Council Cup was won by **Richard Williamson** (Bristol) with 5/6 wins, with John Taylor the runner-up.

Block C - The Reckitt Cup was uncontested this year due to lack of entries.

Block D - The Stevenson Cup was won by last minute entrant **Kevin Wright** (Auchincruive CC, Scotland) with 5/6 wins and Brian Shorney (Eardisley) was the

runner-up. **Handicap - The Gilbey Goblet** was won by **Liz Farrow** (Sussex County) who beat Jim Field +26 in the final. Field also won the fastest game prize (of course he did - Ed!).

Before presenting the trophies, Quiller Barrett, President of the CA, gave a brief history of how this ancient tournament came about.

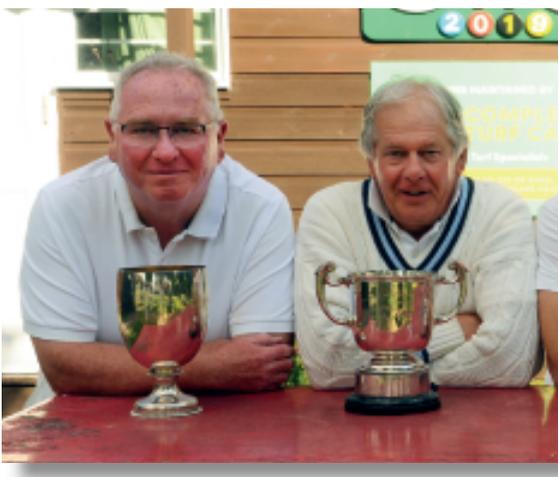
"In 1900 the Sheen House Club, which was then the headquarters of the United All England Croquet Association (as the Croquet Association was known at the time) presented the Challenge Cup for an open competition to the Association.

This trophy was won by Sir William Bruce who beat J. E. Austen +6, +26 in the final.

In 1903 the Roehampton Club presented additional cups so there were then three 'Roehampton Challenge Cups'.

The Challenge and Gil

- report by Manage



Solomon Trophy in Burr ridge

Singles

The first round of singles saw easy wins for Rothman against Patel and Zack Watson against Powe.

Watson, making his international debut, played well throughout the week and it would seem likely that he will break into the US MacRobertson Shield team in the future.

The more established American youngster, Matthew Essick, played well to beat Suter in three, while Reeve secured a point for GB with a comfortable two TP win against Stuart Lawrence.

Burr ridge and Giraud saw their matches pegged down, to add to their unfinished doubles, leaving them with three matches each to finish on the final day, which consequently began earlier than originally scheduled with double banking.

With the score at 6-6 everything was to play for although the Americans were favourites, holding a significant upper hand in two of the three unfinished matches.

Essick was the Americans' banker against Patel and sealed an impressive victory with a 100% hitting record in 1.5 hours (GB 6-7 USA).

Some time later Watson and Danny Huneycutt beat Giraud and Powe in straight games and it was all looking rather ominous (GB 6-9 USA).

However, Suter completed the TP he was already embarked on in the third game for an excellent victory against Rothman (7-9), and Burr ridge and Reeve both squandered chances before running out victors in three



to square the match (9-9) and leave the overall outcome dependent on the pegged-down matches.

All square, so back to earlier pegged down matches

Giraud had an entire third game to play against Huneycutt, Burr ridge was 1 and 4-back with a lift to come facing Morgan who was to be 4-back and peg.

By the time Giraud had completed a three-turn win (GB 10-9 USA), Burr ridge had pegged Morgan out to leave him 4-back alone against penult and peg.

A hit lift to corner IV and roll to three-yard position at 4-back gave the American a great chance but he failed the hoop and, after a subsequent missed shot from into a guarded corner by the American, Burr ridge was able to clinch the test match for GB.

Many thanks to Elaine Moody, Mike Taylor and Joanie O'Brien, and all the other Pinehurst members, who ensured that we were made very welcome, and treated us to excellent hospitality throughout the week.

When we were left to our own devices Mark Suter's barbecue exploits ensured that we were never short of protein!

Ian Burr ridge

In 1920 the Chairman of the CA Council, Mr. Arthur N Gilbey, who was also a prominent supporter of angling and other field sports, presented a cup for a handicap competition and, from a field of 164 entries, the first Gilbey Cup was won by Mr. L. A. Chope of Roehampton who played under the pseudonym of 'A N Other'.

In 1923 the decision was made to run the Challenge Cups and the Gilbey Goblet as a joint tournament, a "marriage" which has lasted unbroken to the present day.

That year, ten lawns at Roehampton were available and 265 entrants played in the tournament that was spread over a fortnight, something of a marathon for the manager!"

Perhaps there is a challenge here, to see how many entries there are in 2020?

Photographs
clockwise from to left:

- (1) The teams lineup before the start of play at Pinehurst Club, N. Carolina.
- (2) The coveted trophy.
- (3) Ian Burr ridge and the beautiful golf club backdrop.
- (4) Mark Suter copes with the double-bankers extra balls.
- (5) Jonathan Powe runs an angled hoop.

~ images by Samir Patel ~



Sam Murray introduces his seven-week-old daughter Winifred to the Solomon Trophy Live Streaming. (photo by new Mummy Ellen)



Gilbey 2019 (and its history) Manager Julie Horsley -





'Fifth Eight' Selectors' Weekend

Callum Johnson further enhanced his growing promise as a young player with a very bright future when he 'swept the board' to win the

2019 Selectors' Weekend, which marked the welcome return of CA AC tournaments to Bath CC. **Bath Chairman Andrew Willis takes up the story:**

It had been several years since Bath last hosted a CA Association Croquet tournament, which may have gone some way to explain the demand from players, as well as the enthusiasm of the Bath members, for this tournament.

Players were split into two blocks of eight, with handicaps in a very narrow range from -0.5 to +0.5. In order to allow an earlier finish on the final day, the manager proposed completing the seven rounds of block games over the first two days, leaving only the semis and final to play on day 3.

Andrew Killick and Callum Johnson were undefeated at the end of Day 1 and led Block A, while Block B was proving more competitive, which may be why the games were typically taking longer to finish.

The highlight from Day 1 was a combination peg-out by David Harrison-Wood; having played a successful Irish peel at rover, he was unable to hit his intended reception ball and was forced to roquet his partner ball. He placed it as close to the peg as he could in the subsequent croquet shot and was eventually able to promote it on to the peg before finally pegging out his striker's ball.

In order to keep to his ambitious schedule, the Manager cut time-limits on Day 2 from 3 to 2.5 hours and although play

continued until dusk, three of the final round of block games had to be

pegged-down overnight.

Killick and Peter Moore made an early start on Sunday in order to complete their game, and when the latter was victorious, Killick missed out on last semi-final spot that was grabbed by Chris O'Byrne.

Johnson had continued his good form and was the runaway winner of Block A with a 100% record and notched yet another swift victory in accounting for Gary Bennett in his semi-final, this time with a straight triple-peel.

David Warhurst had topped Block B with six wins and his consistency and good shooting was enough to beat Chris O'Byrne in the other semi. So, the final pitted Yorkshire teammates Johnson and Warhurst in combat, where the former's impressive play and excellent shooting continued, giving Warhurst little chance.

A failed rover peel, which would have completed yet another triple, did give Warhurst a glimmer of hope, but by then it was too late and Johnson was able to secure victory shortly afterwards, hitting the peg from the boundary.

Johnson's nine wins from nine games earned him a two-step handicap reduction to -0.5 and it was clear to everyone that this is a player who will soon be playing at the highest level.

A short presentation followed during which the manager thanked the Bath members that had helped prepare the lawns as well as the excellent lunches served in Bath's brand new clubhouse.

Finishing order:

1. Callum Johnsons, 2. David Warhurst, 3= Gary Bennett & Chris O'Byrne. Others: (Block A) David Harrison-Wood, Anderw Killick, Peter Moore, Beatrice McGlen, Paul Castell, Alan Chance. (Block B) Clive Goode, Dave Gunn, Andy Dibben, Nick Steiner, Brian Havill, Jim Field.

A three-hour time limit was imposed throughout; even so, it was sunset by the close of play on Day 1, by which time, Davis was unbeaten. His successful weekend was rounded off with a win against Mo Boys, in an interactive game that ended with Boys joined up near the west boundary and Davies near corner 2. He aimed for the peg and hit (to a mutter of 'an 8 shouldn't be able to do that').

Davies earned his silver merit award and a handicap reduction from 8 to 7 and took the Trevor Williams Cup home and the

South of England C

Mark Avery retained the South of England Championship at Compton (Eastbourne), **reports Roger Wood.**

From a strong field of 22 players, three of the top seeds duly made it through to the semi-finals, where they were joined by unseeded Richard Smith who, having despatched fourth seed Jonathan Powe in straight games in round 2, then just scraped home against Ian Lines in a time-limited match that finished in darkness.

David Maugham, having lost the first game of his quarter-final against Sam Murray, despite his TPO, asserted his authority to win the match without Murray scoring another point and then went on to beat second seed Jamie Burch in straight games to reach the final. Meanwhile Mark Avery beat Smith to set up a repeat of last year's final.

In Game 1, Avery took blue to 3-back leaving Maugham's balls across corner IV and himself in corners II and III.

From the contact, Maugham made a superb take-off from corner III to rush his partner ball to hoop 1 but, uncharacteristically, stuck.

Avery missed from hoop 2, allowing Maugham to continue, only to miss a hampered continuation after hoop 3.

Avery, playing black, began by peeling 3-back after hoop 5 and looked set to finish, until his peelee stuck in rover and

Championship C

David Maugham was runner-up again, this time at the Championship of Surrey, played as always at Surbiton, where Spain's Jose Riva took the top prize. Details of the event are scant beyond the bare scores, which throughout saw

New Zealand Tray to his club in Letchworth following the presentations by CA Vice-President Patricia Duke-Cox.

Finishing order: Colin Davies (4 wins), Neal Bacon, John Knight and Tim Lacy-Hulbert (3), Barney Lewis (2), Mo Boys (1), John Dawson 0, (Charles Ostler 4).

~

This is a really good competition for encouraging newer players into tournament play, starting with local event, before area and national finals.

Hilary Smith, Director, AC All England

Davies wins the All England AC

Colin Davies of Letchworth won the AC All-England Handicap title on the well-prepared Hunstanton courts.

The most unfortunate absentee being young Jack Good, who had carried all before him at the area final at Bury, but was injured at a rugby training session three days before and could not play.

Thankfully Charles Ostler from Pinchbeck was able to make up the number.

Doubles Championship

his jump attempt was faulted.

Maugham had the balls replaced, peeled blue, continued his break to 1-back and laid with the opponents closely cross-pegged, lying east-west, and himself in the centre of the west boundary with a short rush to the peg.

Avery lifted black to corner 1, hit red and finished.

Game 2 again saw Avery in first, with a break to 4-back and the same leave as game 1.

From the contact, Maugham laid himself a rush in corner 4 with blue west of hoop 1. Avery shot and hit centre ball and also made a leave.

Maugham missed and Avery finished with a standard triple, the only player to complete the weekend without a loss.

In the plate event, Robin Brown produced three triples to clinch the Sussex Union Cup.

Particular thanks go to Hilary and Tim Smith for their lunches, and to groundsman John Crisford whose devotion to the lawns continues to keep them in such good shape.

The heart-warming highlight of the weekend was undoubtedly the presence of five-week-old Winifred, daughter of Ellen and Sam, who at this, her very first croquet tournament, charmed everyone and triggered unexpected parenting skills in a surprising number of individuals!

Peninsula Cup of Surrey

peeling winning turns more often than not, culminated thus:

Semis – Riva beat Samir Patel +13, +17qp; Maugham beat Robin Brown +11tpo, +14otp. Final – Riva beat Maugham +24qp +2tpo +26tp.



Students' Championship by Kiran Saini

To quote Andy Bernard, **"I wish there was a way to know you're in the good old days, before you've actually left them."** Well, this weekend certainly qualifies.

Van Loon puts on a show

In the singles portion of the event, the venerable Mark van Loon returned to avenge his dramatic finals loss last year.

This year there was no such issue as he dispensed with opponent after opponent with ease - attempting sextuple peels and completing TPs, (almost Dr.) Van Loon had come to put on a show.

In the heat of the beautiful British summer, on the backdrop of England's spectacular cricketing performance and Federer's valiant effort at Wimbledon, he cantered to the singles final, dispensing of the Cambridge captain and Belgian no.2, Rakoen Maeterns, alongside the organiser of the world's largest AC tournament (with 1600+ entrants this year), Tim Foot.

Mark Baker had decided to abandon an attempt at a defence of his doubles title, in pursuit of the singles glory. He similarly cut through the field on Day 1 but was no match for Mr. Van Loon in the final.

Whether it was the pressure of the final or the aftereffects of the night before, he spent much of his final rooted to his seat cursing what might have been had he convinced MVL to join his pub crawl.

Better luck next year!

This was the final outing for Mr. Van Loon as an Oxford student, as he leaves us for the City in the coming weeks. Having become a pivotal figure in the club and a titan of this very tournament, alongside many highlights in the Varsity matches, we will truly miss him here.

He has been a towering figure of the student game and the lifeblood of this club. Congratulations on the win Mark!

The Peninsula Cup

The doubles were far more littered with drama and no coronations were allowed.

Day 1 brought a valiant effort from a team from Exeter, comprising newcomer Molly Dineen and veteran Ross Moore as they sealed the first Exeter student doubles championship tournament victory in a generation, dealing a hefty blow to the egos of the Oxford 2nd team, Oliver Gardner and Dan McKavanagh, in the process. This momentum propelled them into their Peninsula Cup match against the

dream team from Plymouth, Alfie Ball and James Woolas, for the weekend's most dramatic match-up. Bitter from last year's defeat and a difficult Day 1 showing, the Plymouth team meant business.

To dip back into my bank of The Office quotes, **"Confidence: it's the food of the wise man but the liquor of the fool"** – and Ross Moore was confident. Early on the Plymouth team were punishingly efficient in taking their opportunities, but the game then drew to a prolonged stalemate, until, finally, the Exeter team woke from their slumber.

Playing shots that would make any croquet tactician rip their hair out (RIP Ian Plummer's hair), and yet pulling them off, they surged towards a comeback.

Needing 1 hoop to draw level they realised they had nine seconds left on the clock and weren't in a position to score that turn, at which point, a drunken Mr Moore panicked at all the calamity and faulted.

Despite all the panic and the last-minute loss of their crown, the Exeter team were gracious in defeat, taking the Dwight K. Schrute mentality, **"Will I get over it? No. But life goes on."**

Doubles Championship

The much-anticipated doubles final featured the defending champions Oxford 1, formed of the author, Kirandeep Saini, and a newcomer Charlie Mckechnie, against the aforementioned Plymouth team.

Mckechnie made quite the splash, pulling in the biggest fan club this tournament has seen, with over half a dozen supporters including his lovely parents, Ann and John, who brought a much-needed picnic.

Deadlocked after 90 minutes Saini finally remembered he was supposed to be trying to win and went round to peg with a 3-ball break, despite the tactical objections of Oxford's coach (both spiritual and in croquet) Ian Plummer about leaving partner ball behind and risking being pegged out.

How many Students' Championships has Mr. Plummer won anyhow?

The favourites seemed like they would be cantering to victory, but with Plymouth's steely eyed James Woolas starting a minor sports miracle, I could hear the theme song for "The Mighty Ducks", "Space Jam" and "Rocky" all at once. ... *continued overleaf*



Photos: (top) Singles winner Mark van Loon with AC Tournaments Chair Beatrice McGlen.

(left upper) Exeter v Plymouth for the Peninsular Cup.

(left lower) Oxford v Plymouth for the Doubles Cup.

AC Tournaments and Competitions

continued from page 20 . . .

He began the longest three-ball break of his tournament career, needing seven hoops to tie, during which the author and his partner Mr. Mckechnie, had forgotten they were trying to beat Mr. Woolas and became his ardent backers.

The singles final was over and this was the only show in town and the crowd cheered his successes at hoops 4, 5 and 6, before a tactical dilemma found the Plymouth team consulting with none other than their opponents - such is the sporting atmosphere at the Student Championships!

Sadly after, making it through 1-back, the break broke down and the comeback was over. Oxford 1 won the doubles again, Mr. Mckechnie won his first title and Kirandeep Saini became the first defending champion to retain his title in years.

As the Plymouth team try to draw positives from their valiant effort, I thought I would leave them with another quote:

**"Not everything is a lesson.
Sometimes, you just fail."**

- Dwight K. Schrute.

No prizes for guessing what I've been watching on Netflix all week.

Thanks to the Croquet Association for sponsoring and Beatrice McGlen, Chair of the AC Tournaments Committee, for coming to presenting the trophy.

It was a fantastic weekend.

Kiran Saini

Letchworth win shortened Longman final

Letchworth won the final of the CA Inter-Club Longman Cup against Sussex County on rain-affected courts at Surbiton in early October, **reports Hilary Smith.**

The reduced court and time availability caused the match to be reduced to 14-point games, which Letchworth won 5-2.

St Albans beat Chester 4-1 in the 3rd/4th place match (also a 14-point contest).



Longman Cup winners Letchworth and Surbiton's flooded court (by Andy Dibben)



Surbiton win the Inter-Club Championship



Surbiton are the 2019 AC Inter-Club Champions; their fourth win in a row. This time they had to come back from a 1-2 lunchtime deficit to win all four afternoon singles against game opponents Bristol.

Stephen Mulliner's quadruple-peel in the morning doubles partnering Samir Patel, against David Goacher and Richard M Smith, was the highlight of the day.

Bristol's Ed Duckworth recorded a

triple peel and Robert Wilkinson also won against Chris Farthing and Sam Murray respectively, but the Surbiton men got their own back in the afternoon reverse singles, in which Patel got a +26TP and Mulliner did the same but without the letters. - Surbiton won 5-2.

Photo: CA President Quiller Barrett with the Surbiton team: Sam Murray (& daughter Winifred), Samir Patel, Stephen Mulliner & Chris Farthing (photo by Ellen Thompson).



On winning club teams this season were Bowdon's Alan Mayne and Chris Farthing of Surbiton (photos by Chris Roberts)

Bowdon win tight Mary Rose final

Bowdon beat High Wycombe 4-3 to win the second tier inter-Club AC competition, the Mary Rose, on finals day in Surbiton on Saturday 5 October, **reports Bowdon Captain Will Mellor.**

Bowdon's Alan Mayne (0) and Martin Granger-Brown (2) lost to Wycombe's top pair Stephen Wright (0) and Mike Porter (0) -20, and so quick was the game, that the players moved on to play their singles rubbers whilst still in the morning session, whilst waiting for the other two morning matches to finish.

Those singles matches, like the doubles, were over quickly; before lunch, with High

Wycombe winning both, Mayne lost to Wright -17 and Granger-Brown lost to Porter -23TP, leaving Bowdon 3-0 down.

However, Bowdon's Will Mellor (3.5) beat Keith Pound (2) +4 and Charles Harding (3) beat Wycombe Chairman Richard Peperell (4) +7, with both matches going to time, leaving the score poised nicely at 3-2 to High Wycombe at lunch.

The afternoon matches were both over fairly quickly; Harding beat Pound +23 and within minutes of that match finishing, Mellor beat Peperell +25 in what was the match decider. - Bowdon won 4-3

Are Foxy Hoops good for bowls lawn sharers?

About a year ago the CA was approached by the organiser of the then nascent Dunston Croquet Club, Ralph Timms (*photo below*) which would be sharing lawns with the local bowls club.

The question was whether we could advise them on the use of Foxy hoops which are made by Oakley Woods for exactly this purpose, having a fine wire in place of the standard carrot, so as not to cause hoop holes in the bowling lawn.

The Equipment Committee, having very little data on these hoops, took the pragmatic view that the hoops at Dunston would be granted a temporary (two year) approval for use in Federation matches but not in CA tournaments (as yet) so we could have some time and real life use with which to evaluate them.

An interim report has now been made which seems very positive

The Equipment Committee would be interested to hear from anyone who has played with these hoops and who has views on them.

Dave Trimmer, Equipment Cttee.



Syd Jones was a founder member of Tyneside CC in 1983, and also of Belsay Hall CC in 1989.

He went on to organise a demonstration at the Gateshead Garden Festival 1990, sponsorship from which funded all the new Croquet North equipment.

Syd and Jack Shotton discovered Belsay Hall Castle & Gardens when opened to the public in the late 1980s, and they initially organised an 'Alice in Wonderland' croquet event

on a level grassed area at the west end of the Hall. Subsequently, with local interest and existing Tyneside CC members, a two-court area in the Winter Garden was acquired for the formation of Belsay Hall CC.

Syd was the founder Secretary of the Club, and continued to look at other potential croquet sites in Northumberland.

He designed and supplied indoor carpet croquet equipment via his 'Croquet for Leisure' operation for many years, and many Croquet North clubs still make good use of that during winter months.

He arranged for ITV Northern Country to visit Ormesby Hall, near Middlesbrough, shortly after a club was formed there in 1988, and took part in an entertaining and informative film.

Syd Jones was appointed Chairman of the CA's new Golf Croquet Committee in 1995.

He was instrumental in setting up the

Obituary

Syd Jones 1932 - 2019



GC Grass Roots, Centre Stage and Top of the Tree annual competitions, and the first two were taken

over by the CA when Syd moved to Devon, while the 'TOTT' still takes place at Ripon Spa Hotel each September.

He organised many of the Croquet North GC team events – including many at Ripon Spa and the Bishops' Palace at Bishop Auckland.

Charles Waterfield on behalf of Croquet North

~

Irene Fane of Barnstaple CC adds:

Syd was a much respected croquet player in many locations, not just in the north of England but as far afield as Egypt.

However, he had a severe stroke about 20 years ago, recovering enough to continue playing, but at a much lower level than previously.

He had moved to Bude in Cornwall, and joined Barnstaple CC, where he taught many to play, and was later elected the Club's Lifetime President.

Over the last two years his health deteriorated, and he passed away on 13 Aug 2019 aged 87.

He was buried in a green-field site, dressed in whites with croquet mallet and ball! He was a good friend, and croquet was his passion.

He lives on with us at Barnstaple, as we have an old teddy bear of his, dressed in croquet for leisure whites, which is now our club mascot.

Obituary

Pat Edginton 1946 - 2019



Pat Edginton passed away on 26 August 26, after a short but difficult illness.

Pat became a stalwart of Eynsham Croquet Club in his six years' membership, and was well known to Southern Croquet Federation club member who played in the Doubles Only League. He will be greatly missed.

He had been a keen sportsman all his life, especially badminton and tennis, and when he discovered golf croquet in 2013, he took to it readily, enjoying its tactics, skill and especially the camaraderie.

He won the CA National Grass Roots Final at Ashby CC in his second year, 2014.

I skied with Pat in January and March this year, when he was still fully fit, so the short illness has been a great shock to everyone.

When John Dawson rang me three years ago and floated the idea of putting on a croquet demonstration at Countryfile Live at Blenheim Palace, I readily agreed because I was sure that Pat, a local farmer, would help with the equipment and logistics, and so it proved.

I'm still baffled as to how Pat got better access to Blenheim Palace grounds than Countryfile could arrange!

It is certainly true that Eynsham CC could not have prepared the lawn for CFL without Pat's help.

The club held a barbeque on 9 October in Pat's memory, and it was attended by most of the Eynsham membership.

**Tony Newport,
Eynsham CC Secretary and friend.**

The GC Eights & New Federations Shield

First Eight ~ Musk's Cup

The 2019 Musk's Cup, Golf Croquet's top selection event and the GC equivalent of AC's President's Cup, was held at the Roehampton Club from 24 to 26 August in temperatures that soared above 30 degrees.

In the semi-finals, John-Paul Moberly had to recover from 4-1 down in game three against James Death, the 2019 AC Open Champion, before getting home by 7-4, 4-7, 7-5. Stephen Mulliner had a more straightforward 7-3, 7-3 victory against Ian Burrige.

Mulliner had started the final day strongly by defeating Moberly 7-3, 7-5 in the final round of the block stage and managed to maintain his consistency to win the final 7-5, 7-4 and record his second win in this event.

Finishing order:

1 Stephen Mulliner; 2 J-P Moberly; 3= Ian Burrige, James Death; 5 Richard Bilton; 6 Lionel Tibble, 7= Jonatham Powe, Tobi Savage.

Second Eight ~ Kate Jones Memorial

The 2019 Kate Jones Memorial, Golf Croquet's second selection event, was held at Pendle & Craven Croquet Club from 24 to 26 August.

In the semi-finals, Stuart M Smith beat Raouf Allim 7-3, 7-4 and Tim King beat Steve Leonard 7-4, 7-2.

Smith then prevailed in the final 7-1, 7-6.

Finishing order:

1 Stuart M Smith; 2 Tim King; 3= Raouf Allim, Stephen Leonard, 5 Stephen Custance-Baker; 6 David Widdison; 7= John Noble, Paul Rigge.

GC Federations Shield

The inaugural GC Federations Shield was won by High Wycombe, from the Southern Federation, who beat Yorkshire's Ripon Spa in the final, kindly hosted by Nottingham CC (*report on page 26*).

The final was the culmination of this new competition, which is the equivalent of AC's Secretary's Shield, and is similarly contested between the GC Handicap Champions (or representatives) of each of the CA's nine Federations.

A full field of nine teams entered in a straight knock-out, and with a completely open draw, a number of match-ups brought together teams that would never normally ever have played each other.

Congratulations to High Wycombe who, as holders, will be able to defend their title in a ten-team competition next season.

Frances Colman, Director, GC Federations Shield



Patricia Duke-Cox with the victorious High Wycombe team: Mark Higgins, Marc Allen, Keith Toovey and Alan Clark.



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England win GC Home Internationals

by J-P Moberly

England comfortably won the third GC Home Internationals tournament at Balgreen CC, Edinburgh in mid-September.

Playing a reduced format as a result of one of Balgreen's four courts being unplayable, England had convincing wins against all three other nations and only dropped two matches across the weekend.

Two of these nations, England and Ireland, will be contesting Tier 1 of the Golf Croquet World Team Championship (for the Openshaw Shield) in New Zealand in January, and both sides named similar sides to those travelling down under.

For England, Harry Fisher came in for Tobi Savage, while Jane Morrison and Conor Broderick played instead of Patsy Fitzgerald and Mark Stephens for Ireland.

Beyond this the teams were those who will line up against the world's best in Nelson, New Zealand: Stephen Mulliner, John-Paul Moberly and Richard Bilton for England; and Simon Williams and Evan Newell for Ireland.

Wales, who were narrowly relegated from Tier 1 in 2016, had their regular line-up of Ian Burrridge, Sarah Melvin and Peter Balchin, and making his first appearance was Rich Waterman.

Scotland has a new no. 1; Lorna Dewar, who has had a great season and took some scalps at the GC World Championship (GCWC) this summer; she lined up with previous players Alan Wilson, Alan Clark and Rosemary Saunders-Robertson.

England v Ireland

The two doubles matches were restricted to a single game each and therefore only counted for half a point each, while the singles were the usual best-of-three matches for a full point each.

England got off to a commanding start by winning all four of the singles matches against Ireland, although Stephen Mulliner did drop a game to Simon Williams, and Richard Bilton had a close match with Conor Broderick, winning 7-6 7-6.

This rendered the doubles round a dead rubber (so maybe it will be best to play that first next year?) and England duly won both games for a test clean sweep.

Scotland v Wales

Points were shared in the doubles round



with a good game win for Wilson & Clark against Burrridge & Melvin, however the rest went Wales' way. Their 4.5-0.5 win over the Scots did not do the games justice as three of the four singles matches went to a third game and all of those were only won at hoop 12 or later.

Local Balgreen member Charlotte Townsend made a delicious lunch for all players, and this was heartily tucked in to, while some players were even spotted applying sun cream for the afternoon!

England v Wales

Continuing his fine form in this event, Burrridge beat Mulliner 2-0 to gain an early valuable point for Wales, but, unfortunately for them, England won all other matches without dropping a game, and, with the night rolling in, it left the final singles match between Bilton and Waterman not needing to be played.

Scotland v Ireland

Ireland needed a response from their drubbing at the hands of England, and Scotland also needed to get points on the board despite their close matches against Wales. The teams proved to be very evenly matched, with Williams beating Dewar at hoop 13 in game three in the battle of the no. 1s, and Saunders-Robertson winning at the same hoop against Broderick.

Newell beat Wilson in two close games to give Ireland the chance to wrap up the test before the doubles, however Clark overcame Morrison in three games to equalise at two points apiece and, when the doubles were also shared, a 2.5-2.5 tie resulted, with those hoop 13s having proved pivotal.

Ireland v Wales

Into the final round on Sunday and the weather took a turn for the worse, and in true Edinburgh style what was a beautiful autumn Saturday turned into a dour and rainy Sunday, forcing spectators to watch from the shelter of the clubhouse.

Ireland won this close test with the top two singles going Wales' way, and the bottom two going Ireland's, before the doubles won the test for the Irish with both games going to hoop 13. This win gave Ireland their first test win of the weekend, and saw off

the wooden spoon.

Scotland v England

England needed three of the available five points to win the tournament, and did so with comfortable singles victories for Moberly, Fisher and Bilton. Scotland, and in particular their star player Dewar, were not to be downhearted and, while the rain fell (and sometimes poured), through good positional play and consistently straight shooting, Dewar took the first game relatively comfortably against 2019 World Championship quarter finalist Mulliner.

However, write the former AC World Champion off at your peril and he raced into an early lead in game two and looked on course to take the match into a decider.

Dewar had other ideas and stayed in touch and took the game to hoop 12 where a fantastic seven-yard jump shot kept her in it, and onwards to hoop 13.

She cleared Mulliner's first ball in front of 13, and, when he missed the hoop with his second ball, Dewar scored the point – to rapturous cheers and applause!

This was individual match performance of the weekend by Dewar, in her first appearance for her country.

A mention also deserves to go to Burrridge, who is still undefeated in singles in this event, and has beaten the English no.1 player 2-0 on all three occasions!

Final standings and test wins:

England 3
Ireland 1.5
Wales 1
Scotland 0.5

Full details are on www.CroquetScores.com.

England: Stephen Mulliner, John-Paul Moberly (capt), Harry Fisher, Richard Bilton.

Ireland: Simon Williams (c), Evan Newell, Jane Morrison, Conor Broderick.

Wales: Ian Burrridge (c), Sarah Melvin, Peter Balchin, Rich Waterman.

Scotland: Lorna Dewar (c), Alan Wilson, Alan Clark, Rosemary Saunders-Robertson.

Photo of the England team by Lorna Dewar.

Championship Series (Ascot Cup)

English National Champion Rachel Gee heads women's successes in three GC Series

Rachel Gee gleefully lifted the Ascot Cup to become the first female winner of the English National Singles Championship title, *reports player / manager Richard Bilton*.

The Hurlingham Club is one of the best venues to host a major tournament and the lawns in excellent condition were complemented by sunny weather over a mid-September weekend.

Among the 16 players were three previous winners as the top three seeds, namely Will Gee, Ian Burrige and Richard Bilton (all members at Nottingham CC), whose grades were separated by just 16 points, as well as many regulars at Championship Level GC events. At the outset it was anyone's guess whose year it would be.

The format was to use best-of-three matches (13-point games) in four blocks of four on Day 1 to determine the top two in each to progress to the Championship knockout.

Blocks A, C and D finished with players on 3, 2, 1 and 0 wins, with block D going to seeding and all matches ending 2-0 except for Chris Roberts taking the middle game against Lionel Tibble.

In block C, Rachel Gee, who had qualified for this event by reaching the semi-final at the Nottingham Open on the who-beat-whom tie-break for second position in her block, was the only player to not drop a game on Day 1, in what looked like the strongest block; and she seemed to be in by far the best form of everyone.

Block B ended with two players on two wins and two on one, which was good news for both Ian Burrige and his 2-1 victor Tim Jolliff as neither player knew they were first and second in the block regardless of their result until afterwards.

Block A saw Euan Burrige win all three matches, although dropping middle games to Will Gee and Tim King (2-7 in both).

Quarter-finals

The eight-player knockout continued the best-of-three 13-point matches and the draw was made at 0915 on Sunday morning

with six of those eight players present.

No-one dared tell Will and Rachel Gee when they arrived that they had been drawn together, courtesy of Will coming second in his block.

Tibble came through the first round against Jolliff, comfortably winning 7-3, 7-4, and Callum Johnson's more measured and controlled approach also brought him a straight games win over Euan Burrige 7-4, 7-6. In the other half of the knock-out, Ian Burrige lost the middle game to Stuart M Smith at hoop 13 but still won 7-3, 6-7, 7-4 to set up a semi-final with club mates Will or Rachel Gee. The Gee's had previously



played ten ranking games and Will was leading that rivalry 7-3, including a 2-1 win in a previous ENSC final at Hurlingham!

But this time it was Rachel who prevailed narrowly, 7-6, 4-7, 7-6.

Semi-finals

In the battle of youth versus experience, Johnson made a great start to his semi-final against Tibble, who then returned the favour in game two, setting up a much closer deciding game.

Johnson took a 6-5 lead and earned himself a shot at hoop 12 for the match but failed to score, allowing Tibble to level at 6-6 and to then exploit Johnson's short first approach to hoop 13, to take the match.

The other semi-final was never going to be a quick one between Ian Burrige and Rachel Gee, two players who know each other's game inside out, and again it went to the last hoop of the third game, with

Gee taking her first chance at hoop 13, to win 7-2, 4-7, 7-6, claiming the other place in the final, having knocked out two former champions en route.

The Final

Rachel Gee v Lionel Tibble

A new name would once again be added to the Ascot Cup for the fifth year running, and going into the final Tibble and Gee had played a remarkable 28 ranking games against each other, with Tibble leading their head-to-head contest 17-11.

Gee had played the most consistent and best croquet throughout the tournament

and she showed no sign of slipping, with solid clearing and hoop running, earning her a solid victory in game 1. However, a slight dip in performance coincided with Tibble finding prime form

in game 2, constantly demonstrating his speciality known as 'being Tibbled' – his irritatingly effective controlled centre-ball clearances from any range which nudges the opponent ball a dozen yards while his own ball

hangs around in the vicinity of the contested hoop – which gave him game 2. However, there was insufficient gold left in the pot for Tibble in game 3 and Gee regained enough form

to take control and the match, 7-4, 2-7, 7-2.

Rachel Gee's much overdue first UK triple crown (the British Open, this ENSC, and the First Eight) victory is very well deserved.

CA Chairman John Bowcott was on hand with congratulations to present Rachel Gee with the Ascot Cup.

He also thanked player / manager Richard Bilton – who had some consolation success himself, beating Stephen Custance-Baker 4-7, 7-4, 7-4 in the final of the Plate.

~

Warm thanks were extended by all to the Hurlingham Club for hosting the event on their 150th anniversary weekend, and preparing the courts so well, including setting four sets of Quadway hoops for the blocks and main knockout.

Competitions

A-Level Series

'No contest' for Smith

Stuart M Smith had wrapped up the A-Level Series before the last event was played at Southwick in early September.

He took an unassailable lead in the 'points race' to the Sussex Open and extended it still further with a third place finish behind local winner Liz Farrow and Robert T Clarke in second, **writes Series Director Chris Roberts**. This meant that Smith had recorded five scoring placements in the ten tournaments that made up the 2019 A-Level Series roster, and it is no wonder that he finished on 38 points, more than twice as many as his nearest rivals Chris Roberts (14) and Tim King (12).



B-Level Series (3+)

"it's not over until it's over"

Andrea Huxley is a long-time supporter of the B-Level Series, going right back to its inaugural year of 2013 in fact, and she finally got reward for her devotion, when she won the 2019 National Final at her home club in mid-September.

Manager Mike Huxley takes up the story of the closest of all National Finals . . .

The field of 16 that assembled at Guildford and Godalming CC had mostly qualified by winning B-Level Series tournament around the country during the season, or in three cases, by accumulation of points for second to fourth places finishes.

Conditions were tricky, with fast lawns and challenging hoops, and the decision was made to time-limit the games so that the full all-play-all matrix could be completed in daylight.

It was a wise decision, with Saturdays eight games finishing at 7.40pm (sunset 7.32pm), to the manager's huge sigh of relief. Sunday's seven rounds were completed before sunset!

At the half way stage, the leaders were Ron Carter (Ealing) and Brian McCausland (Nailsea) on six wins, ahead of five others on one less.

With 13 rounds of the 15 completed, Mike Bilton (Richmond Park) had just reeled off five successive wins to sit on a tally of nine in a share of the lead with Carter. The two qualifiers from Guildford and Godalming, Andrea Huxley and Julie Tremble, were hot on their heels with eight wins.

With two rounds to go, if either Bilton or Carter won their remaining games they couldn't be caught. At this point, Huxley beat Carter 7-1 in a crunch game, and Bilton lost to Jane Tewson on the 13th hoop.

And meanwhile, Trimble had beaten Rob Chatwin, leaving four players tied on nine wins going into the last round.

Trimble and Bilton both lost but Carter and Huxley won, the latter finishing with a run of five straight wins. Net hoops came into play and determined that the 2019 B-Level Series title went to Huxley.

- 1st **Andrea Huxley** 10 wins, net hoops +29
- 2nd Ron Carter 10 wins, net hoops +10
- 3rd Mike Bilton 9 wins, net hoops +9
- 4th Julie Trimble 9 wins, net hoops +2

~

Photographs:

- Championship Series Winner - Rachel Gee
- A-Level Series Winner - Stuart M Smith
- B-Level Series Winner - Andrea Huxley
- C-Level Series Winner - Izzy Poyntz

C-Level Series (7+)

and another tight result!

Izzy Poyntz from Bishop Monkton CC won a very closely contested C-Level National Final on Cheltenham's magnificent courts to become this competition's second champion **reports Manager Ivor Brand**.

The Final brought together 16 players who had qualified by winning one of twenty qualifying tournaments during the year, or by earning points for multiple top four placings.

The manager held some pre-tournament reservations that the eight-game Day 1 schedule required for the favoured all-play-all format might be a stretch too far for players at this level, but he was pleasantly surprised and relieved to find that very few games actually went to the one-hour time limit (apart from the one maverick result of 3-2 between Russell Robinson and Jack Good). At the end of that first day, an exhausted but contented set of players had all experienced the joy of winning or taking part and the leader board had taken shape.

The youngsters, 13-year old Jack Good (Bowdon) and Henry Gosnell (Colchester), five years his senior, had displayed the confidence of youth well in hitting hard and taking on challenging 'jump' shots; however, Poyntz, David Brame (Hunstanton) and Ray Bassett (Cheltenham) were also showing their class and playing beautifully.

The general standard was far higher than the manager had anticipated and the Day 2 programme of seven game to complete the all-play-all format seemed less of a worry.

Unfortunately, the weather turned dramatically overnight as the day went on, the leader board revealed a very open event with new challenges coming from Russell Robinson (Phyllis Court), who only started playing in April and Edwin Bone (Cheltenham) who ended up with nine wins (and three hoop-13 losses).

The tournament remained in the balance going into very last round, with Brame leading the field by one win, but crucially he lost to Charles Sale (Ealing), while Poyntz beat Gosnell to bring her into a tie with Brame on 11 wins.

Poyntz not only enjoyed a 19-points superior net hoop score over Brame, which was the deciding factor, she fully deserved her tournament and title win, having beaten her nearest eight rivals!

- 1st **Izzy Poyntz** (11 wins, + 31 net hoops)
- 2nd Brame 11, +13; 3rd Good 10,+30
- 4th Robinson 10,+15; 5th Gosnell 10,+11

GC Tournaments and Competitions

English National Doubles Championship

Tight & firm hoops provide a real test at Sunny Hunny

Jonathan Powe and Stephen Custance-Baker won the English National GC Doubles Championship at Hunstanton.

Entries were down slightly this year, but twelve pairs enabled the running of two blocks of six (19-point games, all-play-all, with the top two pairs qualifying for the knock-out) on Saturday followed by best-of-three semis and final, plus a plate, on Sunday, **writes Jonathan Powe.**

Hunstanton had prepared the courts extremely well, with very tight hoops set solidly in hard ground, which meant the games took some time to complete as players struggled to run their hoops with any degree of consistency.

As a result, the last game on Saturday finished just after 8pm as the light was beginning to fade and the last hoop of the final on Sunday was run at 7pm.

The qualifiers from Block A were not known until the very end of the final match on Saturday.

If David Bell & Noel Gill had won their final game against Dick Strover & Chris Sheen, they would have qualified in first place (with an impressive 5/5). Had they lost 10-9, they would have qualified in second place on net points. In the end they lost 10-8, which meant that Strover & Sheen (4/5) went

through to knockout in second place with Jonathan Powe & Stephen Custance-Baker (4/5) in first place.

In Block B, Lionel Tibble & Jayne Stevens took first place (4/5) with Stuart M Smith & Steve Leonard (3/5) squeezing into the runner-up place on net hoops, just above Nick Archer & David Thirtle-Watts (3/5).

On Sunday, the manager arranged a knock-out plate, which saw Tim King & John Bowcott prevail at the 19th hoop in the single 19-point game final (10/9) against Archer & Thirtle-Watts.

In the main knock-out semis, Powe & Custance-Baker beat Smith & Leonard 7-5, 5-7, 7-2, and Tibble & Stevens beat Strover & Sheen 7-5, 3-7, 7-5.

The final was a long and closely fought match, which could have gone either way. In the end, Powe & Custance-Baker took the match and title 7-6, 4-7, 7-4.

Patricia Duke-Cox presented the Ranelagh Cups to the winners and



thanked the hosts for their preparatory work beforehand and their hospitality throughout the weekend. Special thanks must go to David Thirtle-Watts for setting the hoops so well and to Richard Bilton, who selflessly managed the event with impressive efficiency.

GC Federations Shield Final

Wycombe are first winners

Patricia Duke-Cox, a Vice-President of the Croquet Association and a Nottingham Club member, arrived early to set the courts before teams arrived, **reports Alan Clark.**

Ripon Spa fielded Ted Flexman (0), Jane Pringle (1), Roger l'Anson (3) and Sue l'Anson (7) against Wycombe's Alan Clark (0), Keith Toovey (3), Mark Higgins (3) and Marc Allen (8), playing the well-established seven rubber Inter-Club format.

In the doubles, Pringle took a break from successfully jumping long angled hoops, and had the misfortune to peel a Wycombe ball through hoop 12 from four feet, which was an unsatisfactory way to decide such a close match, but Wycombe took the point.

However, Ripon Spa won both their singles to hold a one-match lead at lunch.

In the afternoon session, High Wycombe fought back well as Clark and Toovey won their singles matches to take the score to 3-2 in their favour, only to see Roger l'Anson win a tight match for Ripon Spa, over an informal, but match-inexperienced, Higgins.

With the overall score at 3-3, everyone's attention was focused on the final decisive match, where High Wycombe were one game to the good.

Sue l'Anson informed the crowd that she was 2-6 down in the second, against Marc Allen, who kept shooting hoops from long range. He carried on with this tactic, ignoring opponent's well positioned balls, . . .

Continued at foot of the next page

When 6-5 up, playing with Red and Yellow, and having to concede hoop 12 (say with the Blue ball in the jaws), the Cheltenham CA GC POD considered the best possible position for the Red to take in preparation for hoop 13.

This was determined as about 4-5 yards west of the East Boundary just under the halfway line, for two main reasons.

Firstly, its subsequent approach line to hoop 13 is along the blind side of the hoop, the first 2-3 yards past the hoop being in the shadow area of the hoop from opponent balls around or to the south of hoop 12.

If a wired position is found in this area, the opponent is unable to clear it with either Black or Blue and an unopposed first shot at hoop 13 is achieved.

Secondly, it is further away from the other ball around hoop 12 (Black), denying

GC Pod 'tactics' Approaches to hoop 13

your opponent a chance to glance Black off it to gain legitimate early position at hoop 13.

There are three main antidotes available to the opponent to this: one positional, one sequential and one both positional and sequential.

Firstly, position the Black ball four yards to the west of the peg, just under the halfway line.

From here Black will have a 15-18 yard open clearance shot at Red available. However, Yellow could simply join Red's halfway position, taking a blind-sided wired position from Blue when it runs 12 and ends up even further south.

Secondly, if Black can promote-rush the

Blue jawsed ball through hoop 12, the sequence is now changed in relation to the Red halfway ball; the Blue is able to take position before Red, negating the advantage of a shadowed wired position of Red.

Thirdly, the opponent could position the Black ball south of hoop 12 in rushing position for the Blue when it runs hoop 12 under control.

The subsequent rush (only played if a blind-sided position is achieved by Red, and that is known before Black plays) allows Blue to either attempt hoop 13 if possible, or clear the Red before it plays.

It is risky leaving Black behind but better than surviving a free shot at the hoop, and Black and/or Blue will have further clearance shots at Red and Yellow.

Andrew Cowing,
Cheltenham CA GC POD coordinator

Recent Coaching Appointments

There have been over 40 new coaches' appointments so far this year – either brand new or having progressed to a higher grade – and I hope they have all had a rewarding time coaching over the summer months.

Some more, having completed their initial training, have now completed all the extra sessions required and have all become Club Coaches:

Club Coaches

Sheila Hird - Brodsworth Hall
Peter March - Finchley Victoria
Barry Holland - Surbiton
Graham Williams - Bransgore

Thanks to all the course organisers, extra session supervisors and examining coaches.

The new courses, both CTC (Coach Training) and CQC (Coach Qualification), are being finalised and will be entered into the Fixtures Calendar for 2020.

These courses are always popular, so be sure to reserve a place.

People often ask when they might next attend a CTC and the answer is that such courses usually take place toward the beginning of the season, so please do look out for them.

Examining coaches are often found touring the country in response to requests from 'out of the way' regions, so do also look out for courses advertised locally or through your Federation.

If nothing is obvious, please register your interest with your Federation Coaching Officer.

Sarah Hayes,
Coaching Committee Chair

The Coaching Awards 2019

The usual advert for the Coaching Awards may be found within these pages.

There were no awards made for 2018, which was a great shame.

I am sure there are hundreds of players out there who have received coaching during the season, that's all handicaps and across both codes – so, come on!

Whilst the weather is grim and most lawns are closed, grab some paper and get nominating!

Please don't be too concerned if you are no William Shakespeare – just send your thoughts to me by email and I can take it from there.

If a few more details are needed, I will ask, and a nomination will soon take shape.

Those poor coaches across the land all unloved – put a smile back on their faces... please.

Coach of the Year

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

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

More information on:- <https://www.croquet.org.uk/?p=members/docs/committees/coaching/coty>

Nominations close on 31 January 2020

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

Lifetime Coaching Award

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

AC International Performance Director (AC IPD)

As announced previously in the Gazette, Rich Waterman was appointed AC International Performance Director (AC IPD), and I thank him for stepping into this role.

Rich needs some statistics about the delivery and participation in any AC Coaching Pods that have been run this season.

If you have organised or run AC Pods, please gather the following information:

How many Pods have been held, which ones, where, and how many players attended?

Our AC IPD will be preparing a report for our February meeting and will be in touch in due course, so please do get everything ready now; it will greatly help.

Welcome Rich – I look forward to working with you.

Sarah Hayes

Continued from previous page

... favouring shooting at the hoop itself, much to the concern of his teammates and amusement of the Ripon Spa players. - After hoop 11 the score was 6-5!

Allen then ran a long hoop 12 to win 7-5, proving his tactics were sound after all, giving High Wycombe an overall narrow victory.

Patricia Duke-Cox made an eloquent presentation speech before we all retired for tea, cakes and amicable banter.

It was only at this point (cake time) that we found out that amongst the crowd were some famous players – Ian BurrIDGE, Rachael Gee and Will Gee to name but a few – and the Gees were so carried away with the celebrations that they each had a piece of cake (twice).

The inaugural Handicap GC Inter-Federation Shield final was a great day for grassroots club croquet, the Nottingham crowd and the CA.

Photo: High Wycombe's Alan Clark playing for Scotland at Camerton & Peasedown in the World Teams in 2016 (by Chris Roberts)



The last half roll of the last wrong ball . . .

Continued from page 13

The kernel of NH's argument appears to be that if Rule 10.1.5(d) disapplies Rule 10.2, it follows that a "reverse" Rule 10.2 automatically applies (i.e. where the word "not" is inserted after the word "are" in Rules 10.2.1 and 10.2.2). I see nothing in the Rules or in common sense to justify such a conclusion.

In fact, Rule 7.1.2 provides clear guidance pointing in the opposite direction because it defines that a point is scored for the side that owns a ball that passes through a hoop in order as a result of a stroke and does not require that the stroke be played by the owner of the ball. Were it otherwise, peels on the opponent would not count.

Let us imagine a situation where Bab and Ray, having exchanged colours for several turns in which Bab ran a hoop in order when playing R, somehow reverted to playing in sequence with the correct colours and then, while playing lawfully, realised that, earlier in the game, Bab had played R and scored a point with it. In such a case, Rule 7.1.2 directs that the point was scored for Ray as the owner of R. This conclusion arises solely from the wording of Rule 7.1.2.

Similarly, had Bab and Ray somehow reverted to playing in sequence with the correct colours and then, after playing lawfully for several turns, one of them

played a ball out of sequence and play was then stopped, Rule 10.2 would direct that the point was scored for the opponent. However, this is simply an expression of the principle of Rule 7.1.2 and was included in Rule 10 to provide players with a convenient local reminder when they might wonder if previously scored points counted after a period of playing out of sequence.

Consideration of these two scenarios suggests that, in the Stuart Smith situation, the better answer might have been to apply Rule 7.1.2 and let all the points scored before the Rule 10.5.4 error remain. The players would then no doubt try harder to remember which balls they were supposed to be playing for the rest of the game!

However, as I have said before, the facts of the situation should always be investigated and reviewed by the referee in order to reach an equitable solution under Rule 15.3.

Having re-read my reply to Stuart Smith in Gazette 380 on page 10, it would have been clearer and better if I had written in the penultimate paragraph "(b) to apply the principle of Rule 7.1.2..." instead of "(b) to apply the principle of Rule 10.2, even though it has been disapplied...".

I note that NH ends his letter with a reference to using Rule 15.3 to invoke Rule 7.5 (hoop run out of order). There was no suggestion in the Stuart Smith situation



that any hoops had been run out of order so Rule 7.5 was not relevant.

As explained in my previous reply in Gazette 380 at page 11, the policy adopted by the WCF GCRC is to avoid cluttering up the Rules with text dealing with vanishingly rare situations, typically those caused by the players committing a combination of irregularities. Instead, the WCF GCRC chose to provide Rule 15.3 as an Overriding Rule to allow a referee to give an equitable solution based on the particular facts of an unusual case.

Stephen Mulliner,
Chairman, GC Rules Committee

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Fairy Rings and Levelling – Part 2

The lawn I created from a paddock had 17" difference in height between the highest and lowest points and I decided to level and reseed the lawn. This is a project that I undertook on my own without any assistance except a JCB and driver and the local farmer with a tractor and trailer.

At the heart of this project was a laser survey and the resulting spreadsheet proved to be invaluable.

There were very destructive Type 1 fairy rings to dig out; in a straight line they measured 106 metres and the amount of material removed and carted away was over 80 tonnes.

To kill any remaining mycelium I spread bicarbonate of soda in the bottom of the trenches. The spreadsheet calculated that to fill these trenches and level the lawn, 11" should be removed from the high spots to fill the low spots.

This proved to be incredibly accurate and at the end of the job there was about half a tonne of soil left over. The soil here is very stony so I dug out the hoop areas and filled with sifted soil.

It took a day to remove the fairy rings and a further two days to laser level the area and apply forty tonnes of British Sugar Top Soil across the lawn.

Over the next two weeks I seeded the lawn and covered the seed with seeding compost. But high winds and fourteen inches of rain made this a start/stop operation.

Nevertheless, the germination has been excellent and the new grass has plenty of time to establish ready for some excellent croquet next year.

The total cost of levelling including the JCB, seed, seeding compost, fertiliser and 40 tonnes of British Sugar Top Soil was £2010.

Duncan Hector (contact details: see my advert, left)

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For details or discussion, contact Dave Trimmer
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www.davetrimmermallets.com



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Enjoying England's cricket success on an i-pad at Hunstanton this summer were (standing from left) Phil Cordingley, Richard Forman, John Reddish, Hugh Carlisle, David Tutt (partly hidden), Mike Bowser, and seated, Jonathan Toye and Phil Eardley.



Voting members of CA Council

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The Croquet Association Website

www.croquet.org.uk is a fabulous resource for croquet information covering: membership, news, laws & rules, coaching, who is who, and tournament details (complete with an on-line entry system).

Croquet jargon

The CA website also has a full glossary of croquet terms, jargon and acronyms that are sometimes used in Gazette reporting.

To find the glossary go to:
Advice & Technical/ Other Articles / Croquet Jargon
or use this link:

<https://www.croquet.org.uk/?p=tech/other/jargon>

Publication Details

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Copy should reach the Editor before the 20th of the month before publication is due.

However if you have something that you think the Editor may be willing to expand this deadline for, please contact him direct.

E-mail contributions, including tournament reports should be sent direct to the Editor, or copied to the Editor if they are being posted to the Nottingham List.

Digital images are preferred, but photographic prints may also be acceptable.

Please send digital jpeg or tiff format files.

Please accompany all images with a description of the subject.

If you require any material to be returned please enclose an SAE. Queries regarding the delivery of the Gazette to members should be directed to the Manager of the Croquet Association and not to the Editor.

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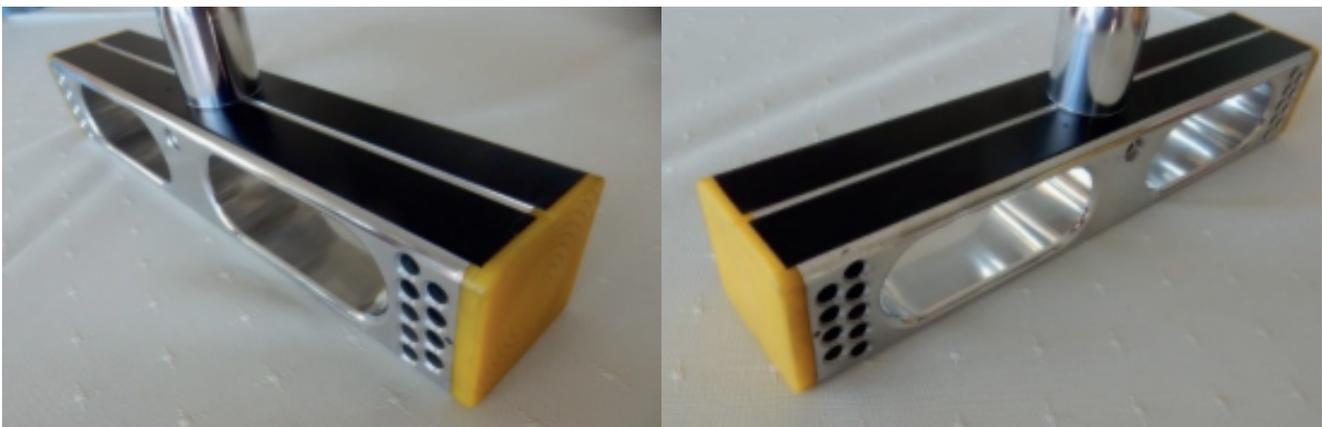
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