

*The*

*Issue 377 December 2018*

# CROQUET

*Gazette*

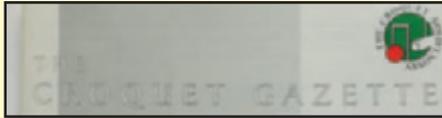
David  
Maugham's  
**Year of  
THE BEAST**



# From our files

researched by Frances Colman

## 10 years ago - 2008



### John Prescott, a favour returned –

Readers will recall that the Rt Hon John Prescott MP received (for him) unwelcome and adverse press coverage when playing on a croquet lawn at Dorneywood in Buckinghamshire.

At the time Mr Prescott was taking a break from a working session that preceded it.

Unfortunately he was Deputy Prime Minister at the time. Tony Blair having departed the country some two hours previously the press took the view, somewhat unreasonably, some might think, that Mr Prescott should have been sitting with his finger on the proverbial button at all times at 10 Downing Street. . . (it was) excellent publicity for Croquet.

To return the favour, albeit unintentional, Alan Pidcock made an extra special mallet for Mr Prescott, the MP for Hull East, and by fortune the nearby Beverley Club play on the laws in the grounds of Rowley Manor Hotel.

At a luncheon there, Patricia Duke-Cox, the vice chairman of the CA Council, presented the mallet, with gratitude from all members of the Association, to Mr Prescott.

One side of the mallet is beautifully engraved "for services to croquet at Dorneywood May 2006".

*- The famous (and very lucrative) photograph was actually taken by a local newspaper photographer friend of mine Garry Trotter, who couldn't believe his luck when, whilst out walking his dog, he spotted Mr Prescott playing croquet. Garry made a small fortune. Some people get all the luck! – Ed.*

~

### GC All England Handicap Final – . . . By

Saturday evening, last year's winner Richard Harris (5) was out in front with Ryan Cabble (4), and close behind was another 15 year-old, James Goodbun (3) . . . Colin Davies (4) came through in fourth place (in the block) and these four contested the semis, where Ryan beat Colin 10-5 and James beat Richard 10-4. The final was the best-of-three 13 points between the two youngsters.

Ryan did not use his extra turn in either game, James was always aware of the threat and was perhaps forced to take more risks. Ryan won 7-5, 7-5. (Report by Freda Vitty).

## 50 years ago - 1968



### Front Cover Letter –

Test Fund as of 30 November 1968 totals £1,250.

Dear Sir,

As members of the test team, we would like to express our appreciation of the efforts made by so many people during recent months in order to make our forthcoming tour possible.

It is doubtful whether a team could have been sent to defend the MacRobertson Shield without the generous support of so many Associates. The magnificent response to the appeal for funds and the very hard work done by our vice-president, Gerald Williams, in pursuit of that object have made it possible for a team truly representative of this country to be sent to Australia . . .

Yours sincerely,

G.N. Aspinall, R.W. Bray, B.G. Neal, W.P. Ormerod, J.W. Solomon, D.F. Strachan.

~

**Test Tour publicity** – Negotiations are well advanced for the results of both the State and Test matches to appear in the Daily Telegraph on the following day . . . short accounts of the test matches will be published in this paper. It is hoped that similar arrangements can be made with The Times. It is also expected that an interview with the President, Mr M.B. Reckitt, will be broadcast by the B.B.C. in their radio programme "Today" on the morning of the teams' departure on January 23rd.

*(A detailed itinerary of the tour, showed an expected arrival in Australia on 27 January and departure on 10 March).*

~

**Roehampton** – It is a thousand pities that Roehampton, the headquarters of Croquet for so long, should shortly be reduced to four lawns, thus making it impossible for a tournament to be held there as a minimum of five lawns is essential as prescribed by the C.A. . . .

Some of the games in the September tournament were played at Hurlingham as the programme was fully charged for the seven lawns at Roehampton . . . So ended Roehampton's swan song, but we still hope the management will relent . . .

## 100 years ago - 1918



### Lieut. P.S. Preston, R.F.A.

#### Killed in action

We much regret to announce the death of 2nd Lieut. P.S. Preston, R.F.A., who was killed in action on March 28, 1918.

Mr. Philip Southwell Preston, of The Clock House, Braintree, aged 34, was the second son of the late Percival R.S. Preston, of Marshalls, Braintree.

He was educated at Felsted, and after being articled with Messrs. Cunnington, Son, and Orfeur, of Braintree, was admitted as a solicitor in 1906, continuing subsequently in practice with the same firm.

In 1909 he was appointed Deputy Coroner for East Essex, a post which he continued to hold until his death. He obtained a commission in the Royal Field Artillery in July, 1916, and went to the front the following month. After being wounded in September, 1917, he returned to the front last January.

~

### Military Cross Awarded to

#### Capt. G.L. Reckitt

The Military Cross has been awarded to Capt. G.L. Reckitt, Royal Sussex Regiment, for gallantry in the field early in March last. "The Times" of May 15th contains the following reference: "Capt. G.L. Reckitt, Royal Sussex Regiment, carried out a raid on the enemy's trenches at very short notice at a time when identifications were urgently required. He handled his party with great skill, and set them a splendid example of contempt of danger. By his keenness and initiative he contributed very largely to the success of the operation."

~

### Gift for Recreation of Wounded Soldiers

"A Player at Work" (an Associate) has again generously placed at the disposal of the Secretary of the C.A. the sum of £5 to assist appeals made on behalf of hospitals for wounded soldiers in reference to the supply of croquet balls, mallets, etc. The Secretary begs to announce that he has distributed the amount amongst the following institutions:- Private Auxiliary Red Cross Hospital, Felthorpe Hall, Norwich; Horbling V.A.D. Hospital, Folkingham, Lincs.; High Rough Military Hospital, Haslemere, Surrey.

# Editorial

Whilst the Gazette cover and centre page spread rightly celebrate David Maugham's wonderful year (and further congratulations to him), there is a 'Red Hot Topic' comprehensively detailed in this issue, namely the upcoming **CHANGES TO THE GC RULES** (pages 18-19).

Stephen Mulliner calms the nerves for anxious GC players with a step by step guide as to what has and has not changed (it's not as much as you might think).

This issue also has a big focus on coaching courses and our comprehensive guide lays out the many offerings from our three Croquet Academies in easy to read tables, so it's never been easier to choose your course and register before all the places go.

If your loved one is stuck for what to get you for Christmas, drop a heavy hint in the direction of an Academy course!

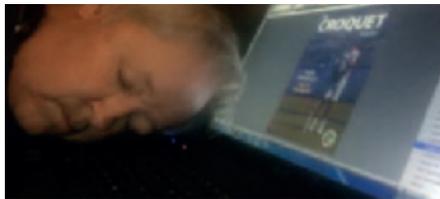
Elsewhere, this is a magazine in the true sense with a variety of articles covering everything from CA meetings and awards, though club improvements, right up to playing croquet on an ants nest (yes really!).

The GC World Championship is being hosted in Sussex and Kent in July and this issue starts the build up to that with the splendid news that a title sponsor has been announced and the event will be known as

## **The WCF Simon Carter Golf Croquet World Championship**

Huge thanks to Simon and his internationally renowned menswear brand for this wonderful and generous support.

Closer to (my) home, I was delighted to welcome CA President Quiller Barrett to Phyllis Court CC at Henley-on-Thames last month for a special dinner celebrating the club's first 50 years of CA membership. I thank Quiller for his attendance and his warm congratulatory words.



## **Chris Roberts**

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The  
**CROQUET**  
Gazette



Issue 377 December 2018

**Front cover:** David Maugham, who apparently has never been on a Gazette cover before. This Editor is delighted to put that right (photo by Ed.).

**This page:** The Editor who really should get more sleep, and the new Chairman all smiles.

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# Chairman's Column

The CA strives to build a structure that facilitates your enjoyment of croquet. We now have about 5000 members and they have various needs.

Some just want to be left alone but many others do want to become more involved in the 'croquet family' because it is fun.

A part of that family is competitive and some of it very competitive but all of it supports croquet.

Much of the CA's recent work has involved taking this opportunity to more people.

My predecessor has written about his disappointment that the take up of standard membership has not been greater. He was right to point out that by not doing so non-tournament players miss out on something tailor-made for them.

I hope that they reinvestigate this and I can help them to do so.

As a governing body we want to help both generally and specifically.

A part of the plan to do this has been a review of our governance.

It involved not only our decision-making process but also the way that we communicate with our members.

At whatever level you play or whatever your interest in croquet you need these to be transparent, responsive and consequently helpful.

We propose such an environment.

At its October meeting, Council agreed to reduce the number of its voting members to 12 with each being elected from 7 constituencies.

These would be based upon one or more existing Federations and would be entitled to return a number of Council members that reflected roughly its share of the total CA membership.

That meeting also agreed that the governing body should limit its role to 'high level' policy, strategic initiatives and scrutiny of the Executive Board (previously the Management Committee) which will be charged with the day to day running of croquet.

A new Working Party has been asked to prepare proposals for the changes to the Constitution that are needed to adopt this structure and also develop a procedure

for holding the constituency elections. It is hoped that these can be presented to the Management Committee and Council in January.

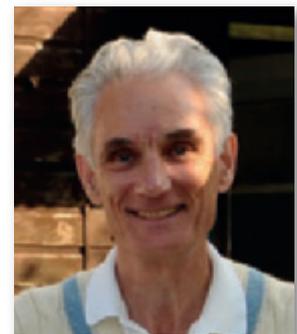
If endorsed, arrangements will be made to seek the approval of the CA membership as early as March if possible. There will be more information about this in the New Year.

October is often a time of personnel changes.

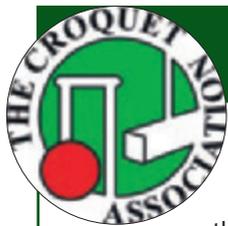
Brian Shorney stood down after two years as Chairman but still promises an active involvement.

Jeff Dawson, Martin French, Dave Kibble and David Mooney retired from Council and are replaced by Sam Murray, John Reddish and Chris Roberts.

The 'leavers' have given great service; it is up to us replacements to make it a 'good swap'!



**John Bowcott**



## Annual General Meeting of the Croquet Association

A number of members wrote their names in the attendance book, but the terrace room at Hurlingham looked a lot fuller than that.

### Council's Report

Council's report was presented by its Chairman, Brian Shorney, who was coming to the end of his term of office.

He noted that Council and its officers had again been heavily occupied by the membership and governance changes, and on top of that there had been a complete turnover of staff in the office and shop at Cheltenham.

He apologised to those members who had been adversely affected by this, but was confident that once the new staff had gained experience the normal high standards of service would be resumed.

He was pleased, and to some extent relieved, by the progress made with supporting Standard Membership, but somewhat disappointed by the lower than hoped-for take-up.

The CA now has just short of 5,000 members, out of an estimated 7,500 club members.

Progress with changing governance had also been slower than he wanted, though some had been made and more was possible at the afternoon Council meeting.

Although change was desirable, he was satisfied that the CA continued to be fundamentally well run.

He congratulated David Maugham on his astonishing feat of winning nine out of the eleven domestic AC Championships and thanked all those who had supported him during his chairmanship.

### A questions to the Chairman

The issue of the level of the CA's reserves was again raised by Hugh Carlisle.

Brian Shorney agreed that it was a matter of policy rather than book-keeping, but pointed out that Council had been

spending some of the capital, on things like the National Development Officer and investing in IT, and asked the Treasurer, Peter Death, to give a detailed analysis.

He noted that total reserves had fallen by £11K in 2017 and a further significant fall was expected this year.

George Noble and others raised the proposed change to abolish the concept of primary membership, to which his and a number of other clubs had raised objections.

He was assured by the President that Council would take these into account.

There being no further questions, Brian was thanked to applause for his thoughtful leadership over the last two years.

### Changes to Governance proposals

Jonathan Isaacs, a Vice-President who had been chairing a working group on governance, then outlined the proposals which were to be considered by Council that afternoon.

The essence of them was to take a step-wise approach, starting by reducing the size of the Council from over 30 to 12 voting members, elected by CA members on a geographical constituency basis.

The new Council would be tasked with deciding policy and scrutinising the effectiveness of an Executive Board in carrying it out.

The working committees, which have generally been working well, would continue unchanged while that change was made.

The meeting was assured that it would have the final say, either at an SGM in the spring or next year's AGM, if Council approved them.

### Remaining business

The remaining business moved more swiftly, starting with the Treasurer's report, much of which had already been given in reply to the question about reserves.

The elections were uncontested, though

there was a vacancy on Council arising from the later withdrawal of one of the candidates.

Patricia Duke-Cox was elected a Vice-President *nem. con* (*see opposite page*).

### Awards

The recipients of the most improved AC player awards, Chris Coull and Sarah Melvin, were at the rival attraction of an AC development squad weekend at Ealing, where the trophies were presented, but Richard Bilton was available to receive the Spiers Trophy for the most improved GC player in 2017 (*see page 7*).

Roger Mills received the Coach of the Year award and Ian Plummer a lifetime one.

Jeff Dawson and Michael Hague were presented with Council Medals (*see page 6*).

18 members were awarded CA Diplomas.

### A O B

At AOB, Roger Barnacle, speaking on behalf of Ian Harrison, asked for more flexibility to be given to experienced club handicappers and was assured that this would be considered by the Handicap Committee.

Thomas Wills-Sandford, while noting that the Nottingham List was quite independent of the CA, asked contributors to be less aggressive to each other.

### President's closing remarks

In closing the meeting, Quiller Barrett welcomed the increased number of women involved in administering the sport, and suggested that clubs that were finding it difficult to get their members to volunteer might benefit from following good practice elsewhere.

He also praised Kevin Carter for organising the annual Charity One-Ball competition, which had raised over £35,000 for various charities. Next year's cause would be Alzheimer's research.

**Ian Vincent, Hon. Secretary**

Stop Press  
re: Nottingham List, see page 30.

### Hello from the new Chair of the Marketing Committee

Hello there, fellow croquet-ista!

I have recently started in my new role and am excited to develop my ideas and build on the work of my predecessors.

I am still finding my feet and learning how the CA operates, but I have been given a warm welcome by the rest of my committee and the CA 'top brass'.

The Marketing Committee has a broad strategic and operational remit and I will use this column to update Members on

current work, with additional articles from time-to-time. My particular interests are:

- getting young players in to competitive croquet,
- encouraging the CA and regional Federations to be more data-driven,
- growing the number of volunteers in the

## AGM elects Patricia Duke-Cox as a Vice President



**C**ouncil nominated Patricia Duke-Cox as a Vice-President of the Croquet Association at the 2018 Annual General Meeting and she was duly elected.

Patricia served on Council as a Federation Representative and as an independently elected member from 2000 – 2012.

In 2008 she was elected Council's first female chairman in modern times.

She has been a stalwart of the East Midlands Federation and is currently its chairman. She founded, and was for some years the backbone of, Woodhall Spa Croquet Club, but is now secretary of Pinchbeck CC and also a member of Nottingham CC.

Patricia plays both Association and Golf croquet.



New Vice-President Patricia Duke-Cox with President Quiller Barrett

She has a particular interest in junior croquet, organising matches against Irish Juniors in the years when they were able to raise a team, and introducing a bursary system with support from Stephen Mulliner.

As a librarian she is very interested in the history of the CA and was delighted to receive items on behalf of the CA from Tremaine Arkley of the USA, with knowledgeable support from Roger Bray, a noted collector of items relating to croquet.

Since retiring from Council she has retained an interest in CA affairs and recently served on the Governance Working Party.

## October Council meeting

**S**am Murray, Chris Roberts and John Reddish were welcomed as new members of Council, and Patricia Duke-Cox as a returning friend.

**John Bowcott** was elected to take over from Brian Shorney as **Chairman of Council**, with **John Dawson** as **Vice-Chairman** and Chairman of the Management Committee.

~

A number of committees have new chairmen:

- Frances Colman** (Handicap)
- Eugene Chang** (Marketing)
- Brian Havill** (Publishing)
- Lionel Tibble** (GC Selection)
- Beatrice McGlen** (AC Tournaments)
- Jonathan Powe** (GC Tournaments)

~

The main business, as foreshadowed at the AGM, was to consider the Governance proposals, which were again presented by Jonathan Isaacs.

After a substantial discussion, in which various valuable points of detail

were raised, it was agreed by a majority that the Chairman of Council should be elected by the body itself, rather than the wider membership, after which the other proposals were agreed unanimously.

Strat Liddiard, who had chaired the working party that researched and developed the original proposals, was thanked for having done the groundwork.

The next steps are to draft the necessary changes to the Constitution and draw up a detailed plan for implementation, with the aim of implementing them next year.

~

Arising from the AGM, it was agreed to promote the Charity One-Ball Tournament through the fixtures book, waiving any levy that might otherwise accrue so that the charity would benefit to the maximum extent.

~

The financial reserves would be considered, along with a risk assessment, at the January Meeting, and the concerns

about Primary Membership were noted.

~

The AC International Performance Director's budget was agreed, after the Management Committee had enforced the policy that only coaches, rather than players, should receive expenses.

It was agreed to buy six sets of Atkins Quadway hoops and refurbish the President's Cup ones.

However, the proposed differential rates for lawn and ball hire charges, the top rate of which the Management Committee had restricted to larger events, were referred back for further consideration.

The new, 5th Edition, of the GC Rules was adopted for use from 1 March next year.

Finally, the new Chairman exhorted his colleagues to work as a team to serve the enlarged membership, emphasising the need for leadership, good communication and mutual support.

**Ian Vincent, Hon. Secretary**

sport, both regionally and nationally.

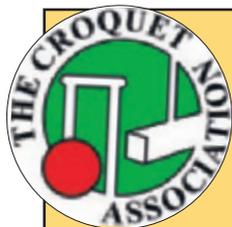
I am always open to ideas and feedback – so please contact me (details below).

About me: *I started croquet as a teenager in 2000 and have thus been around awhile, although I am \*still\* considered very young in the croquet community! Having left academia*

*in 2017, I am now a data analyst at the Department for Education, working in both London and Sheffield, with family roots in Bath. I try to build on this regular travel to get round the UK croquet circuit. I've also played some top-level AC events in the USA, NZ and Ireland. Croquet has given me many life-long*

*friends, a chance to be competitive at sports, and has occupied my summers for the last 15 years, and I would love for more people to catch the croquet bug the same way I have!*

**Eugene Chang**  
Chairman of the Marketing Committee  
etychang@gmail.com



## Council Medals for Jeff Dawson and Michael Hague



**J**eff Dawson has contributed hugely to the administration of the sport of croquet over many years.

He has been a member of Council since 2003, chaired it from 2012 - 2014, and has chaired the Management, Marketing and AC Laws Committees.

This year Jeff has served on our Publishing, ICT, Laws and International committees.

Before that, he ran the CA Shop from his garage for seven years, before it moved to Cheltenham.

For many years Jeff has been an Examining Referee, running courses at various clubs in the South East Federation.

However, Jeff's outstanding contribution



has been in the field of membership administration, both its policy and implementation.

He inspired, and guided through Council and a Special General Meeting, the change to enlarge the CA's national membership to include all members of its member clubs.

Having nursed the membership database used in the CA Office for many years, he has been actively involved in the project to replace it, and also in the process of uploading and importing details of the new members.

It is therefore timely that he should be awarded the Council Medal for his outstanding work in so many respects.

**S**ince 2000 Michael Hague has been responsible for many significant advances in the coaching and development of croquet.

Michael started playing in 1996 at the age of 61.

Building on his experience of coaching in many sports during his Army service, he soon qualified as a Grade 1 Coach, and at the same time took over as the South East Federation Schools, Coaching Officer and Development Officer.

In April 2001 Michael organised the first CA Coaches Qualification Course at Surbiton. He devised a two-day course to train coaches, and wrote the course manual.

He then was the lead coach at seven major clubs around the country, and the format he developed became the model for all CA coach training courses.

His coaching has included courses in five overseas countries, one of which was given in Italian!

His work included referees' courses and contributing to the structure of the present GC referee examination process, including the introduction of mock exams.

Michael was a leading instigator of the first 'AC Coaching Manual', insisting that the format of coaching novices should be arranged in short, easily assimilated sessions which together form the six basic

lesson structure, still used as the framework for delivering elementary coaching today.

Michael is both a GC Examining Coach and Championship Referee.



He was Coach of the Year in 2002, and officiated at the 2004 and 2016 World Golf Croquet Championships.

His knowledge has been captured in his many articles published in the Gazette in 2003 and 2004, culminating in his book *Golf Croquet Tactics*, first published in 2005. It is now in its second revised edition, and is used as a textbook by GC players today.

Michael's development work within the South-East Federation has seen a large number of new clubs formed and blossoming over many years.

During his tenure of office, Michael has been instrumental in helping to devise progressive policies to assist start-up clubs and aid sustainable recruitment.

His forensic and insightful analysis of grant applications has been a significant part of the effectiveness of the CA grant-awarding process, and his recent resignation after 17 years of service on the Development Committee will be a sad loss.

Michael has left a splendid legacy.

## CA hope to double-up as BBC Countryfile goes North

The CA has been able to showcase croquet for the last two years during the four-day BBC Countryfile Live event at Blenheim Palace and to give hundreds of visitors the opportunity "to give croquet a go".

In 2019 Countryfile Live is doubling-up; in addition to Blenheim Palace on 1-4 August, a second event is to be held at Castle Howard, Yorkshire, on 15-18 August.

The CA would also like to double-up and take its successful croquet experience to "God's Own County".

This depends on two factors. The first is getting a suitable area of the Castle Howard parkland that can be mown as a croquet lawn (that decision will not be taken until April/May); the second is having a squad of enthusiastic croquet players to supervise

the public playing croquet over the four days.

It's good fun, as the Blenheim squad of volunteers will testify, and there is free entrance to the Countryfile Live Show.

If you are interested in joining the Castle Howard volunteer squad email Anna Giraud of the Yorkshire Federation at [eag.giraudnet@gmail.com](mailto:eag.giraudnet@gmail.com).

**John Dawson**



## The WCF Simon Carter Golf Croquet World Championship

The 2019 GC World Championship is being hosted in the UK by Sussex County Croquet Club (at Southwick, near Brighton) and three other South East Clubs – Compton (Eastbourne), Tunbridge Wells and West Worthing.

The organizing Committee is delighted to announce that Simon Carter Ltd, an internationally renowned menswear brand, has agreed to be the championship main sponsor.

The championship will be known as:

### The WCF Simon Carter Golf Croquet World Championship 2019

Simon Carter is well known on the UK Golf Croquet tournament circuit as a highly accomplished player.

His support will go a long way in making this a superb spectacle for golf croquet lovers.

Simon said:

*"I'm delighted to be the principal sponsor for the 2019 Golf Croquet World Championships. As a passionate player of the game, this seems a natural fit to bring my brand to a wider audience and an opportunity to design a dedicated collection of croquet clothing."*

#### Gearing up for hosting

Sussex County Croquet Club (SCCC) has invested heavily in their lawns over



the last five years. All have been re-laid and promise to give the competitors some challenging conditions.

All the clubs hosting the event are gearing up to welcome visitors and at SCCC coach parties will be welcome, as well as

spectators travelling by car or public transport.

Parking facilities are being planned adjacent to the club for both coaches and cars.

#### Schedule and spectator opportunities

The opening ceremony will be held on Friday 26 July with play commencing on 27 July at all four venues, culminating in the World Championship Final at SCCC on Sunday 4 August.

Jonathan Isaacs, Chairman of the Organising Committee, said:

*"This promises to be a fantastic championship, with the Egyptians and many other top world competitors, including the current World Champion Reg Bamford, demonstrating golf croquet at its very best."*

Visitors organising a club day out are welcome to come by coach and SCCC will be offering a full range of catering options, a licensed bar and plenty of good viewing facilities.

~

For more details a dedicated website at [www.gcworlds2019.org](http://www.gcworlds2019.org) has been launched for use by both visitors and competitors.

Jonathan Isaacs,  
Chairman of the Organising Committee,

**WCF Simon Carter  
Golf Croquet  
World Championship 2019**

## The Most Improved Players of 2017 receive their awards

The Most Improved Player awards are usually all presented at the following season's AGM by President Quiller Barrett, but this year only GC winner Richard Bilton was able to be present. The AC winners Chris Coull and Sarah Melvin were attending an IPDS training weekend at Ealing, and so received their trophies there from IPD (AC) Director Alison Maugham (photographs by Chris Roberts and J-P Moberly).

Spiers Trophy (GC) - Richard Bilton



Apps Memorial Bowl (Male AC) - Chris Coull



Steel Bowl (Female AC) - Sarah Melvin



## Give good tossers the right to choose

Dear Sir,

I read Tony Salem's letter in the November issue regarding the toss with delight.

I have been attempting to change this manifestly unfair rule for several years.

However, it is not simply handicap GC where this applies, but also level GC.

Even during the 2016 GC World Teams, there were times when I wanted to lose the toss, so as to be able to dictate the order of play.

Now, we have the real whammy - at the top level, if you lose the toss, you get to dictate the order of play for all three games of the match!

There was some contention in the wording of the previous version of the Rules, but despite my attempts to allow a

choice, the new Rules have been written to confirm that the winner of the toss must play first and that the order of play must be the same in all games of a match.

My final attempt to show the injustice of this rule was at a Trans-Tasman match I played in.

I offered a coin to my opponents to toss and called "side".

Tony is absolutely right that the coin tossing principle should never be one that places the winner at a disadvantage.

Why can't GC players be allowed to choose?

To say that it is "too complicated" does little to enhance the reputation of GC as a game with tactics.

**Chris Clarke,**

**United CC, Christchurch, New Zealand**

## Remembered well

Dear Editor,

May I thank you for the latest Croquet Gazette and the references to those who sacrificed their lives for us in the Great War and the work our predecessors may have done to help in the rehabilitation of returning servicemen.

We will be holding a two minutes' silence, which will include most of the croquet section, during our social play in front of our Club War Memorial and as the grandson of someone who gave his life (in WW2) it means a great deal to me that the CA made this special edition of the Gazette.

**Tim Lomas, Dulwich CC**

*Tim got in touch after the 11th November to say that on that day, Dulwich had players born in the UK, South Africa, Australia, Belgium, Spain, Argentina, Cyprus and the USA present - Ed.*

## Sad but not surprised at disappointing membership take-up

Dear Editor,

It is with sadness but little surprise that I have read the Chairman's remarks in the last two additions about the less than expected take up by members of the new system.

I originally opposed the changes (*Gazette 354, Feb 2015*) primarily because the game has a large "social" membership who, are unlikely to enter CA tournaments nor read the Gazette (despite your making it very much more readable than it used to be!).

To this can now be added, the growth in concern about internet access to contact information.

With the wonderful benefit of hindsight it is, I think, now clear that a straightforward justification for subscription increase plus increased tournament fees would have been a better route to go. Extra costs would not have had to be incurred in changing systems and distributing the Gazette so fee income would not have had to rise so far!

**Ian Simpson**, taking a short allotment break from Sidmouth CC

## Country house rules - GC with a twist!

Dear Editor,

I recently came across a version of Golf Croquet that I hadn't heard of before.

The protagonists were an Earl and a Brigadier who play croquet at a fabulous location with surprising rules.

The rules of GC apply except... you must get both your balls through the hoop before the opponent.

Each ball through scores a point, so you can score 2-0 or 2-1 for each hoop won.

When one side has scored 2 for the hoop you move on to the next hoop.

The game takes quite a long time, so they only make six hoops AND the peg.

You score 2 points for each ball that hits the peg and the game finishes when one side has pegged both balls out as in AC.

I haven't tried it but would be interested to hear whether anyone else has come across this version.

**Duncan Hector, Hunstanton CC**

## Recording thanks to Guildford & G.

Dear Editor,

The report of the Treasurer's Tankard published on page 19 of the most recent issue (*Gazette 376*) was the blow by blow account, rather than the more descriptive one that had also been submitted.

The latter stated that the event had been superbly hosted by the Guildford and Godalming Club, which was holding its first Eight, on lawns that were fast and well prepared (if rather challenging!) by Tony

Mrozinski, Arthur Lindley and their team.

We were very grateful to them and those who fed and looked after us, and I would not like that to go unrecorded.

**Ian Vincent (one of the field)**

*My apologies to Ian, and indeed Guildford and Godalming CC for overlooking the descriptive report. It is rare to have a choice of reports from a tournament, and I chose the wrong one for the last Gazette. - Ed.*

## Deafist?

Normal hearing for the general population, or for the club membership?

I don't advocate bellowing but isn't this a bit "deafist"?

**Ian Cumming, Colchester CC**

## In praise of GC Handicap play

Dear Editor,  
Colin Whyles wrote in the last issue (*Gazette 376*) that "GC handicap play is broken. Playing with extra turns does not work."  
While I sympathise with some of Colin's points, his conclusion is manifestly not right.  
I have played around 90 handicap singles games a year in recent years.  
Many of those games, in club competitions and league matches, have been interesting and exciting – though I agree there are some games which just don't go right. But this is also the case with level play – not all games are exciting and stimulating either.  
Colin says extra turns (ETs) change the nature of the game. Yes – that's part of the interest and skill in them.  
I employ different tactics in handicap games to level ones, and these can vary depending on the number of ETs involved,

how experienced my opponent is, and how I feel like playing the game.  
Colin asks if the purpose of ETs is to equalise players' abilities.  
I don't think that's their purpose at all, nor is it possible.  
Their purpose is to (more or less) equalise the players' chances of winning.  
In a level-play game between players of different standards, the better player will generally win, so the outcome is more predictable (which might become boring?).  
You can only change someone's abilities through coaching and practice.  
There is nothing wrong with level play – so if you really dislike handicap play, stick to level play.  
But think of this: in many small clubs like my own, the number of club members wanting to play competitively isn't huge (maybe 20-25?).  
The handicap system allows our club to fill our lawns all year round with a dozen

players of a wide range of abilities in each of our one-day club tournaments.  
These typically involve players with handicaps from 16 through to -4.  
If we offered level play events instead, we'd need to offer separate C-Level, B-Level and A-Level events – as I don't think the 16-handicap person would be very pleased to be playing a -4.  
So we might have only three or four people in some of these "classed" level-play events.  
That would soon get pretty boring with such a small range of opponents, and would often not even be viable as an event.  
I enjoy handicap GC because it adds another dimension to the tactics I normally need in level-play tournaments.  
It's a different game, true, but it requires the same techniques and a richer range of tactics.  
Bring it on!  
**Martin French**

Dear Editor  
I would like to take issue with Colin Whyles's letter "GC Handicap play is broken" in the last issue (*Gazette 376*).  
Having played golf for many years, and now croquet for a relatively short time, I would point out that all club golfers have a handicap and either give, or receive strokes in match play - and it works to

everyone's satisfaction.  
I also profoundly disagree with the statement that extra turns spoil the game of golf croquet.  
Obviously in friendly club afternoons everyone plays level, but I much enjoy match play, either within my own club, away against other clubs or more intensive all-day games at various clubs, so I strongly

support the extra turn system.  
It is much more fun to battle against someone when giving extra turns, and I enjoy playing with a bit of cunning when receiving them.  
Having the extra turns does improve your game as you learn tactical play, which stays with you as your handicap goes down.  
**Anne Buckingham, Guildford CC**

## Some maths homework from teacher Joel

Dear Editor,  
Here is a puzzle that some members will enjoy:  
A croquet club organises a round robin tournament for a number of players.  
Every player plays every other player once, and there are no draws.  
Show that if no player wins all of their matches then there exists three players, A, B and C, such that A beat B, B beat C, and C beat A.  
**Joel Taylor**  
*Please send your answers to Joel at joeltaylor@jetemail.net.*  
*The best solutions will appear in the February Gazette – Ed.*

## 'Easy Fund Raising' has worked for High Wycombe

Dear Editor,  
Does your club need more funds?  
Do you want to raise money with minimal effort?  
Then you may be interested by **easyfundraising.org.uk**  
In essence:  
A croquet club can register as a good cause  
Anyone can then sign up to support your good cause  
Anyone can visit retailer websites via [easyfundraising.org.uk](http://easyfundraising.org.uk), or by activating a browser extension, and then . .  
Each online purchase attracts a small % donation paid by the retailer to your good cause

So, every time you buy new white socks, a book, a TV, or a holiday, you could be raising funds for your club.  
There are thousands of participating retailers, including big names such as Amazon, the major supermarkets, John Lewis, Expedia, etc.  
High Wycombe CC has raised over £150 in a few months, and I know of another organisation that has raised five times that!  
It really feels like 'money for nothing' – just get people signed up.  
**Duncan Reeve, High Wycombe CC**  
*CA Treasurer Peter Death commented that: 'The CA does not endorse the scheme, and members should make their own enquiries before signing up.'*

## Richard Griffiths



**R**ichard started as a playing member at Bowdon Croquet Club in 2002 where he remained until he moved to Cornwall in 2007.

He soon developed a real enthusiasm for the game, entering his first tournament at Bowdon, the May Handicap Weekend, his handicap having been chopped from 24 to 18.

He won the Reed Cup, having finished one game with nine bisques still standing.

By 2007, Richard's handicap was down to zero and he won the Advanced Doubles Trophy at the Bowdon Northern Week.

He also played for club teams, including in the Mary Rose and went on to captain the Channel Islands in AC Inter-Counties tournaments.

Richard played widely in tournaments around the country and was particularly pleased by winning the Bournemouth Bowl in 2008 (*as pictured above*).

Always keen to pass on his love of croquet, Richard was unstinting in giving his time to coaching at all levels, in both formal lessons and when asked for help, firstly at Bowdon and then in Cornwall until his death.

He was a man of wide interests and was a talented musician who performing regularly in musical evenings at Bowdon before forming his own band called 'Cataclews' in Cornwall.

Also in Cornwall, he organised a form of garden croquet for his village at Trevone, took a major part in arranging canasta and possibly euchre competitions in the area.

Richard took over a collection of books on naval history and became fascinated with "Jackspeak" by Rick Jolly.

He was also an enthusiastic member of a select lunch club, devoted to sampling a different pub at each monthly meeting.

Richard was much missed when he left Bowdon and the same at Cornwall.

He died suddenly in his hotel at the start of the Inter Counties on 26 May, 2018.

**Lorna Frost and  
Tony Backhouse**

## Obituaries

### Martin Brandt 1949 – 2018



**T**here is a thriving Croquet Club in Basingstoke, largely due to efforts of one individual, Martin Brandt.

Having learned garden croquet at an early age, Martin – like many others – was seized by the bug and continued playing for as long as he possibly could.

He died on 15 November 2018 as a result of illness that had plagued him for much of his adult life.

He confounded the medical prognoses but, eventually, things caught up with him.

Martin was a founder member of Basingstoke Croquet Club in 1974 and was never off the Committee.

He was Chairman at the time of his death and had been for over 20 years.

Martin was also AC Leagues co-ordinator of the Southern Croquet Federation and had been its Chairman for a number of years.

His personal life was clouded in sadness, having lost his first wife, Belinda, in tragic circumstances. He later remarried Iryna - and taught her to play croquet!

He was noted for taking croquet kit to work (for SSE) and setting up on a patch of grass at the office for some lunchtime practice; one or two current members of the Club joined as a result!

In spite of his illness and a move to the Abingdon area, he was able to see in the move of Basingstoke CC to new facilities (*as pictured below*) in 2018 and he has left the Club in good form for the future.

**Ian Harrison**



### John Cotes 1924 – 2018



**J**ohn Cotes was a founder member of Croquet Durham.

He had a prestigious career as a lung physician. After reading medicine at New College, Oxford, he worked at the RAF institute at Farnborough, where he was responsible for the design of the oxygen mask that was used in the first successful ascent of Everest in 1953. He later worked in Wales on lung conditions in miners, and in 1965 wrote a classic text on "Lung Function" which is still in print.

John eventually settled in Durham, and after retiring became very keen to set up a croquet club there. He was particularly interested in promoting Golf Croquet, which he believed to be a game that would appeal to a wider range of players.

Initially, he joined Auckland CC, and after several years looking for a suitable venue, in 2008 he finally found two police bowling greens that were no longer in use at at Aykley Heads in Durham City. He persuaded the police to rent them out for a new club.

Durham residents who had played with John at Auckland came across to form the core of the new club and in 2010 John was awarded a CA Diploma for his work in getting Croquet Durham up and running.

He played enthusiastic and competitive croquet there well into his late eighties and the photograph below shows John at Aykley Heads in 2011 with young players John-Paul Moberly and Andrew Carpenter.

In his last few years John's health deteriorated, but he still showed great interest in the club he initiated and in its move to Chester-le-Street in 2016.

**Susan Martin**



## A letter from the President

Dear Editor,

Like many croquet players I am well aware of the effects dementia has on those who are close to the person who has lost touch with reality.

But I also know that support is available and that research into brain disease needs more funding.

So I was very pleased to hear that Kevin Carter had chosen the Alzheimer's Society (<https://www.alzheimers.org.uk>) as croquet's charity for 2019.

Kevin has masterminded the One-Ball Handicap Championship in aid of charities for 12 years and so far has generated more than £35,000.

37 of our clubs organised heats in 2018 that for the first time broke the £5,000 barrier.

I hope we can all contribute to donate even more in 2019 to show that members can have fun playing one-ball and at the

### Croquet's charity for 2019

In aid of



same time support a worthwhile charity.

The One-Ball Championship is a variation of croquet that enables GC and AC players to meet at clubs throughout the country and have some relaxed and enjoyable games.

I'm looking forward to the spectacular final tournament at Surbiton on 12 May 2019.

This year the Croquet Association is encouraging members to donate even though they may not be able to play in the heats.

You can do this by visiting [www.justgiving.com/fundraising/cob21019](http://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/cob21019) and you can donate now.

See the 2019 Fixtures Book for details of how to get involved and contact Kevin if you need more information: [kevin@profundus.com](mailto:kevin@profundus.com).

**Quiller Barrett,**  
President of the Croquet Association

## Going for Growth by NDO Dave Gunn

Following my article in the last Gazette, I am pleased to report a flood of requests from clubs (and Federations) around the country to participate in the two main initiatives that I highlighted: our centrally-hosted club **Website Offering** and the 'Croquet Matters' club development programme.

### Hosted Club and Federation Website Offering

There are now over twenty clubs using the website template and if your club is interested in joining them then we'd like to hear from you, as there is no upper limit to the number of clubs we can support.

If you visit one of my pages on the CA website:

<https://www.croquet.org.uk/?p=clubs/croquetmatters/marketing>

you will find a link to our online help desk where you can ask any questions you may have or formally request that a template be set up for you.

We also now have a Federation version of this offering that is coming to the end of a pilot phase (with Yorkshire Federation) and will then be taken up by Croquet North, West Midlands and Southern.

Any other interested Federations can take things forward via the same online help desk.

### 'Club Matters' development programme

Momentum is also building with Croquet Matters, with a dozen or more clubs having

already run or booked workshops with me and/or their Federation Development Officer, and further requests are arriving weekly.

To help get the message out to clubs, a number of Federations are also working with me to find ways of allowing their member clubs to see something of what would be involved and to be able to assess the potential benefits that running their own workshop might bring.

The Southern Federation, for example, booked me to speak briefly towards the end of their November AGM and to then run a 'generic' version of the workshop for the representatives of a number of clubs that stayed on after lunch.

Participants found it to be very thought provoking, with three clubs so far having come forward requesting their own dedicated workshop.

The **Southern Croquet Federation** committee will also be running a session for itself that it hopes will help it look to improve the way it is able to support its clubs. The SFC will also be running two further club group sessions at:

**Phyllis Court CC** (15 January)  
**Winchester CC** (6 February)

Three other Federations have similar group sessions booked for January:

**North-West at Bury CC** (12 January)  
**Yorkshire at York CC** (19 January)  
**South East at Surbiton** (27 January)

following their AGM).

All clubs in these Federations will no doubt be receiving details from their committees but I am pleased to say that all Federations would also welcome interested visitors from neighbouring areas who want to see if the programme might be for them.

If your club falls into this latter category, please contact me and I will supply further details and put you in touch with the relevant organiser.

There are still opportunities to get new initiatives in place at your club before the start of next season and all you need to do is take the first step!

**Dave Gunn,**  
National Development Officer,  
[davegunn59@gmail.com](mailto:davegunn59@gmail.com),  
07710 981561



# 2018 Croquet Association Diplomas

This is only part one of the 2018 CA Diploma award winners.

Available space has meant having to hold over the citations for **Mike Russ, Klim Seabright, Mike and Sylvia Steer, Charles Waterfield and Martin Wroughton**, until the next issue. My apologies to them for the disappointment that this delay may cause.  
- Ed.

## **Jenny Biggs Ashby CC**

Every Club should have a Jenny Biggs. Jenny organises our taster sessions for groups such as Girl Guides, Lions Club and Womens Institutes.

With her friendly disposition, Jenny is always bright and cheerful when welcoming new members and goes on to assist at our 'Learn to Play' courses.

She manages our GC 'C' team in the East Midlands League, and she includes new and inexperienced players, boosting their confidence with her ethos 'to do one's best but enjoy and have fun'.

She is a willing volunteer for club working-parties and nothing is too much trouble for her,

She has been a committee member for several years and as Club caterer at events her meals are legendary.

## **Jill Catt Dogmersfield CC**

Jill is a founder member of Dogmersfield CC, which was formed in 2005 at the request of the local Four Seasons Hotel, was its first secretary and only stood down recently.

Throughout this time, she was also social secretary, a position that she relinquished in March this year and he has excelled with annual events such as barbeques and skittles evenings expertly organized.

She has made our annual fun afternoon her own with the introduction of new croquet games; pirates, race round the lawn, wheel chair croquet, time trial, skittles, clock golf to name but a few.

Her legendary teas, to which those fortunate enough to have played a friendly match in our beautiful walled garden can attest.

Dogmersfield is only a small club with half a lawn on which we play GC and so our emphasis has been on the social side despite playing in two leagues, because we are on the border of the Southern and South-East Federations.

For her dedication, encouragement, friendship, inspiration, we commend Jill for a CA Diploma.

## **Richard Field Bishop Monkton CC**

Bishop Monkton CC has grown and thrived under Richard Field's leadership, and he has given exceptional service to the club with a determination and enthusiasm that has never wavered.

In 2008 Richard Field founded, on rough agricultural land with no facilities and borrowed equipment, the now successful 61-member club with excellent lawns.

As Chairman since its inception, Richard has worked tirelessly, often behind the scenes, to make the Club what it is today.

He is lucky to have the full and active support of a hard-working committee, and amongst his most obvious achievements have been spearheading fundraising for a new clubhouse, raising £17,500 for ground improvements after continual flooding, and raising membership numbers.

Bishop Monkton CC play in the Yorkshire Federation League and host two tournaments.

Richard edits the village website which includes a comprehensive croquet section, and he has spearheaded moves to gain royal recognition for the ground, safeguarding croquet here in perpetuity.

## **Steve Fisher Southern Croquet Federation**

As a key member of National Development Officer Dave Gunn's 'Federation Working Party on Marketing', Steve took on a lead role in the design and development of a free of charge, centrally hosted and administered club website template.

This offering aims to help the nearly one hundred clubs that currently have no web presence, to 'get online' and improve the effectiveness of their marketing to potential new members.

Steve led the selection of appropriate design software and hosting environments, the testing of early versions of the template, and is currently supporting an eleven-club pilot with a view to a full launch later in 2018.

Plans for a Federation version of the template are also in hand.

The project has consumed many hours of Steve's time, and his efforts are much appreciated.

## **Douglas Gurney Roehampton CC**

Douglas Gurney personifies what croquet is all about; a good humoured, octogenarian player of GC and AC who, despite using a mallet that has seen better days (the handle is bound up with insulating tape) is amazingly accurate at hitting-in over long distances.

He thoroughly deserves a CA Diploma, not for his undoubted croquet playing talents, but because, since joining Roehampton to play croquet over 30 years ago, at different times he has served as both Captain and Chairman, is a Club handicapper for both GC and AC, and is a meticulous manager of competitions and tournaments, including



Proudly showing off their deserved diploma  
Mile Huxley, David Guyton, Mike Russ, Charles Waterfield,  
Klim Seabright, Jill Catt, Sylvia Steer

throughout the winter. He has always gone out of his way to welcome and encourage newcomers to the section.

Douglas has played a key role, over many years, in helping croquet at Roehampton to flourish, as well as being a superb ambassador for all that is best in croquet.

The CA Diploma was surely invented to thank people such as Douglas Gurney.

## **David Guyton Chester CC**

David Guyton was Chairman of Chester CC from 2004 to 2015, during which time he oversaw major changes in the club, the lawns and the public park in which the club is situated.



David has been an outstanding leading member of the club over many years, and amongst his notable achievements was to bring a comprehensive management system to the club during a period of major expansion.

Not only were roles managed to meet the needs of the club, but he established a culture of willingness amongst members to "do their bit for the club".

David was instrumental in persuading the outgoing City Council to provide a new clubhouse, which came about in 2008-09, and made a huge difference to members and potential new members.

He also painstakingly negotiated the long-term lease to secure tenure for the



James with CA President Quiller Barrett are: Richard Field, Steve Fisher, Douglas Gurney, Richard Field, and Mike Steer (photo by Chris Roberts)

club.

Liaising with the Local Authority, a role he still performs for the club, is probably the most thankless and frustrating task a club member can undertake.

David taught himself the skills required to build a new website for the club.

He has ensured that the club has played a full regional role and, under his encouragement, the club hosts NW Federation and national tournaments each year.

He produced a new data protection policy for the club which was then taken up by others in the North West, and he co-authored the note on roles within the CA to stimulate a more thorough approach to

effective governance.

### **James Hawkins CA Development Committee**

As a key member of National Development Officer Dave Gunn's 'Federation Working Party on Marketing', James has produced an excellent 'easy to use' guide that aims to help the large number of clubs with no social media presence to make a first step by creating an effective Facebook page.

Facebook is an excellent way to reach the much sought-after demographic of 30 to 50-year olds, and is something that should be of interest to many clubs as they look to increase and broaden their memberships.

James also supported the club website template offering by producing a similarly 'novice-focused' set of documentation to help newly appointed club webmasters get to grips with the possibilities.

The many hours James has invested in these projects are much appreciated.

### **Mike Huxley Guildford and Godalming CC**

Having joined Guildford and Godalming CC as a novice in 2001, Mike quickly discovered the delights offered by the game, winning his first AC Handicap Tournament just two months later.

His new-found passion led to the beginning of a long and deep involvement in the running of the club.

He qualified as a Club Coach and Grade 1 Association Coach

As Chairman from 2004 to 2013, he grew the membership from 20 to around 50 by deploying the skills developed over a lifetime of enthusing and encouraging his students.

He still runs regular coaching sessions, particularly aimed at introducing newcomers to the game and club.

He has been a tournament manager since 2013 and re-elected as Chairman in 2016, his commitment to the club remains undimmed.

Always willing to lead the way in everything from organising working parties to improve the club's facilities, to developing strategies for increasing publicity, he will turn his hand to almost anything (re-fixing the loo seat being one of his specialities!).

His commitment to the wider game is exemplified by his genuine desire to regenerate interest in AC.

He has represented both Surrey and

Middlesex in the GC and AC inter-County championships respectively, and has been awarded the CA merit award for a Triple Peel.

Basically, he is an all-round 'good egg', and our club is pleased to see his contribution formally recognised.

### **Frank and Janice Moir Bowdon CC**

Frank and Janice have been members of Bowdon CC since 1999.

Both have successfully played in class and knockout events, and have represented Bowdon in the North West Leagues, and Frank has also been a member of Bowdon teams that have been successful in CA competitions.

Frank and Janice have regularly helped with coaching on taster days and coaching courses, looked after tournament catering and social events, and have provided accommodation for visiting players, including some international visitors.

As well as maintaining the clubhouse, they have also provided the floral displays in both summer and winter.

Frank and Janice always make themselves available to offer friendship and support to new members, whilst also concerning themselves with the welfare of sick and older members.

They have made an invaluable contribution to the promotion of croquet, and the success of the Bowdon Club.

### **Stewart Newman Sapcote CC**

Four years ago Sapcote CC was operating with just four active members and we decided to close, but then Stewart Newman arrived and brought with him 16 U3A members, most of whom are now full members.

Due to age and ill health we lost our Chairman and Groundsman, and Stewart now carries out their duties, and has introduced our first Constitution and website.

He has gained Club Coach status, is now working towards his Grade 1 AC badge, and has introduced AC play, including (indoors) in the winter.

Stewart has rebuilt our storage area and made new kit carriers.

He is our first honorary President, and the fact that we are celebrating our 30th Anniversary this year is all thanks to Stewart.

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# The Alison Maugham Column

## The not so secret world of croquet

I liken croquet to a great little secret find restaurant that you happen to come across one day, serving delicious food with gracious service, delivered with a side of elegance and delight.

The sort of restaurant you might take your friends from far away to, to impress, but not tell the neighbours so not to make the place too popular, keeping the chances that you will always get that fabulous little table with a window seat and perfect people spotting opportunities.

Croquet is something that many of us have come across by chance but often with an introduction.

Just like the restaurant table, your host would have been delighted to impress you the first time with the secret knowledge of this sporting delight, but perhaps not so keen to offer up their first place seat at the prize winning table.

Now that we are in this crazy world of croquet however, there is always much more to learn, on and off the courts, and what better time to try out the rest of the menu than in the off-season.

So here is my little guide for your winter croquet feast:

### From around the globe

Why not try venturing to [www.croquetscores.com](http://www.croquetscores.com) for the sweet successes and sour notes of the croquet tournaments from around the world.

This is where the scores and commentary are recorded for your 'from afar' spectating pleasure.

All year round games are reported on by dedicated commentators around the globe.

During the UK off-season you could take a peek at the AC North Island Championship in New Zealand along with the GC Womens World Championships in February.

Finally when we are back playing in the UK, if you can't make it to Southwick in person, I am sure there will be

excellent reporting from the The WCF Simon Carter GC World Championship in July.

### The Daily Specials

Every now and then it's worth checking in to the '**Notts Board**', an e-mail forum for croquet players to discuss, despite and dream (<https://nottingham-lists.org.uk>).

Sign up to the e-mail list to get involved in the crazy world of croquet discussions. This is a place where you can ask the croquet community for opinions and help, from saucy tactics to spicy banter, there's something for everyone.

### Top Table

**The Croquet Association website** is of course a fabulous place to find all the latest gossip, from recent news to award nominations, treat yourself to a cuppa and a read on a chilly winters day.

A top tip for the CA website is to use the 'Google Search' tool on the left of the page, try searching for 'top players' and you'll see what I mean.

Find out a little more about the Top Players ([www.croquet.org.uk/?p=press/profiles](http://www.croquet.org.uk/?p=press/profiles)), some of our greatest and current croquet players talk about their croquet careers and give a little insight into who they really are.

In the coming season, if you see some of these croquet folk around at tournaments, they are very approachable and I am sure would be delighted to answer questions and share practice tips.

As you can tell, I am always available for a croquet chat, if you would like to know a little more about something specific and just need a point in the right direction, just get in touch – [alison@alisonswebsites.co.uk](mailto:alison@alisonswebsites.co.uk).

Merry Croquet x

## (AC) IPD Squad Weekend

The International Performance Development Squad met on a very cold October weekend at a surprisingly sunny Ealing for a two-day coaching session led by "The Beast" himself; David Maugham.

Organised by the International Performance Director, Alison Maugham, who is doing a great job of continuing the work by her predecessor Ian Burrige, the Development Squad brings together British-based players who are on an upwards trajectory and have the potential to represent their country on the International Association Croquet stage.

This coaching was organised with an emphasis on tactical play and also introducing (or recapping) various aspects of the game, such as Super Advanced play, openings, various types of leaves and POPing (*peeling an opponents ball*).



We were like sponges and took all this essential information in, and there was plenty of scope for discussion and also time on the lawn to try and practice the hot topics of debate!

Rich Waterman gave a fascinating overview on sports psychology and mindset and how we can train our minds through both mental and physical actions to produce our best when it matters.

Top players such as Reg Bamford swear by this approach so it was brilliant to get such

insight from a professional in the field.

Ian Vincent also popped by on the Sunday morning to give a rules refresher (and also show some of us how inconsistent our yard lines were with our mallets!).

Overall it was a very worthy weekend (complete with lots of beer and wine consumed at the pub on Saturday evening);

it gave us players plenty of food for thought and lots of ideas to practice and try to implement in the future.

### J-P Moberly

Photograph, from the left: Chris O'Byrne, Rich Waterman, J-P Moberly, Andrew Dutton, Brian Havill, Adrian Kirby, David Marsh, Dave Gunn, Mark Van Loon, Daniel Gott, Chris Coull; (seated) Andrew Killick, David Maugham, Nick Steiner, Sarah Melvin. Photo by Alison Maugham.



## In 2018 David Maugham won seven of the nine top UK Championships:

- The Coles Championship (first win)**
- The Western Championship (7th win)**
- The East Midlands Championship (6)**
- The Open Championship (2)**
- The East of England Championship (13)**
- The Surrey Championship (2)**
- The North Of England Champ'ship (12)**

The two he did not win, though he has won them previously, were:

- The Men's Championship**  
- lost in semi-final
- The South Of England Championship**  
- lost 3-2 in final

10 games at Chattooga, beating Bamford once, Hogan twice and then Fulford twice. In 2000, Dave produced one of the best and most important game wins in the sport's history.



The MacRobertson Shield was poised at 10-10 (it is first to 11) and the deciding match was between Dave and Toby Garrison (NZ) – both GB and NZ having won their first two Tests against Australia and the USA.

They had shared the first two games and Toby had built a large lead on a very difficult lawn in the decider.

Dave played some magnificent croquet under the most immense pressure, with the crowd of 200 all supporting the home player Garrison, to complete a triple peel and enable GB to retain the Mac.

To this day, it remains one of the best turns I have ever seen.

However, I believe that Dave's greatest contribution to the game is the sheer quantity of croquet that he plays.

Some players find it difficult to maintain the motivation to play event after event, but between 1997 and 2018, Dave has played between 121 and 188 ranked singles games each year.

Now, we need to add in all the doubles that he plays and the fact that he does play the odd handicap event and it soon

## The Year of the Beast?

**W**hen I was asked by the editor to write an article celebrating the "Year of the Beast", I wrote back indicating that to do so would be a disservice to our beloved Beast, David Maugham. I suggested that perhaps an article celebrating his career whilst looking at his success in 2018 might be more appropriate, so here goes!

Dave played his first ranked game in 1987 and by the time he had won the Presidents Cup in 1990 and Sonoma in 1991, he was regarded as one of the strongest players in the World and possibly the best shot.

1993 was a standout year, with Dave winning the Australian Open before producing one of the most remarkable turns in croquet history at the 1993 MacRobertson Shield.

GB were on the brink of winning the Mac, needing just one more match win.

Dave was playing the legendary Bob Jackson and had been tpo'ed in the deciding third game.

Both players had one ball left – Bob for 2-back and Dave for hoop 1.

Bob was in the middle of the East boundary and Dave was a foot straight in front of hoop 1.

Dave declined to run his 1 foot hoop, hit the 20+ yarder at Bob and finished, on a somewhat bobbly lawn, with a 2-ball break!!

Later in 1993, Dave won the President's Cup and then finished the year by becoming World number 1 having won all

**A**s the year draws to a close, the time is right to reflect on the season just past and in AC, the name of David Maugham was everywhere.

There is a piano at his home that is now creaking under the weight of his prize silverware, and in the Autumn, he got the top prize when he married Alison.

### Two time World AC Champion Chris Clarke

reviews not only David's achievements in 2018 but looks back at his whole croquet career and contribution to our sport.

Photographs clockwise from above:

- (1) **'The Beast' David Maugham** with the face of determination at the 2018 Open.
- (2) With current World Champion Paddy Chapman refereeing a hampered stroke.
- (3) With a dilemma, again at the Open.
- (4) With Alison on their wedding day.
- (5) With the Ranelagh Gold Cup at Roehampton in 2006, a year dominated by
- (6) Robert Fulford, with the Open trophy.

(by Chris Roberts, Samir Patel and Alison Maugham)



# YEAR OF THE BEAST

David was not eligible to play in any of the other Championships, eg Women's, Senior, Veterans and Junior, but will be eligible to play in the Senior Championships in 2019 and wants to become the first player to have won both the Junior and Senior Championships. David is one of the few players who plays all the Regional Championships and has the most regional titles (36).

Next most is Robert Fulford with 27. David is one of only three players to have won all four Regional Championships; Robert Fulford and Keith Aiton being the other two. In winning the Coles Championship David became the second player after Robert Fulford to have won the nine different Championships.

**Chris Williams, CA Archivist**



becomes clear that he can pretty much be relied on to be at most major and many minor events. This is absolutely vital

for the health of top class croquet.

From 1990 for the next 20 years, British croquet was extremely strong.

More recently, it has become weaker – Bamford played no UK events this year and Fulford, only three. The World number 1 lives in Australia and I no longer play singles.

In previous seasons, it would have been almost impossible to win seven UK Championships without winning a match against anyone in the World top half dozen, but that is what Dave has achieved this year.

Some people have described Dave's 2018 as "historic", so I thought I'd compare it with Fulford's 2006.

I'm going to come down on the side of the 2006 results since they include winning all four major events that were played (the top five events listed are considered to be majors), compared to one out of four for 2018, but it is a close run thing.

I should probably highlight a key difference in Dave's games between the 90's and nowadays. Whilst his single ball strokes have become somewhat variable, his break-play is much better.

I have no doubt that the trickier lawn conditions experienced during the fabulous

	Maugham 2018	Fulford 2006
World Champs.	Last 16	No event
Open	Won	Won
President's	3rd =	Won
NZ Open	DNP	Won
Mens	semi	Won
Surrey	Won	DNP
Northern	Won	semi
Western	Won	clashed with Coles
Eastern	Won	Won
Southern	runner-up	DNP
East Midlands	Won	DNP
Coles	Won	Won
<b>World Ranking</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>

weather of early and mid-summer in 2018 will have been important in enabling Dave to utilise his excellent break play and tactics, rather than having to rely on single ball strokes as is so often the case in UK seasons.

In summary, Dave has now won 36 Regional titles, nine more than Robert Fulford who is second.

I believe he wants to become the first player to win both the Junior Championship and the Senior Championship – I have little doubt that he will succeed.

All UK players who enjoy competing against the best owe Dave a huge debt of gratitude, so next time you see him, go and give him a hug - *if you dare!* :o)

**Chris Clarke**



**By far and away the most important message about the 5th Edition is that there is nothing to worry about.**



**T**he World Croquet Federation (WCF) Golf Croquet Rules Committee had three objectives for the 5th Edition, namely to make the Rules easier to use, to deal with situations that were omitted from previous editions and to improve the playing experience by removing inconveniences in a few areas.

It is good to be able to report that the early experience of the new Rules in New Zealand, South Africa and the Over-50 World Championship in Cairo has been uniformly positive.

### **Ease of use**

Numeric sub-paragraphing has been adopted so that Rule 2(a)(1) becomes Rule 2.1.1. In a few cases, when it has been necessary to use a further level of paragraphing, lower case letters are used, such as Rule 3.1.3(a).

The drafting of the 5th Edition has been made rigorously consistent so that references to a concept are always described using exactly the same words.

A Glossary has been added at the front of the Rules to define the key terms used in the Rules and there is an Index at the back.

In order to ease navigation and to avoid overloading rules with excessive content,



there are now 19 Rules divided into four parts instead of 16 Rules presented as a single list.

### **Part 1 (“Introduction”)**

Part 1 (“Introduction”) includes Rules 1 to 4 and has very largely the same content as in the 4th Edition.

The only differences relate to double-banked play and outside agencies.

The rules regarding the former have been expanded and moved from Rule 1(h) to a new Rule 17.

The definition of an outside agency has been moved from Rule 9 to Rule 4, so that the definition precedes later references to outside agencies.

### **Part 2 (“General Rules of Play”)**

Part 2 (“General Rules of Play”) includes Rules 5 to 8.

Rules 5 to 7 serve the same purpose as in the 4th Edition (the Start, the Turn and Scoring a Point) with the addition of the definition of the striking period to Rule 6.

The offside ball rule has been moved from Rule 10 to Rule 8 where it is more appropriately situated.

### **Part 3 (“Irregularities”)**

Part 3 (“Irregularities”) includes Rules 9 to 13 which cover Interference, Playing a Wrong Ball, Faults, Overlapping Play (which replaces Rules 6(e) and (f) in the 4th Edition) and Playing After Play has been Forestalled.

### **Part 4 (“Other Matters”)**

Part 4 (“Other Matters”) includes Rules 14 to 19 which cover Information, Advice and Use of Markers, Referees, Behaviour (previously entitled Etiquette), Double-Banked Games, Penalty Areas and Penalty Area Continuation and, lastly, an expanded rule on Handicap Play.

### **Situations omitted from previous editions**

Rule 6.7 directs that a boundary ball must be played into court if it is to strike another ball that is just inside the boundary. Otherwise, the stroke counts but will be ineffective because all balls moved will be replaced.

Rule 13 (Playing After Play has been Forestalled) has been added to give explicit guidance if this situation occurs.

When a player has to make a decision, the Rules now require that the decision be made promptly and cannot be changed.

This applies in Rule 8 (Offside Balls), Rule 10 (Playing a Wrong Ball), Rule 11 (Faults) and Rule 19 (Handicap Play).

The opponent is now also permitted to ask for a decision in such cases.

### **Improving the playing experience**

#### **Rule 4 – outside agencies**

A scoring clip is now not an outside agency when attached to a hoop, even when it belongs to another game.

This means that a point scored in a jump shot which might have contacted a scoring clip on the way is valid.

However, either side can require that a scoring clip is removed from a hoop before a stroke is played.

#### **Rule 6 – striking period**

Non-striking faults have been abolished. They served two distinct purposes in previous editions.

One purpose was to penalise accidental contact with a ball by a player preparing to play a stroke.

This aspect has been preserved by bringing forward the start of the striking period to when the player takes up their stance and treating an accidental contact after that moment as a striking fault.

Striking faults are now referred to simply as “faults”.

The more controversial purpose of non-striking faults was to penalise accidental contact with a ball in other circumstances. These cases were rare but the penalty of losing the next stroke was felt to be unnecessarily harsh and many disliked it.

In the 5th Edition, such incidents are treated as interference under Rule 9. The affected ball is simply replaced and there is no penalty.

#### **Rule 6 – when a ball leaves the court**

A ball now leaves the court when its edge (not its centre) touches the plane of the boundary line (the inner edge when the line is painted).

This is the approach used in Association Croquet and is more precise when a ball leaves at a shallow angle.

# 5th Edition

There have been no significant changes to how the game of Golf Croquet is played.

## Rule 8 – offside balls

If Blue scores a hoop and Red is inside but Yellow is offside, Red can now be played before the owner of Blue and Black has given an offside direction about Yellow.

The owner of an offside ball is now entitled to ask for a direction and the opposing side is obliged to reply promptly.

## Rule 9.4 – interference with the playing of a stroke

If a player takes relief from a fixed obstacle or uneven ground outside the court by moving their ball into court, they remain obliged under Rule 9.4.3(b) to move any ball which might interfere with the passage of their ball and lies within a yard of their ball's original position so as to preserve the relative positions of the two balls.

There is now an important new requirement in cases where a player intends to clear a ball which lies within six yards of their ball's original position.

It would be unfair for the taking of relief (which can sometimes be as much as a yard for players with long backswings) to shorten such a clearance significantly and perhaps alter the tactical balance of play.

Therefore Rule 9.4.3(a) directs that the target ball is to be moved into court by the same distance to preserve the length of the clearance.

However, in cases when the target ball is already within one or two yards of the next hoop, such a movement might create the possibility that the player could get an "in-off".

Accordingly, the owner of the target ball has to give their consent to the movement of their ball and might, in some cases, prefer to leave it where it lies.

## Rule 10 – playing a wrong ball

The wrong ball rule has historically created more confusion than any other rule.

The 5th Edition has sought to simplify the rule while also providing an effective solution to the "gift hoop" problem.

The "Replace and Replay" remedy now applies to playing an opponent ball and the striker's partner playing the striker's ball in doubles, both of which previously attracted a penalty.

The intention of the change is to speed up play by giving the opponent an incentive to forestall before such errors occur.

The most common example of playing a wrong ball is playing the partner ball instead of the striker's ball, in either singles or doubles.

Under the 4th edition, the only remedy was "Replace and Replay" and, from time to time, this could give rise to an unfortunate "gift hoop" situation.

*(Shorthand 'key' for the next passage: Bab is the owner of Blue and Black; Ray is the owner of Red and Yellow; B is the blue ball; R is red; Y is yellow; K is black).*

The "gift hoop": consider the case where Bab plays K into position for the next hoop when she should have played B and Ray does not notice and plays R into position. Bab then plays B into position and Ray now realises that play has gone out of sequence.

If Ray now forestalls and Replace and Replay is the only remedy, B has to be replaced and Bab will play K next, being able to attempt the hoop without Ray having had an opportunity to clear that ball with his second ball.

This will be all the more galling for Ray because Bab was the original culprit.

The 5th Edition addresses this situation by giving the non-offending side the right to choose either "Replace and Replay" or "Ball Swap".

Choosing "Ball Swap" means that the offending side's last stroke stands but their balls are "swapped", namely each is placed in the position occupied by the other.

The non-offender then plays the next stroke with the partner ball of the ball they played last (which is what they will have expected to do).

In the example described above, Ray would no doubt choose Ball Swap and have B and K exchanged and then play Y to try and clear B from in front of the hoop.

This solution is simple and, importantly, preserves the tactical balance of the situation.

## Rule 11 – faults

As noted above (see the comment on Rule 6), the striking period now begins when a player takes up their stance. If a fault is committed in a stroke that scores a point for an opponent ball, the point will count if the opponent chooses to leave the balls where they stopped.

The standard of proof for faults is now the



same as in Association Croquet, namely the balance of probabilities.

Appendix 4 of the CA Rules Booklet contains more detailed guidance about how to judge double-tap and hammer stroke situations.

## Rule 15 – behaviour

Referees have been given increased powers to deal with situations in the hopefully rare occasions when a player misbehaves during a game.

A fuller account of the differences between the 4th and 5th Editions can be found in the document entitled "WCF GC Rules Rationale" which is available at: <http://www.worldcroquet.org/index.php/croquet-information/golf-croquet>

**Stephen Mulliner,  
Chairman, CA Golf Croquet Rules  
Committee**

Photographs clockwise from top left:  
(1) Richard Raby playing from a penalty spot, can now play from a 'penalty area'.  
(2) A wrong ball dilemma for Messrs. Rutherford, Maguire and Goldring.  
(3) Championship Referee Tim King explains it to South Africa at the World Teams.  
(4) Aspiring refs try to fault Cliff Jones.  
(photos by Chris Roberts)



# CA Grants help Charlton, Cornwall and Canterbury

**Charlton Croquet Club** was originally formed in 2006 and is based in Charlton Horethorne, a village of some 650 residents lying on the Dorset/Somerset border.

We have 66 members who enjoy both AC and GC and we organise two club afternoons each week, internal competitions and regular friendly matches with neighbouring clubs.

Work has just been completed and is the culmination of a project started seven years ago to transform what was a very uneven but extensive private lawn into a croquet lawn and an adjoining car park area.

The land is under new ownership and held by the Club on a long-term lease.

The development work carried out over the last few years, which included re-turfing the whole space, cost an estimated £13,000, has been funded with grants from our Parish Council, South Somerset District Council, Somerset County Council and Viridor Credits.

The input from the Club has been extensive voluntary labour and fund-raising with the major event being a silent auction which raised £2200.

The last part of the whole project involved the erection of a wood and concrete fence following the removal of an evergreen leylandii hedge. This left a deep trench, given the lie of the land, and this has now been filled and seeded.

The Clubhouse roof was also in need of re-felting before the onset of winter.

The end result of all this work over the years is a facility enjoyed by many in the village and surrounding communities and the lawn is the only outdoor sporting area for adults in the village.

**Charlton CC is appreciative of a small grant of £270 provided by the Croquet Association towards this recent work.**

**Keith Gudgeon, Charlton CC**



**Cornwall Croquet Club** was founded in 1995 and for eight years used members used private lawns in a number of locations across the county before our present landlord decided to construct two lawns at what has now become our home at Porthpean.

**The establishment of the club was assisted by a grant of £1000 from the Croquet Association** together with a set of hoops and two sets of Barlow balls from the **South West Federation**.

Donations from members enabled the club to buy a timber hut which became our pavilion and still remains in situ, but now as our equipment shed. Over the years we improved facilities, by adding two toilets and a third full sized court, in addition to a better, more up to date mower.

Membership grew and the original pavilion was soon replaced with a larger building courtesy of our landlord and this is still in use by the club today.

However, with an increasing membership and involvement in South West Federation League matches, meant we needed more space for changing clothes and storing our bags. We applied to the Croquet Association for a grant towards the cost of an additional building and after some research, we eventually decided upon a secure low maintenance portable building.

**A 50% development grant of £4,635 was approved by the Croquet Association**

in October 2017, subject to planning permission. We are extremely grateful to the South West Federation Development Officers, Adam Wimshurst and Robert Moss, for their support for our project and their advice throughout the application process.

In January 2018 planning consent was granted but start of the project was delayed by the very wet weather.

The project has entailed a lot of work from those involved, but, thanks to them and to the CA's Development Grant, we now have an excellent multi-purpose building and improved overall facility has provided a springboard for the club to expand and prosper.

**Rhona Foster, Chairman, Cornwall CC**

Photographs: Charlton CC's new fence, Cornwall CC members enjoying their new building and Dave Buckman taking the new mower for a test run at Canterbury CC.



**Canterbury Croquet Club** moved to a new location in 2017, within the grounds of the leading sports facility in the city, Polo Farm Sports Club.

The complex hosts a cricket club with two pitches that are used by Kent County, a leading hockey club with three existing pitches and a fourth planned, and a tennis club with an indoor hall and several outdoor courts. Polo Farm recently completed a large indoor sports hall, as part of a deal with Canterbury Christ Church University, which also uses Polo Farm facilities.

The Croquet Club is grateful to Polo Farm, who developed three new laser-levelled courts for us, with a rabbit proof fence and a laurel hedge at a cost of around £30,000.

We were left to provide buildings and equipment and our principal capital costs have been a new pavilion, mains water connection, and a disabled toilet with septic tank. Club members have been extremely generous in **helping to fund these projects, as have the Croquet Association, the South East Croquet Federation** and other Kent-based sponsors. The courts opened for play in May last year.

There was one thing missing, however – we did not have a mower.

We borrowed an old machine from Polo Farm, but it did not cut low and had a solid front roller, which flattened the grass.

After consultation with the CA, we decided to invest in a second-hand greens mower and with the help of one of our members, who has long experience of golf course management, we selected a ten-year-old Toro mower with a known history.

Our new mower arrived in mid-July and it has made a noticeable improvement to our playing surface, which will surely continue.

**The machine cost £4,790, half of which was funded for us by the Croquet Association, for which we are most grateful.**

In addition we purchased a container, in order to store the mower safely.

Meanwhile, the club is flourishing.

We have gained 15 new members in the last 18 months and we were very pleased to host the GC Kent Cup, two one-ball tournaments, and most recently the GC Selector's Second Eight (Kate Jones Memorial Trophy).

The quality of our courts should improve over the coming years and we look forward to increasing the popularity of croquet in the Canterbury area.

**Barry Sales,  
Past Chairman, Canterbury CC**

# Australian Bush Croquet!

Top Australian player Alison Sharpe was brave enough to give it a go . . .

Hi Guys,

I can't resist telling you all about a unique croquet event that I was involved in in October when I experienced a Bush Croquet ("extreme croquet") tournament that was a world away from the croquet we all know.

It was a great and certainly unique day!

This annual Brutus Plate was held on a gorgeous homestead just outside Rylstone (near Mudgee, NSW) owned by the lovely Mike and Sue Pridmore.

It took a 15 km drive on a dirt road to get to the property, but was completely worth the trip. This was Bush Croquet at its quirkiest and its very best.

This Brutus Plate has been going for the last 28 years, and it all started with a group of friends who went to college together and decided to have a croquet competition.

It comprises a full day of croquet, with a BBQ lunch and the (more than) occasional drink. This year some 30 bush croquet aficionados took part, as couples or as families.

## Making the players suffer

The course designer has an insatiable appetite for making the participants suffer, by laying out some almost impossible hoops, but of course this was to the delight of spectators, who were guaranteed the ultimate entertainment.

The format consisted of an initial Block round (six blocks) and the top two players from those heats went through to the semi-finals. There were six players in each semi-final, and the top three in each qualified for a six-player final. Each player plays in order (the same as GC) until there is an eventual winner who gets through the last hoop in less shots than the others.

## A tree stump, a wombat hole and an ants nest

I came first in my Block which had a fairly simple course, but the semi-final course was much more difficult. Hoop 2 was placed on a tree stump, hoop 3 was by a wombat hole, and the last hoop was on an ants nest!

This last hoop was the most entertaining because each player had to run up, hit the ball as quickly as they could towards the hoop, and then run away again very fast.

The more experienced players, who had developed the perfect knack of flicking the ball into the air using the end of the mallet shaft, raced through hoop 2 (the tree stump) with ease; sadly, I didn't have that level of technical expertise, and the local guys left me for dead, so I didn't make it to the final.

## Challenging last hoop

The course for the final had some near impossible hoops: hoop 2 was placed on a 45-degree slope in heavy bush up the side of a hill, while the last hoop was carefully placed in a bath tub full of green, stagnant water.

A lot of the shots involve flicking the ball up (always using the end of the handle) in the air to get it through the hoop because some of the hoops were many feet from the ground. In past years hoops have been placed on logs in dams, through electric fences, on tractors, in forks of trees, and suspended in mid-air.

My favourite was having to get a ball through a hoop which was inside the broken windscreen of a rolled ute (car).

The rougher the terrain the more exciting the course is.

## Winner had the knack

The winner of this year's Brutus Plate was Craig Currie from Rylstone, who became a three-time victor. He really did have the knack of scooping the ball in the air very effectively, and he was also very accurate.

Craig would be positively dangerous on a level flat croquet lawn as we know them, so I don't think it would take too much to get him into the NSW State Team!

## Alison Sharpe, NSW, Australia

Photographs, clockwise from the top:

(1) One of the competitors and a close up of his mallet – and he was runner-up in the event!

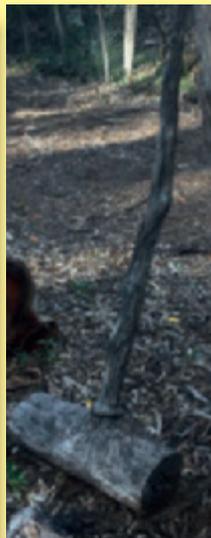
(2) Hoop 2 was placed half-way up a slope.

(3) At least half the shots were flicks into the air using the end of the handle. Alison is seen here trying to flick the ball through a hoop on a tree stump!

(4) The last hoop of the final – hoop can be spotted with a lime green label on top of the hoop.

(5) Giant mallet – look carefully, it is a cut down trunk and the branch is coming out at 90 degrees forming the handle. Just amazing!

(6) Alison Sharpe on more familiar terrain at the AC Worlds at Surbiton in 2013.



# Ask the Ref

## Timing is everything in the heat of the moment

Dear Ref,

I recently observed something close to this scenario in an AC handicap game and it made me read the rule book (several times over) to get clarity but I would like a professional view on it please.

~

An AC game was tight and both sides were close to level on hoops as time approached.

The player with the innings was one hoop behind, had one bisque remaining and knew that time was very very close to being called.

They had a ball near peg, and one near 4-back and one a good rush away from 3-back but the ball in play was not in a position to make that rush.

So they quickly played a stroke to potentially get that ball into a good rush position and called to take the last bisque.

About one or two seconds later, time was called and the player went on to make the rush and the next two hoops and won the game.

However I observed that although the call to take the bisque occurred after the last stroke of the last turn < T2(a)(2) > the

player's ball was still rolling into position as time was called.

So my question is was it correct to take that bisque?

< Rule 37(c)(4) probably suggests NO >, but more importantly, how best should a vigilant opponent have forestalled the taking of the bisque early < Rule 37(e) >

I can imagine a disagreement over when the ball had actually stopped and/or whether forestalling might have delayed a second valid call to take a bisque.

Hope that makes sense.

I can also imagine more complicated scenarios involving shooting a ball off the lawn and bringing the ball back on or a shot involving rushing a dead ball.

**David Boyd, Rother Valley CC**

### The Ref replies:

This is a situation which the tournament regulations were amended to clarify a



couple of years or so ago.

It is covered by Reg T2(b), which states:

(1) No half-bisque or bisque may be played at the end of either of the two turns which comprise the extension period. If play continues after the end of the extension period, under (a)(4) above, any half-bisque or bisque may then be played.

(2) For the purpose of this Regulation, a half-bisque or bisque is played when the first stroke of that turn is played. Accordingly, if a player indicates that he intends to play a half-bisque or bisque but does not play its first stroke before time is called, the half-bisque or bisque is deemed not to have been played and his adversary's turn is deemed to have begun before time was called.

So the player was not correct to take the bisque and the opponent should have forestalled (in the usual way, by shouting to ask his opponent to stop play).

David is concerned about the possibility of a disagreement about the timing, which is why the players should have appointed a time keeper.

It is also the reason why the old tradition of time-keepers turning their back to the lawn lapsed, as they need to be able to observe the precise state of play at the moment time was called.

## Generosity and the Taxman

**H**ow many of us have bought something for our Club and then not bothered to claim it back from the Treasurer?

While our generosity is very laudable, there is an opportunity, for income tax payers, to make money for the Club that is then being missed!

The key is that your Club should be able to claim back the income tax you pay on anything you donate to the Club - via the HMRC's Gift Aid Scheme. This assumes that:

1. Your Club is a Community Amateur Sports Club (CASC), or a charity.
2. Your Club has registered with the HMRC for Gift Aid.
3. You are a UK taxpayer.

As long as those conditions are met; if you submit the receipts to your Club Treasurer for the costs you have incurred on behalf of the club, but at the same time indicate that you wish to donate their value to the Club, your Treasurer can then claim 25% of the value of your donation from the HMRC.

### Your action list:

1. Register for Gift Aid with your Club

Treasurer.

2. Obtain receipts for expenditure.
3. Submit receipts to your Club Treasurer, together with the statement that *"I would like to donate these expenses claimed to [your club's name] under Gift Aid"*.

### Treasurer's action list:

1. Maintain record of Gift Aid donors.
2. Record the value of the receipts submitted both as Club expenditure and as a Gift Aided donation - thus net effect £ nil.
3. Submit claims for Gift Aid online, retaining supporting paper work.
4. Wait a few days for the money (25% of the value of the receipts) to arrive.

~

One important point is that you need to understand that if you pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax in the current tax year than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all your donations (by all charities/ CASCs) it is your responsibility to pay any difference!

Of course, when it's a pint of milk, or a cake for the club match, then probably all

of us agree the effort is not worth the candle.

But, if the amounts concerned were larger - or indeed smaller sums mounted up over the season, then, for the simple effort of retaining and submitting the receipts to your Treasurer, while waiving reimbursement, your Club can claim more money from the Inland Revenue - and that must be a Good Thing!

In addition to increasing Club's income, this approach to expense claims will ensure that your anonymous generosity is recognized in the Club's accounts both in the expenditure incurred on its behalf and in the donation you are effectively making.

Thus the Annual Accounts will more realistically represent the true financial position of your Club.

As a cherry on the cake, for those paying income tax at the 40% tax rate, they can claim on their annual tax return a tax reduction equivalent to the balance of the income tax paid on the donations (40%-25%) - another Good Thing!

**Ian Shore, High Wycombe CC**

# My Parkinsons Croquet Story *by Malcolm Ball*

**H**aving played hockey up to the age of 55 and golf to a handicap of 7, it was with some concern that I noticed a steady decline in the standard of my golf during 2010.

That coincided with both myself and my wife Jenny looking for an alternative leisure activity. I should explain that by then we were well established as 'Swallows' in Somerset West, Cape Town, spending five months there and seven months in the UK.

We had driven past the Somerset West CC on dozens of occasions, so in January 2011 we decided, along with our good friend Mike Dooley, to give Golf Croquet a go.

We were given basic tuition, started playing games regularly and were then introduced to the tactics by our now very good friend Grahame Tomes.

We returned to the UK for the summer of 2011, joined Exeter CC and continued playing under the guidance of Roger Thorne, who gave us lots of advice and encouragement.

Then in October 2011, just before we returned to South Africa, I was diagnosed with Parkinsons (we never refer to it as a disease ... more of a condition).

Ah well, stiff upper lip and all that. It won't be too bad and it won't affect me as it does others. - who is kidding who?

Luckily both Jenny and I decided to take GC seriously and before long we were both playing at a reasonable level, enjoying the game and the social scene at SWCC.

We returned to UK in 2014, with a move to Winchester and an old house to renovate to keep us busy. Once again we were lucky and joined Winchester CC, with excellent courts and a friendly welcome.

We jogged along, but by 2016 my health wasn't great. Fortunately I had new medication prescribed and it improved (and has continued to do so ever since), to the point where my handicap is down to 2 and most people I meet don't realise that I have Parkinsons.

I have also been extremely lucky to have been invited to play in cup and league teams for my South African and English clubs, and the competitive edge gives the game the focus I need. I still play golf twice



a week and, although here I now have a 27 handicap, hitting the ball better than I have for years and walking the course with ease.

Where is this leading?

Well, I am convinced that competitive (not social) GC focuses the mind to the exclusion of some of the symptoms of Parkinsons.

It takes me a while to warm up, but that might be an age related issue. When I am playing I don't think about anything other than the croquet.

I don't kid myself that I am going to get better, but hopefully it helps to keep my Parkinsons under control.

So if you know somebody who has Parkinsons try to encourage them to give GC a go - if it has worked for me it might work for them.

Despite what the general public might think about the aggressive nature of croquet, it attracts some of the friendliest people in the world, and I am sure they will be happy to help those who are prepared to help themselves.

As for me, I know that I have been lucky and without Jenny could not have achieved what I have.

I reckon I must be one of lowest handicappers playing GC who has Parkinsons.

**Malcolm Ball**



**Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines**

## Cruise with Fred. Olsen

Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines are offering Croquet Association members a very tempting 10% membership discount\* on your first sailing with them – and that's on top of any current offers. Existing Fred. Olsen customers can save 5%, in addition to their 5% Loyalty Club discount.



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\*All bookings are subject to Fred. Olsen's (FOCL) standard terms & conditions, available on our website & on request. All prices quoted under the Croquet Association members discount offer are exclusive to qualifying members & their travelling companions only, members must quote their discount code at time of booking. Membership discounts cannot be applied retrospectively. Bookings must be made via the booking hotline number 0800 0355 108. Proof of membership will be required at the time of booking. Offers cannot be extended to any unrelated third party, are subject to availability & may be withdrawn or amended at any time without prior notice. From time to time FOCL may run special offers which cannot be combined with this discount, including selected group travel deals. All guests booked under this scheme are requested to refrain from disclosing the fare paid whilst on board. Offer is for first-time cruisers with Fred. Olsen only. Fred. Olsen Oceans members are entitled to a 5% Croquet Association discount subject to the same terms & conditions, to be applied after the standard Oceans discount, where applicable. In this instance, Oceans Terms & Conditions apply. This offer expires on the 30th September 2018. E&OE.



## The Croquet Academy - Southwick (near Brighton)

Date	Course	Ideal h'cap	Course Leader	Cost*
3 April	GC Beginners' & Improvers' Course	7+	Janet Hoptroff	£50/£40
4 April	Introduction to Association Croquet	n/a	Morgan Case	£50/£40
4-5 April	Coach Training Course (CTC) - Club Coach (£40 subsidy may be available)		Daphne Gaitley	£75/£65
5 April	Croquet Mind over Matter	n/a	Rich Waterman	£60/£50
10 April	GC Referees' Refresher Course (£17.50 subsidy may be available)		Ian Cobbold	£50/£40
10-11 April	AC Improvers' Course	18+	Frances Low	£75/£65
11-12 April	Coach Qualification Course (CQC), Grade 1 & 2 GC & AC (£40 subsidy may be available)		Daphne Gaitley	£75/£65
11 April	One-to-One and Small Group Coaching 1 & 1.5-hour sessions for AC & GC		Cliff Jones	POA
12 April	One-to-One and Small Group Coaching 1 & 1.5-hour sessions for AC & GC		Cliff Jones	POA
13-14 April	AC Towards the Triple Peel	8-	Cliff Jones	£75/£65
16-17 April	AC Development in Handicap Play	12-18	Clive Hayton	£75/£65
16-17 April	AC Intro. & Dev'tment in Advanced Play	6-14	Nigel Polhill	£75/£65
24 April	AC Workshop incl. Video Analysis		Jonathan Isaacs	£50/£40
25 April	GC Moving towards 'A'-level play	3-6	Daphne Gaitley	£50/£40
1-2 May	AC Laws & Referees' Qualification Course (£40 subsidy may be available) Exam		Jeff Dawson	£75/£65
1-2 May	GC Rules & Referees' Qualification Course (£40 subsidy may be available)		Daphne Gaitley	£75/£65
3 May	GC Masterclass	4-	Jonathan Powe	£60/£50
7 May	GC Workshop inc. Video Analysis		Jonathan Isaacs	£50/£40n
30 May	GC Coached Games Day	7+	Richard Carline	£50/£40
5-6 June	AC High Handicap Follow-Up Course	18+	Frances Low	£75/£65
8-9 July	AC Supervised High-Bisque Tournament	14-20	Frances Low	£50/£40

\* The costs shown are for Ordinary members / Premium members of the CA

### The Croquet Academy at Southwick

has launched its programme of 21 courses aimed at AC and GC players, from complete beginner to advanced.

#### New for 2019:

Video Analysis within one-day AC and GC Workshops – numbers will be limited, so please book early to secure a place.

Moving Towards 'A'-Level Play – designed for those in the 3-6 handicap range.

AC and GC Small Group Coaching has also been added.

Rich Waterman, one of the UK's leading Mindset experts, will explain how to improve performance in competitive play, with Croquet Mind Over Matter.

And Jonathan Powe will run a GC Masterclass for aspiring A and B-Level tournaments players.

A GC Referees' Refresher Course will encourage confidence amongst new Referees, and explore the new GC Rules.

Many of the courses are accompanied by Cliff Jones's excellent course manuals.

Full course and entry details can be found on The Croquet Academy Website:

[www.thecroquetacademy.com](http://www.thecroquetacademy.com)

For further information please contact:

The Croquet Academy Secretary  
Janet Hoptroff  
courses@thecroquetacademy.com  
01903 859417

## The Northern Croquet

Dates	Course
2 March (pm)	GC All about the new GC Rules for 2019
6 April	AC Become a CA Graded Coach
7 April	AC Moving on in AC - skills and strategy
13 April	GC & AC Back to Basics
14 April	AC Practice makes Perfect
(1) 19 April (2) 20 April (3) 21 April	GC/AC One-to-One with Cliff Jones
27 April	AC How to make twelve hoops in one go
28 April	AC It's not all about breaks
4 May	GC Classic skills and tactics
5 May	GC Skills and tactics in practice
18-19 May	GC/AC Become a CA Club Coach
1 June	GC/AC From GC to AC in one day
2 June	AC Next steps in AC: tips & technique

\* The costs shown are for Ordinary members

### The Northern Croquet Academy (NCA) at York,

is now entering its third year, and is going from strength to strength.

Most courses were full or oversubscribed in 2018, and the 2019 programme combines courses that have proved particularly popular and successful with a number of new ones to meet demand.

#### Three courses are newly launched for AC players.

These are aimed at differing handicap levels and cover skills and strategy, tips and technique, and improving play through targeted practising.

Complementing these, James Hawkins, author of Complete Croquet, returns to run two linked days for middle and lower handicap AC players which together cover many aspects of the AC game.

For GC players, Tim King, one of the prime movers behind the **new revised Rules of Golf Croquet**, is running a half-day seminar on important rule changes for 2019. The very well received '**Classic Golf Croquet skills and tactics**' is followed up by a new course centred round guided games with discussion of options.

Meanwhile a one-day course is being run for GC players wanting to use their GC experience to give them a head start in learning AC.

## Northern Croquet Academy - York

	Course Leader	Cost *
	Tim King	£12/10
	Roger Staples	£35/30
	Roger Staples	£35/30
	Derek Knight	£35/30
	Derek Knight	£35/30
	Cliff Jones	POA
	James Hawkins	£35/30
	James Hawkins	£35/30
	John Crossland	£35/30
	John Crossland	£35/30
	Roger Staples	£60/50
	John Harris	£35/30
	John Harris	£35/30

/ Premium members of the CA.

Of interest to both codes is '**Back to Basics**', concentrating on the fundamentals of good technique.

We're also pleased to welcome back Cliff Jones, who is offering three one-to-one Easter coaching sessions open to both GC and AC players wanting to develop any aspect of their technique, strategy or mindset.

The 2019 programme includes two **coach training courses**, one for Club Coaches (AC/GC) and a new Graded Coach training course for existing AC coaches looking to upgrade.

Subsidies of £25, funded by the CA, are available for qualifying applicants.

Feedback on our 2018 courses was very good, with 96% of respondents recommending the experience.

We are expecting high demand so early booking is advisable.

Full course and entry details are on the Northern Academy website:  
[www.northerncroquetacademy.org](http://www.northerncroquetacademy.org)

For further information please contact:  
Northern Croquet Academy (NCA)  
Secretary - John Harris,  
[northerncroquetacademy@gmail.com](mailto:northerncroquetacademy@gmail.com).  
01904 620211

## The South-West Croquet Academy - Budleigh Salterton

Date	Course	H/cap range	Course Leader	Cost *
29-30 Mar	Tournament & Competition Management	n/a	Cliff Jones	£75/55
31 March	One to One / Small Group Coaching (2-hours)	n/a	Cliff Jones	POA
1 Ap -Oct	AC & GC One to One or Small Group session	n/a	Roger Mills	£35/25
3-4 April	Coaches Training Course - Club Coaches	n/a	Roger Mills	£75/55
4-5 April	Coaches Training Course - Grade 1 AC & GC	n/a	Roger Mills	£75/55
April tbc	Coaches Workshop AC & GC	n/a	Sarah Hayes	£25/15
10 April	AC Tactics, Bisques & Breaks	16-22	Roger Mills	£45/35
12 April	AC Tactics, Tactics	14 max	Roger Mills	£45/35
25-26 April	GC Rules & Referees Course	n/a	Tim King	£65/55
25 April	GC Rules & Referees Course - no exam	n/a	Tim King	£45/35
26 April	AC Masterclass - a day with Ian Burrige	2 max	Ian Burrige	£45/35
8 May	AC Short Croquet - Skills, Tactics, Bisques & Breaks	16-24	Roger Mills	£45/35
10 May	AC Get Peeling!	12 max	Roger Mills & Peter Moore	£45/35
14 May	GC High Handicappers Development	10 plus	Stephen Custance-Baker	£45/35
16 May	GC Improvers Development	4-9	Stephen Custance-Baker	£45/35
22 May	AC Short Croquet - The Special Skills to Succeed (AC16-) (SC 6-)	16 max	Stephen Custance-Baker	£45/35
25 May	Referees Workshop - AC/GC	-	Dave Kibble	£25/15
9 June	GC Improvers Development	4-9	Stephen Custance-Baker	£45/35

Additional courses may be available later - check website

The costs shown are for Ordinary members / Premium members of the Croquet Association (note: Premium Members receive a discount of £10-£20 on all courses)

Qualification Courses may be eligible for CA subsidies and/or SWF travel assistance

### The South-West Croquet Academy (SWCA) at Budleigh Salterton

is continuing to offer a wide range of courses in 2019 that offer something for everyone.

Additionally there are a number of Specialised Courses and Workshops.

For those wishing to run or assist in **Managing Tournaments and Competitions** we are delighted to have secured Cliff Jones as Lead Coach.

Cliff is regarded as the UK's best in this field. Delegates will receive a free copy of Cliff's tournament management software and will be able to purchase a copy of his Tournament Management Manual.

The two **Coaches Courses** will be led by Roger Mills (2018 Coach of the Year), and are for players wishing to gain their first coaching badge at Club Coach level (AC or GC), and for others to gain their Grade 1 badge (AC or GC).

This latter course will appeal to existing

Club Coaches, as well as suitable players who have already established themselves at club coaching level but who may not have a formal qualification.

For anyone already involved in coaching, the new **Coaches Workshop (AC & GC)** is aimed at developing your coaching skills, learning new techniques and methods to improve your coaching in a relaxed and enjoyable day.

We are excited that Sarah Hayes, Chairman of the CA Coaching Committee will be running this course.

She is renowned for her unique coaching style and will share her many years of coaching at all levels of the game.

For players interested in becoming referees, the SWCA is delighted to have Tim King lead a **GC Referees Course**.

This is also suitable for players who are not yet ready to become referees, but who would like to gain (*continued overleaf...*)

(... continued from page 25)

a deeper knowledge of GC Rules. The new (Edition 5) GC rules will be covered.

For existing referees (AC & GC), Dave Kibble, one of the UK's top international players and an Examining Referee, will be running a **Referees Workshop** to develop skills and knowledge, build confidence and share experiences to keep referees on top of their game.

Dr Stephen Custance-Baker returns to lead the very popular **GC Courses and the Short Croquet** 'The Special Skills to Succeed' course.

Stephen is one of the leading exponents of the game and is also one of the foremost GC coaches in the South West.

A real coup for low handicap AC players is the **Masterclass with Ian Burridge**.

One of the UK's top international players and one of the UK's leading AC coaches. He is renowned for his inspirational coaching.

Additionally, **One-to-One or Small Group coaching** is also offered with either Cliff Jones or Roger Mills at the helm.

So there it is!

A wide ranging programme for 2019, which offers something for everyone.

Courses are usually held using the excellent facilities at Budleigh Salterton CC, but bespoke courses can be run at club locations if there is sufficient interest – contact the SWCA for details.

For full details of our courses, please visit: [www.southwestcroquetacademy.co.uk](http://www.southwestcroquetacademy.co.uk)

For further information please contact:  
SWCA Secretary - Maureen Smith  
enquiries@  
southwestcroquetacademy.co.uk  
07821 45 8447

Space is at a premium in this Gazette, so my usual ramblings have been curtailed for this issue (*is that cheering I hear in the background?*).

The Editor has kindly squeezed in an article by Dave Kibble which will make perfect reading on those cold winter nights when next season still seems a long way off. . . . I will expect all to be mentally prepared come March!

Many thanks to Dave for an excellent piece of work.

Academy Courses are also detailed here; I have been promising there would be lots of courses and there are!

Thanks to all involved at the Academies – it is no easy task planning all of these sessions.

Please note that places are nearly always limited so please don't leave booking till the last minute because you may end up being disappointed to find your chosen course is already full.

One Academy has cleverly encompassed all possible attendees with two courses over one weekend.....can you spot them?

**Sarah Hayes,**  
**Chairman of the Coaching Committee**

Photo, below: Dave Kibble in coaching mode with Roger Barnacle and Richard Stevens at Winchester. (Photo by Ian Harrison)



**M**any players believe a coach who tells them their swing could be improved but are sceptical when told their mental game is open to development.

I'm not talking tactics here; it's about players who do well in friendly games but whose confidence and shot-making ability evaporate in a match.

These tips can help you. Read-on for croquet nirvana.

I became convinced of the power of the mind in croquet after I had lunch during the AC Opens with top player and psychology master, Reg Bamford.

I described how I'd several times almost completed a sextuple peel (a complex AC turn).

He said I should stop thinking of it as the first one and instead 'remember' I've done a hundred.

An immaculate sextuple followed immediately; my 101st!

The simple message is: you just need to believe that you can do it and performance flows from that.

Now, how do we get to that happy state?

Think back: you played well when you were feeling good and it felt good to be playing well – this is a virtuous circle and means that when you take control of how you feel you will play better.

It takes significant training to do it well, but everyone can benefit from applying a few simple tips.

There are three important croquet skills: shot-making skills, tactical skills, and mental skills.

This is about the mental skills:

- Be confident
- Be calm
- Think the right thoughts
- Stay in the present
- Visualise your successful shot
- Have a routine and a rhythm

### Mental Skill no.1: **Be Confident**

*"Whether you think you can, or you think you can't, you're right."* - Henry Ford

Confidence is related to stress, and there's good stress and bad stress.

Psychologists talk about 'optimal state of arousal':

- If you are over-aroused you think about the outcome of the game and fear being unable to perform well – you are stressed and get butterflies in the tummy, you break out in a sweat, you rush off to

## Recent Coaching Appointments

Thank you from the Coaching Committee to these people who are all making a significant contribution to coaching and have received qualifications since the last Gazette issue.

### AC Graded Coaches

#### Grade 3

Samir Patel                      Surbiton

#### Grade 1

Alison Maugham      Surbiton

### GC Graded Coaches - Grade 1

Alison Maugham      Surbiton  
Roger Mills                      Sidmouth

### Club Coaches

Raouf Allim                      H. Wycombe  
Alison Maugham      Surbiton

## Good Croquet is in the Mind - by Dave Kibble (part 1)

the loo every five minutes. You lose your ability to focus on the process of making the next shot.

- If you are under-aroused, you become careless because you don't really mind what happens.
- There is an optimally aroused state in between, where you are focussed and perform well, but are not stressed.

Even in so-called friendly games you should try to achieve optimal arousal so that you have the habit.

If you don't then you'll be in that 'don't care' state as default and therefore more likely to become stressed when it matters.

In short: stop mucking around in friendly games!

Any good sportsperson is hyped-up when they are playing their sport.

You can see it clearly when you watch the professionals - look at their faces in those close-ups the photographers like to show us.

You will play better when you are feeling confident - don't let your confidence wax and wane with your last result or shot.

You must recognise that you are responsible for your own level of confidence, and that you can control it.

Do you believe that? Can you learn to be more confident? How?

- Remember your successes: successful shots, success in practice, and successful matches.
- After each game, remind yourself what you did well.
- Practice success. Most of practice should be things you can do. Always finish with something you can do well.
- After each practice session remember what you did well, what you learnt (and what you still need to work on).
- Think about things you do (other than croquet) that you are confident about - imagine doing them and so create the same mental state.
- Pretend to be someone else: the World Champion, or the best player at your club.
- If you are starting to feel stressed, then remember it is only a heightened place on the arousal curve, which you want to be on. Just bring yourself down a notch with some breathing or visualising calming things. Embrace it as a good thing, just a bit too much of a good thing.
- Prepare yourself for the important tournament or match, don't just show up. Don't be stressed out by a late journey.

Give yourself the best chance; build your confidence in the warm-up period:

- Run hoops from inches, not yards; and from straight, not silly, angles.
  - (i) practice running easy hoops, not failing difficult ones - know that you always run hoops.
- 'Shoot' to hit balls a yard or two away, don't practice missing balls ten yards away.
  - (i) to get your swing working and your brain knowing that you always hit.
- Ignore any stroke that might not succeed - replace it with a positional shot.

Write down your achievements, or the specific attributes of the player you want to be, and read it to yourself (or out loud) regularly and certainly on a match day.

When you walk on court, be "king of the court" - you are in charge, no one else.

### Mental Skill no.2: *Be calm*

The storm before the calm.

How can you calm yourself when in an uncomfortable situation?

Focus on something else: how wonderful the sky or a beautiful tree look.

Let unhelpful thoughts drift away, replace them with something calming.

Take a few deep breaths if you are particularly nervous.

Close your eyes, breathe deeply in and feel the breath ... hold ... breathe slowly out feeling and hearing it.

It's very easy to let yourself become afraid to run a hoop when it's not an easy hoop and the opponent's ball is nearby and if you mess up you will hand advantage to your oppo, so imagine that the balls are grey.

I'm not saying be cavalier, just don't worry about the outcome - it will be what it will be. Concentrate on the action, not the outcome.

Have a plan; and when it goes wrong: stop, plan, then play.

Never be planning whilst you are playing. Remember how the top players always look like they know what they are doing?

Well, here's the inside track: what they know is how to play a shot that still maximises their chance of success when it goes wrong; they have a new plan immediately when they see where the balls actually finished.

When you have a critical shot and you really don't feel ready, walk away and

compose yourself.

I don't mean you should be constantly asking yourself if you are ready, just notice when you are not feeling completely calm.

*"I've had a lot of worries in my life, most of which never happened."* — Mark Twain.

### Mental Skill no.3: *Think the right thoughts*

Don't be praying for your opponent to make errors all the time, it encourages you to be thinking about all the things that can go wrong - if they are particularly bad, giggle at them and don't get complacent; if they are having the game of their life, or have some good luck, feel pleased for them.

That is **your** best chance when it is your turn because you will be in the right frame of mind to play the best turn you can.

Remember that you can't influence how your opponent plays, you can only influence how you play.

Don't be ruing your last turn if it ended badly - forget about it immediately.

Remember your successes, forget your failures. Some people are really good at this - become one of them.

Many club players watch experts and often remark "they make it look easy" or "there wasn't a shot played I couldn't have done" - it's all completely true, and you can too!

Often AC players can get 'stuck on a hoop' - each time, they remember all the times they failed before.

Instead: think about all the hoops you've run (26 in AC or 7 in GC, in each game you won) - they are easy really.

In a tricky position?

Remember that fantastic hoop you ran last year - yards away and at an angle - this one looks easy in comparison.

Before a critical hoop, I say a mantra to myself, something personal that snaps me into the right frame of mind - you could say a bit of a poem, or anything that focuses you on the success of the hoop.

It's about establishing a routine that gets your mind on the task in hand.

Voices in your head: There's a running commentary in your head about everything you do, it's called self-talk.

You'll recognise these thoughts because you have heard them all your life: I'm not smart enough, I can't do it, this is too hard.

You're not alone and this is not mental illness - everyone has it.

The bad news is there's no getting rid of it. The good news is you can manage it.

Become aware of the inner dialogue.

*Continued over-leaf...*

## Good Croquet is in the Mind

Continued from page 27 . . .

Realise that you don't **have** to react to the thoughts.

It is a habit you can break.

The moment you realise it is just a thought, you have a choice.

Change takes time - start by observing how often you listen to your mind's nasty voice.

Imagine if you had a friend who spends all day, every day with you, and was constantly whispering comments like these in your ear! - How long would you stay friends?

Do the same with your inner-voice: work out where it is, imagine it is a small person and move it onto your shoulder and literally brush it off.

Each time you recognise that you are self-criticising, pause, remind yourself that it's just that old habit you've got into, and that from now on you are changing this habit.

Use positive self-talk to remind yourself about how good you really can be, how good it will feel when you do well - or just sing a song or recite a poem to yourself to drown out the voice.

Treat yourself as if you are calming an upset two-year-old.

Reassure yourself. Calm yourself. Remind yourself of the value of being calm and confident.

Think about the best way to teach a child to do something well: do you praise it when it does things right, or criticise and chastise it when it does wrong?

Which is best? Accentuate the positive, eliminate the negative.

Now, doing this once or twice won't make a lot of difference.

It takes quite a while to replace the habits of a lifetime - but it's definitely worth doing so.

*Nothing is good or bad, but thinking makes it so* - William Shakespeare.

*To be continued in the next issue . . .*

## A croquet resurgence in the South Lakes district

Croquet has been played in the South Lakes area for over 120 years and is now experiencing a welcome resurgence at **Crake Valley CC**. The club has a long history that boasts two entries in the Guinness Book of Records (because they beat their own record for the most AC hoops scored in 24 hours).

Based at picturesque Greenodd, just south of Coniston Water, Crake Valley and has had an influx of new members this year which has increased its membership to over 30.

Traditionally Crake Valley was an AC club but they entered a GC team in the North-West Federation competitions for the first time this year, and won the NW Summer Festival at Southport.

David Cornes qualified as a GC referee and for the GC All England Handicap final, while David Lloyd and Sandra Cornes won B and C-Level Series tournaments respectively to also qualify for national finals this year.

AC playing members have also enjoyed tournament success with the experienced Jim Allcock and David Lloyd beating quality opposition to win at Hunstanton and Surbiton.

The route to our GC success is clear. Established members have been welcoming and helpful to new members through mentoring, a bronze level GC coaching day was run by Paul Rigge of the NW Federation, we have introduced internal competitions, and we have practised!

The future is bright for Crake Valley CC and we will compete in the NW Federation level play league GC in 2019.

We are looking to replace our quaint clubhouse and to resurrect a third court to cater for increased usage.

Crake Valley welcomes visitors too, so if you are planning a trip to the Lake District, do please pack your mallet and pay us a call. A warm welcome awaits you.

**David Cornes - [www.crakevalleycroquet.org.uk](http://www.crakevalleycroquet.org.uk)**



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# Lawn Care ~ by Duncan Hector

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*Croquet player and turf care specialist.*



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## Rolling

I am often asked whether it is advisable to roll croquet lawns. So, here is a technical note published by the Sports Turf Research Institute.

Rolling of golf greens has come and gone out of fashion over the last 30 years due to fears of increased compaction and loss of turf vigour as a result of the operation.

Research over the past 15 years has helped to alleviate some of these fears, with results finding that rolling with modern lightweight rollers can be carried out up to two to three times per week on native soil greens and five times per week on sand-based greens without any detriment to turf vigour or soil bulk density.

That said, rolling should only be carried out when conditions are conducive, i.e. firm and dry, but never when wet.

Rolling is found to greatly improve the ball roll qualities on golf greens through injecting additional pace and also improves the smoothness and trueness of ball roll. As a consequence, it is widely used for tournament preparation to polish the surfaces.

It can also be a useful operation in settling surfaces down following renovations and helping to work top dressing into the turf canopy. Rolling also allows for occasional mowing operations to be missed without negatively impacting on ball roll qualities which therefore reduces the stress placed on the sward from mowing pressures.

I would add that it is a good idea to aerate after rolling if possible. Using a mower with a trailing seat has the advantage that you roll every time you mow which will help to maintain a smooth surface. I used a 5-tonne road roller on my lawn here in Norfolk to great effect and the rolled areas are just as healthy as the unrolled areas.

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

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[www.davetrimmermallets.com](http://www.davetrimmermallets.com)



## STOP PRESS

### Important announcement

### The Nottingham List

If you were subscribed to the Nottingham List, an e-mail list for discussion of croquet, before Monday 3rd December, and have not subsequently re-subscribed, then you will no longer be receiving messages from it because it was necessary to clean its address list.

You can (re-)subscribe to it by browsing <https://nottingham-lists.org.uk/mailman/listinfo/croquet> and completing the subscription request form, or sending an e-mail to [croquet-join@nottingham-lists.org.uk](mailto:croquet-join@nottingham-lists.org.uk).

**Ian Vincent, List Maintainer**



Peter Death in play with the beautiful backdrop of Nottingham Week  
(photo by Chris Roberts)

### The Croquet Association Website

[www.croquet.org.uk](http://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](https://www.croquet.org.uk/?p=tech/other/jargon)  
or use this link:  
<https://www.croquet.org.uk/?p=tech/other/jargon>

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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. The Croquet Gazette is printed by Billingham Press, Central Avenue, Billingham, Stockton on Tees.

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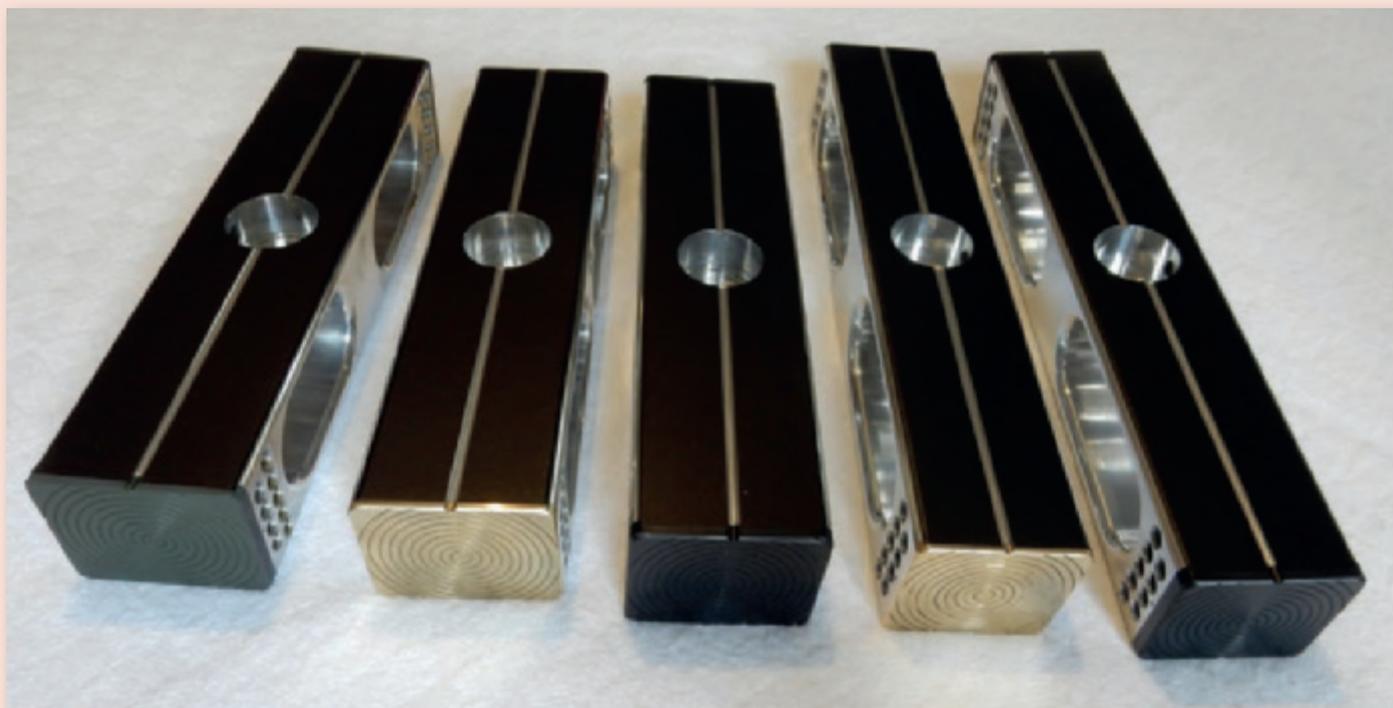
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