

The

Issue 344 June 2013

# CROQUET

Gazette



Reg  
Bamford  
*Double World Champion*





## 10 THINGS....

### you might not know about The Croquet Association

- 1 In the last 10 years the CA has awarded grants totalling nearly £200,000 to 80 member clubs and interest-free loans of more than £28,000 to 15 clubs. This support is often crucial for clubs to obtain funding from other sources.
- 2 In the last eight years, 48 *new* clubs have benefited from the CA's financial and practical help.
- 3 In the last 10 years the income from well over £1million of CA Shop sales to the public and £40,000 from sponsors has been used by the CA to expand its development programme.
- 4 198 clubs are members of the CA and most benefit from its free Public Liability Insurance scheme as well as help from 10 Federation Development Officers.
- 5 The CA organises national coaching, handicapping and awards to encourage enterprising play and to raise overall skills.
- 6 The CA co-ordinates championships, tournaments and inter-club events nationally.
- 7 The CA represents the interests of players internationally and selects and supports teams and individuals who play for their country.
- 8 The CA promotes research into, and development of, playing equipment and court surfaces.
- 9 The CA publishes *The Croquet Gazette* and a website, which are full of news, coaching tips and information so that players can keep in touch.
- 10 More than 60 volunteer members help run the CA which only employs three part-time staff in the CA Office and pays modest retainers to three others.



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# Editorial

There was an easy decision about our cover image for this issue!

The first simultaneous World Champion of both codes of our game is amongst us.

Step forward... no wait, giants don't step, they 'stride' – pride of Surbiton and Roehampton, Reg Bamford – congratulations and much respect.

Reg provides our lead story as the subject of a fascinating interview by Marcus Evans.

This runs alongside Martin French's overview of the GC World Championships on our center pages.

Reg allows us a peek into his world of the 'inner game'.

His conditioning and mental toughness are as foreign to us mere mortals, as is the very thought of being able to come back from 2-6 down to win any game - never mind the biggest match in the world.

By complete contrast, Richard Brand gives us an insight into his work as a PE teacher at the National Star College, where he delivers a croquet experience to young people coping with learning disabilities and brain acquired injuries.

Richard, you are an absolute star.

We have encouraging news on the youth front, with a possible resurrection of the Schools Championship that has been dormant for a number of years.

Back in the more familiar surroundings of



our clubs, for those like me, not blessed by a regime that can see the benefits of winter play, our essentially warm weather game is now in full flow.

However, this being Britain, the weather has been far from kind thus far and as I type this, I am hoping that the second day of my tournament at Roehampton will go ahead tomorrow, after this afternoon's wash-out.

Since my last editorial, I have been snowed on at Surbiton, pelted by hail whilst hoop setting at Phyllis Court, rained on at Hamptworth and nearly everywhere else, but rather unexpectedly had my bald patch sunburnt at Hurlingham!

My croquet has been rather the same – good one minute and then, as one of my club mates said the other day, and I paraphrase, '*I couldn't hit the largest part of a cow with a banjo!*'

Following the preview of the GC World Championships in the last Gazette (and let us remember that Stephen Mulliner's predictions proved to be right 'on the money'), for this issue we turn to the WCF AC World Championships which is being held at four London venues between 10 - 18 August.

Don't miss this opportunity to see the very pinnacle of our sport played right here in England.

And above all – enjoy your own croquet.

## Chris Roberts

# Chairman's Column

**F**irst of all, let me congratulate Reg Bamford on his remarkable win at the World Golf Croquet Championship in Egypt. I say remarkable because not only is it the first time the Egyptians have been beaten on their home turf, but it is also the first time anyone has held both the Association and Golf Croquet world titles at the same time. Truly an amazing achievement, which gives us all a new level to aspire to! There is more about



the championships are detailed inside this Gazette.

Meanwhile, preparations for the next AC World Championships are progressing apace. They will be held in the London area from 10th to 17th of August – full details are available at the event website, which is [www.acwc2013.org](http://www.acwc2013.org). Please make sure you note it in your diaries, as I'm sure it will be well worth a visit to see all the top players in action and it will be some time before the event returns to England. Will Reg be able to sustain his good form to win it for a fifth time, and equal Robert Fulford's record?

This year is a bit unusual, in that the WCF will have held both AC and GC championships, and it will be only just over a year since the last AC world championship in Adelaide. This is due to the re-distribution of the events into a new 4-year cycle the

**Front cover:** Reg Bamford adds the GC World Championship to his AC World crown - *by Nick Cheyne*  
**This page:** The Editor stranded - but no man is an island when he has helpers. You know who you are and thank you - *photograph by Howard Cheyne*

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**Chris Roberts Editor**

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WCF have introduced; in future we should see a more regular pattern, with each championship being held every 2 years, interleaving the AC and GC events. It has certainly been an issue for some top players that, with the team championships as well, it is impossible to find time to go to all of them. The WCF have recognised this, and I think the new cycle should be a big improvement.

Finally, I have an apology to make to Gail, as outgoing editor. It seems she did not want information about her holidays published, and was upset when I mentioned it in my last column. I'm very sorry, Gail, and will make sure I check with the individuals concerned before publishing any other personal information.

**Jeff Dawson**

# Protecting Children and Vulnerable Adults

Ian Vincent cuts through the jargon to explain this important issue

This is a brief summary of the updated advice to clubs about protecting children and vulnerable adults which the CA published on its website at <http://www.croquet.org.uk/?d=826>.

The document discusses the changes introduced by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 (which I mistakenly called the Freedom of Information Act in the last issue).

Their intention seems to have been to lighten the regulatory load by reducing the requirement for checking the past records of people coming into contact with children and vulnerable adults, and to improve confidentiality for those whose records are checked, but by mid-May they had yet to be fully implemented.

Checks with the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) must, and must only, be made by clubs (or other bodies, e.g. Federations or the CA itself) on people engaging in what is called "Regulated Activity" organised by them.

In the context of a croquet club, this is now only likely to occur if children (people aged under 18) are being taught or supervised by the same person frequently (once a week or more often), intensively (on 4 or more days in a 30 day period), or overnight (between 2am and 6am).

There is an exception if the coaches are being actively supervised, but only if the supervisor has been checked.

Adults are now only considered to be vulnerable while they are being given

health, personal or social care or assistance with household affairs, not just because they are elderly or disabled.

Thus, for example, someone coaching a group of children weekly during the summer term would be undertaking Regulated Activity, whereas someone who gave a bit of advice to a youngster they had



just played in a club competition, or gave first-aid to one that had been stung by a wasp, would not.

Note also that merely being an officer of, or employed as a groundsman by, a club that was offering coaching to children does not qualify as Regulated Activity.

The CA advises that if half or more of a group under instruction is under 18 then teaching them would be Regulated Activity (if the frequency or intensity conditions were met), but teaching a few children on a course aimed mainly at adults would not.

As a service to clubs, the CA has arranged with an umbrella body to undertake DBS checks on CA members if required. The checks are free of charge for volunteers: the CA itself will meet the administrative cost.

Checks will be arranged by club secretaries contacting Jean Hargreaves, the CA's Child Protection Officer, who will ask the individual to complete a web-based application and the secretary to verify their identity documents.

Jean will be notified if the disclosure is clear, otherwise the individual will have to send her the disclosure he or she receives, so that she can assess whether any of the matters disclosed are relevant to their suitability. The DBS's update service will apply to applications received after 17th June, and the individual will be able to register the disclosure, which will enable organisations to check that it is still current, and thus make it portable between voluntary activities.

Please read the full advice, or contact Jean Hargreaves, [jwjh@care4free.net](mailto:jwjh@care4free.net), 0161 7924694, if you would like information.

Above: Schoolboys from Eton College enjoying their inter-house final at Phyllis Court, Henley. Opposite page: Ian Vincent  
Photos by Chris Roberts and Robert Thomson

## CA Office News

### Liz Larsson

**Public Liability Insurance** - The subscription cycle for Clubs is well under way, and the Public Liability Insurance certificates are being posted out to clubs.

**Archives** - The CA's archives go back to the 1890s with minute and year books, Gazettes and a library of books. While these cannot be lent out, members are welcome to come and use them for research in the office in Cheltenham. Simply make an appointment with the office.

**CA Shop** - The CA shop is, as ever, open for business, and Paul Hands will be happy to help. With more than 40 years' playing experience, Paul has a wealth of knowledge and advice to give.

## Croquet Association Diplomas

Nominations, by clubs or federations, of people who have performed exceptional service are invited for the award of CA Diplomas. These were first awarded in 2000 and are intended primarily to recognise the work done by the many volunteers who do so much "behind the scenes" to provide the facilities, service and organisation that we all enjoy, but so easily take for granted.

Nominations should be sent to the CA Office by 1st August, together with a short (approx 100 words) citation that will be published when the awards are made. Diplomas are normally presented at the AGM (which this year is at Hurlingham on 19th October), but arrangements can be made to present them locally if the recipient is unable to be there. *Ian Vincent - Hon. Secretary*

# From our files

Frances Colman has again searched past Gazettes for a variety of articles that give a flavour of both history and writing styles.

## 100 years ago - 1913

### Croquet Association Gazette.

The Official Organ of the Croquet Association.

Printed—HIS MAJESTY THE KING.

**Surbiton** – The new croquet club, which was opened last year, and already has sixty members, held its first open tournament on June 2nd and following days, which was an unqualified success. The number of entries in both quantity and quality was remarkable. There was an array of talent in the open singles, and looking at the programme it was quite impossible to predict the result, although many fancied that either Mr.B.H.Burton or Lord Tollermache would carry away the Challenge Cup; however, the winner eventually proved to be Mr Trevor Williams whose victory was most popular, the more so as he is a member of the Surbiton Club..

**Peel Memorials** – the meeting proves more popular each year, the entries this week show an increase of 20 of those of 1912. This would probably prove a record entry for any tournament, as although statistics of the Eastbourne entries are not available, it seems hardly credible that there have been more than 179 individual players.

## 50 years ago - 1963

### CROQUET

The Official Organ  
of The Croquet Association

**Miss L. Elphinstone -Stone** – In the death of their much loved lady on May 23rd, our Association has lost its oldest member and most notable veteran croquet has ever known.

Had she lived for another three months she would have been 98, and it is only in the last few seasons that she ceased to be a competitor in the open tournament at Southwick, which she had made her home since the war.

She had won her silver medal in the very first season in which the Association was brought into being, and continued to be in the first flight of lady players for at least a dozen seasons after this, winning the Woman's Gold Medal in 1902...

# Council Meeting Report

## Ian Vincent (Hon.Secretary)

For the January council meeting to have been affected by snow was not too surprising, but I had not anticipated that wintry weather would return to prevent several members from getting to the March one! However, 21 people made it, including Chris Roberts, the new editor of the Gazette, also representing the Southern Federation in the absence of Brian Fisk, who was getting married.

Email votes on motions to approve the budget, discontinue separate fraud insurance, authorise the management committee to make provisions for DBS checks and to wind up the Lawns Advisory Group were confirmed. The 2012 accounts were approved and a discussion on the level of development grants concluded that they should be held at roughly the current level pending a wider review of the CA's finances.

I reported back from a workshop about the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), which is now the organisation responsible for providing information about the records of people working with children or vulnerable adults (*see article on opposite*).

Trials of two temporary variations of the laws were authorised for this season: one for the wrong ball law in GC, the other for handicapping doubles pairs in AC.

The recommendations of a working party on the regeneration of AC were accepted as suggestions, which clubs might like to consider and feed back their own ideas of what worked for them.

The main thrust was to get people playing a form of Association Croquet with simple rules on small lawns quickly,

rather than risk putting them off by highly structured coaching in the early days.

The conclusion of a paper outlining the implications of the CA reconstituting itself as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation, that the CA needed to decide whether it wanted to be seen as a charity acting for the public benefit or as a private members' club, was discussed. The general consensus, though with some reservations, was that charitable status was the right way to go in principle and hence that further work to investigate the details should be undertaken.

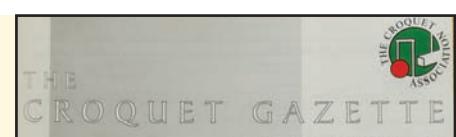
A working party was established to do this, which would welcome input from anyone with specialist knowledge in this area. In the meantime, amendments to tidy up the current constitution, primarily to align it with the WCF's Statutes, were approved to be put to the 2013 AGM.

The other major discussion

was on the report of the Federation Working Party, which made recommendations in four main areas: the constitutional position of federations; the relationship between federation and CA competitions; geographical boundaries and subscription structures. All these are areas where problems are perceived with the current arrangements, which have not kept pace with the growth of competitive play in many federations since they were established in Sports Council regions some 30 years ago. The recommendations are not proposals cast in stone, but rather ideas for discussion with clubs and federations at meetings over the coming winter.

## 10 years ago - 2003

Dear Sir – I have been reading a splendid little book by Patrick Cotter entitled 'Tackle Croquet this Way'. Cotter states that "Whatever happens don't become an Aunt Emma player... rather than play like this, be content to lose the game in an honest endeavour to make



a break. Your reward will come, for you will eventually become a croquet player enjoying the rights of man to express intelligence, while the Aunt Emma player will still be wallowing in chaos"...

Audry Howell - Budleigh Salterton CC

## Who to watch for at the top of AC this season – Samir Patel

**The Open Championship** is the flagship event of the UK calendar and is also the strongest such tournament in the world.

This means that progressing through the championship will require consistent play at a high level and there are usually some “big names” who find themselves out of the event before the knock-out stage.

In the past decade, only four players have won this event (Fulford x5, Bamford x3, Beijderwellen and Maugham once each), and only four others have reached the final (Clarke, Fletcher, Patel and Trimmer).

Held at the same time is the Open Doubles Championship and for many years Clarke and Fulford were the pair to beat.

However, pairings have been more varied since then, with four different winners in the last five years.

Picking favourites will have to wait until the pairings are known.

### The Eights

The selection process means that all players are closely matched so it's essential to get off to a great start and the 14-game format often means that the winner remains undecided until the last couple of rounds.

If one of these events is held at or near your club, I recommend trying to go to watch.

Every game is closely fought, and the pressure of the final rounds can provide much excitement as the leader tries to stay clear of the other players.

Consistency is required to win an eight, and for the President's Cup this puts Robert Fulford, winner in each of the last five years, as the clear favourite.

**WCF AC World Championships** are being held in August, at Hurlingham, Roehampton, Surbiton and Woking.

Reg Bamford, as current holder and recent GC World Championship winner, will probably start as the favourite, but there will be 79 others doing their best to stop him.

Of the visiting players, Robert Fletcher is one to watch. He reached the semi-final in 2009 and the final in 2012, and will clearly be looking to go one better this year.

**The MacRobertson Shield** starts on 30 December in New Zealand.

For the first time since 1963, this will be contested by England (rather than Great Britain), but there are at least a dozen players who will wish to stake a claim to a place in the side.

Selection is scheduled to take place just after the World Championship and a month after the Open Championship.



# THE AC CHAMPIONSHIP 10-18 AUGUST at Surbiton, Roehampton

(6-8 August ~ Qualifying)

**Don't miss you  
the very best**



**Photographs, clockwise from top left:**

Reg Bamford, Robert Fletcher, Robert Fulford, Rutger Beijderwellen, Chris Clark, Ian Lines, Stephen Mulliner, David Maugham, Samir Patel and Marcus Evans. All images by Samir Patel, except Bamford & Clark by Nick Cheyne, and Lines, Mulliner & Maugham by Julie Kaye Photography.





## Do you know your President's from your Spencer Ell ?

The CA oversees a large number of tournaments with interesting and sometimes historic titles. Your Editor found them confusing and, suspecting that many readers might also appreciate an insight, he asked **CA Manager Elizabeth Larsson** to explain the hierarchy and a little about each one.

AC Championships are graded and Grade 1 events are the most prestigious.

### **Grade 1 Championships**

**The Open Championships** - This is the oldest croquet open tournament in the world and, along with the Australian and New Zealand Opens, is one of the 'Big Three' that all top croquet players want to win. The winners of the Opens are usually in the top three or four in the world rankings on a regular basis.

### **Men's, Women's and Mixed Doubles**

As with the Opens, these are old and prestigious tournaments and winning one is also a real tick in the box for the A-class croquet player.

### **The Regional Championships: The Westerns, Easterns, Southerns and Northerns.**

### **Grade 2 Championships**

**The Jersey Open, The Coles Championship, The Championships of both Surrey and East Midlands.**

**Grade 3 Championships** include **The National Veterans and Seniors** which are very popular tournaments, along with the **Students', Juniors' and Schools' Championships** (see page 15) ~

Sitting alongside the Championships are the **AC Eights**, which are selection events which take place over the same weekend, but at different venues. The President's Cup is the most senior of these, and it has similar prestige to the Opens. These are the 'Eights' in order:

**The President's Cup** – This is the 'Top Eight' and there would be Open Champions and Mac players in this group.

**The Chairman's Salver** – The 'Second Eight' and a Mac player might be in this group.

**The Spencer Ell Cup** – The 'Third Eight' and it is unlikely that recent Mac players will be involved.

**The Treasurer's Tankard** – The 'Fourth Eight'.

**The Selectors' Weekend** - Strictly speaking, this isn't an Eight at all, as there

are 16 players and it has a different format. It takes place at the same time as the Eights and players are selected at the same time.

For this set of tournaments, players state which eight they want to play in and the selectors make a decision based on their standard, ranking and their record in the current year (the GC Sixes are based on this). If a player drops out between selection and the event, reserves will be offered the place. Quite often the reserves are people in the next eight down, so for example, if someone dropped out of the President's, the next person on the list would be offered the place and that might mean that there is a vacancy in the Chairman's, and so on down.

Players are encouraged to make themselves available for selection events even if their playing strength may not be sufficient. They would not be criticised for being available for events for which they would not normally be considered - let the Selectors decide! The Selectors will not place a player into a lower Eight merely because of their availability – if they are of a higher standard then they'll be placed into the appropriate Eight, but if they are not available for that higher Eight, then they won't be selected for it.

And although not 'graded', **The Peel Memorials** is a lovely handicap tournament (Men's, Women's and mixed Doubles) and was first contested in 1898. The **Challenge and Gilbey and South of England Week** are similarly historic and both also date back to the beginning of the last century.

And finally the **AC Inter Counties** is a huge event, attracting a minimum of 132 different players. It takes part over four days and frequently there is an even greater participation because counties can nominate a squad of up to nine players.

Details of how to enter all of these CA-run tournaments can be found in the Fixtures Book and on the CA web site by 'clicking on' the 'i' icon next to each event in the AC Tournament Fixtures Calendar.

# WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS August Hurlingham, London & Woking (playing at Nottingham)

## Our chance to see the best in the World



## Obituaries

### Judy Anderson 1936 - 2013



Judy was born and brought up in Essex, apart from being evacuated from the Thames Estuary during the war. She trained as a microbiologist and had a process for typing bacteria named after her, in the days before DNA sequencing. She played hockey for many years, keeping goal with only minimal protective clothing. Another interest was singing and it was through an amateur operatic group that she met her husband Tom. They both got jobs at the Unilever research institute at Colworth, moving into separate houses (as was conventional in those days) before getting married in 1967.

It was at Colworth that she discovered croquet, which was played at lunchtimes on a lawn outside her lab. She was shown how to play 'properly' by members of Wrest Park, which allowed her and Tom to join, despite it being a sports and social club for the staff of the Silsoe research institute. The club's generosity yielded high dividends as they helped to build its pavilion and, despite living at the other end of the county, continued to support it in many ways. As John Wheeler, one of the long-standing friends she made at the club said, "she was always there when needed" - even if, on one memorable occasion, she had to go back to fetch the tournament lunch which had been left on the kitchen table!

The coaching she received paid off too, as Judy rapidly developed into a good player. She was selected to play in the Ladies' Field Cup (subsequently the Barlow Bowl) eight times, and won the Ladies' second six in 1986. She played in Colworth's Longman Cup team, which won the event in 1983 and again in 1996, and was part of Bedfordshire's highly competitive, but very sociable, Inter-Counties team.

However, it was with development work that she made her greatest contribution.

In 1983 Judy was asked to be the Sports

Council's Eastern Region contact for croquet, and she worked up a three-year development plan which attracted financial assistance. At that time the six counties in the region had just nine registered clubs between them, but that number more than doubled over the next few years. The East Anglian Croquet Federation was formed in 1986, with Judy as its secretary and development officer for its first 17 years. Large numbers of people were introduced to the game at National Trust tournaments and the first ever indoor event was held at Clacton in 1987. Sports Council funding dried up in 1990, due to a change in policy, but by then the federation was self-sustaining.

Judy served on the CA Council from 1985 until she was forced, by illness, to retire in 2002, when her outstanding work was recognised by the award of the Council Medal and by an award from the Sports Council. Her name is inscribed in the Benefactors' Book, along with those of Tom and John and Pandora Wheeler, for having found and donated back to the CA the magnificent Beddows Cup, which had been lost to the game after Miss DD Steel won it for the fourth time in 1933. Despite no longer being able to play competitively, her enthusiasm for watching the game endured and she continued to support Tom and her other club mates, not entirely uncritically, at tournaments at Hunstanton and elsewhere. She also continued to encourage players at Colworth.

Croquet in general, and the East Anglian Federation in particular, have good reason to give thanks for her enthusiasm and dedication to the sport.

*Ian Vincent - Nottingham CC*

### Connie Chick 1926 - 2013



Littlehampton Croquet Club regrets to announce the death of Connie Chick on 9 March 2013.

Connie was the Club's President from 2002 to 2010 having been Chairman for the previous four years.

She had served on the Committee almost continually since she joined Littlehampton Croquet Club in 1988, and her many activities included coaching new members, catering for match teas and fund raising, all of which were undertaken with equal enthusiasm.

Connie had been a member of both the South East Croquet Federation (SECF) Committee and the CA Golf Croquet Committee. She had been match secretary for both friendly and league matches and had herself represented the club in the SECF League.

In the Winter of 1994/5, together with her late husband Don (Treasurer and Sports Field Representative), Connie oversaw the relocation of the Club's elderly wooden clubhouse to its present site on the Sports field. In 2008 Connie was awarded a CA Diploma for exceptional services to Croquet, which she proudly displayed in her home.

*Barbara Walters - Littlehampton CC*

### Success for CA members at GC World Championships

With Surbiton and Roehampton member Reg Bamford winning the main Championship, the CA had a successful event. Pierre Beaudry (Dulwich), representing Belgium, won the Championship Bowl, beating Yasser Esmat in the final 7-5, 4-7, 7-5. Beaudry had never won a tournament outside of play at his home club: quite a surprise for a player of such ability, and especially impressive because he beat two former World Champions, Mohamed Nasr and Salah Hassan, on his way to the Bowl final. Egypt did succeed in the second tier Plate (Tarek Mamdouh) and fourth tier Shield (Sherif Nafee) events, with the GCWorld Championship offering four trophies for the first time.



*Pierre Beaudry photo by Nick Cheyne*

## Letters to the Editor

### Croquet is delightful in the Algarve

I was interested to read about the Bela Romao Croquet Club in Portugal (Gazette issue 342, February). My partner and I are lucky enough to be able to spend winters in the Algarve – leaving these shores in November after our club's end-of-season social and returning in time to participate in the Ripon Rowels Tournament in April.

Imagine our delight upon discovering Bela Romao on the Eastern Algarve, a mere 50-minute drive from us in Silves. We arranged a visit and were met by David (the club's coach), Lita (the Portuguese "mistress-mind" behind the enterprise) and Sarah (the English co-owner and chef whose concoctions are to die for). Language can be a real barrier and I did have slight communication problems – not with Lita, but with Sarah – she being from Lancashire and me from Yorkshire! Despite us playing the 'wrong sort of croquet' (golf) we were made very welcome and had a great day.

Although there is only one court (maybe more in the pipeline) it is remarkably good for only its second season. Any quirks are amply compensated for by looking up to admire the view over the Rio Formosa coastline and quickly forgotten when enjoying the hospitality over lunch in such idyllic surroundings. We managed to fit in a couple more visits during our stay and pushed the 'proper game'! To our delight, as we left on our last visit the club members were playing in an impromptu golf tournament – Result!

We're home now with a season stretching ahead but already looking forward to playing again at Bela Romao. If you're planning a holiday to the Algarve and fancy a game or two, do get in touch with Sarah or Lita. Or if a croquet holiday is on the cards both the villa and studio apartment are gorgeous. See their website ([www.belaromaocroquet.com](http://www.belaromaocroquet.com)) and maybe I'll see you there sometime! **Gill Brent - Ripon CC**

### 'No penalty' idea for striking wrong ball

How refreshing to read Frank Lee's letter (Gazette issue 343, April) suggesting simplification of the 'wrong ball' laws.

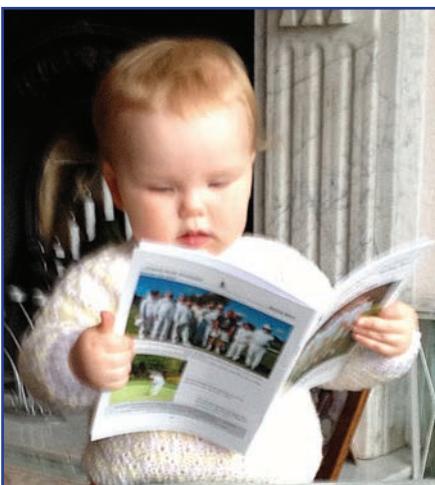
I would go even further than Frank and have no penalty for playing any wrong ball – as soon as it is noticed, replace and replay using the correct ball.

Opponents should stop a wrong ball being played if they notice it is about to happen.

I would rather win by playing better croquet than by using the laws to gain an advantage.

**Bob Connop - Culcheth CC**

### Heidi 'gets' croquet at 16 months



Ian Hunter of Belsay CC tells us that his granddaughter Heidi, aged 16 months, had picked up a Croquet North Newsletter that he had been reading and decided to copy him, looking at the contents with great concentration and interest as you can see. As Ian says "We aim to foster an early interest in croquet at Belsay!"

*Editor Chris Roberts hopes to see Heidi progress on to the Gazette before too long!*

### Feeling Queasy over wrong ball law

Bill Arliss is to be commended for his efforts to correct perceived injustices in the application of the current wrong ball rules but to this common playing error there is an even simpler resolution which also may alleviate a twinge of conscience which must have visited many golf croquet players.

I have always felt a little queasy (opportunistic? deceitful? unethical?) as I watch in silence an opponent address the wrong ball and wait for the moment to call a fault.

If playing the wrong ball (and also playing out of turn) were deemed no-fault errors and instead of a fault being called on these occasions the balls were replaced to enable the correct sequence to be resumed, then every player on the lawn (and the referee if appointed) would be in a position to forestall such incorrect play. The incidence of a continuing wrong sequence and its complicated consequences would be greatly reduced.

In football, the player wearing the wrong colour shorts is, after all, not sent off but asked to change them and we would all, I think, wish to succeed by playing skill, rather than by sequence recall.

Croquet players in the very large majority are instinctively sporting and, I feel sure, would welcome a less conspiratorial playing ethos – as well as a pruning of the rules they are required to remember.

**Peter Lowe - Tyneside CC**

*Chairman of the GC Laws Committee Bill Arliss, answers these two letters and the whole subject of playing the 'wrong ball', on page 20*



### AC Referees and Laws Course

**Examining Referee Cliff Jones** (right) ran a very enjoyable course at Southwick in April. The following attended and qualified as Full Referees during examinations after the course:

**Wayne Wiseman, Chris Roberts and David Boyd.**

The following qualified as Assistant Referees:

**John Taylor, Roger Loram, Mike Cockburn, Neil Coote and Frances Colman.**

Peter Moore also attended the course, but was unable to stay for the examination.

# £3400 raised by Charity One Ball Competition



## Kevin Carter reports

In this year's Charity One-Ball tournament two regional finals were held: the usual southern final at Winchester and a new northern final at Bowdon.

The pedigree of the winners of each could not be more different. Libby Howard-Blood (Nailsea), playing off 22 in her first tournament, won at Winchester, while Colin Irwin, ex-GB international and playing off -5, won at Bowdon!

At Winchester this year we had an unusual number of high handicappers among the qualifiers.

The lunchtime leader, unbeaten after four rounds of the swiss, was Gill McDiarmid (Woking), followed by Simon Balmford (Parsons Green), Martin Pulsford (Surbiton) and Libby.

In the afternoon Simon and Martin fell away, while the two ladies were joined by another strong lady contender in Anne Wilkinson (Roehampton), along with John Weydling (Littleton) and Peter Haydon (Dulwich).

Going into the eighth and final round there was the potential for a four-way tie. However Libby - gaining in confidence with every game - powered to a seventh win, Gill was edged out of the prizes and the deserving runners-up were Anne and John.

The sole minus player, Graham Gale (Guildford & Godalming), was weighed



## PROSTATE CANCER UK

down by timber all day and collected the booby prize.

In the morning's dry weather at the inaugural Northern Regional Final, John Lucas (Bowdon) was the leader and unbeaten after four rounds with Tim King (Ashby), Colin and Neil Thompson (Bowdon) all close on his tail.

The rain of the afternoon session soon changed the speed of the lawns and, after six rounds, the two clear leaders were Colin and Neil who then effectively played a final to determine the overall winner and runner-up, while Tim King and Graham Good (Bury) tied for third place.

The poor spring weather played havoc with this year's heats and while a record 33 heats were scheduled, four had to be cancelled and six suffered postponement.

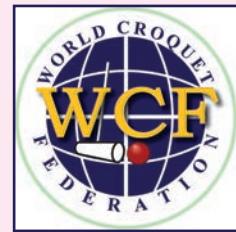
At the time of writing this account two heats had yet to be played and so the totals quoted will be increased once they are!

A total of 389 players took part in 29 heats prior to the finals and raised £3400 for this year's chosen charity, Prostate Cancer UK.

**Photographs , top Left:** Southern winner Libby Howard-Blood flanked by Winchester Chairman Rita Nunn and National Organiser Kevin Carter  
(by Terry Young)

**Top Right:** Northern Winner Alan Mayne receives the congratulations of manager Colin Irwin at Bowdon  
(by Ken Cooper)

**Left:** The moustachioed players of Huddersfield CC (by Rena Souten)



**Window o**  
by Martin  
Secretary

The World Croquet Federation primarily exists for two reasons: to organize World Championship events and to develop the sport internationally. The last two months have seen plenty of activity on both fronts.

We had long planned a GC World Championship in Cairo in April, preceded by an Under-21s event, where the best two players would get places in the main event the following week.

We had a field of 16 U21 players expected from around the world, but with a few weeks to go, seven pulled out, leaving a potential entry list of just 9 from 2 countries.

This left the host nation, which receives government support for hosting international events, in trouble with its government regulations which require the participation of several more countries in order to receive funding.

The event was cancelled as a world championship, though I'm glad to say it was possible to resurrect a lower key U21 qualifier for the remaining players.

The main GC World Championship had no such troubles, with 64 entrants and top class play in excellent surroundings.

There is a full report elsewhere in this issue, but congratulations to Reg Bamford

## Recruiting via Association

It is possible for clubs to recruit keen new members via the Association game, **writes Quiller Barrett**.

Early in the season many clubs have open days or run courses to recruit new members and my club at Watford is no exception.

I've been lending a hand coaching the newcomers – but this time it has been via AC not GC.

The Watford lead coaches John Bee and John Smallbone, were keen to introduce beginners to AC and they structured their four week, two hour sessions course, to follow the recommendations of the CA Regeneration of AC working party (see the CA website, Technical & Articles / Advice for

## n the WCF n French, y-General



for the incredible feat of holding both the AC and GC World Championship crowns at the same time.

The following week we sponsored the first WCF Academy at Southwick and had nearly 20 players from 8 countries taking part.

In the past we have sent coaches from one of the larger member associations to smaller association to give a weekend's coaching. This Academy was an attempt to change that model, by training potential coaches and referees to standards similar to the CA's.

Five candidates are now GC referees and seven have coaching qualifications (Club, GC or AC coach). We hope this will accelerate development in those countries and help them begin to be self-sufficient.

The WCF sincerely thanks Jonathan Isaacs, the coaches, referees, trainers and helpers at Southwick who made this Academy such a success.

At the same time as these events were taking place, entries closed for the next WCF event – the AC World Championship that is taking place in SW London from 10th – 18th August.

And so the process begins again.  
So there's always plenty to do!

## ation Croquet works!

### Clubs)

One of the lawns at Watford was divided into two short courts.

We followed Duncan Hector's advice and 11 people who signed up for the course were very soon having fun playing a blend of Garden and AC 14pt rules, instead of getting bogged down in AC jargon.

At the end of the course more than half of the beginners became members and they all said they are intent on mastering the Association game.

The club is appointing mentors to act as club contacts, help arrange more practice sessions and games and generally make the newcomers welcome.

# Stellar work at Star College



**The Croquet Experience at The National Star College**  
Introducing croquet to students with learning disabilities and brain acquired injuries was quite a challenge for **Richard Brand**. He tells us his story:

I have been a member of the CA for over 25 years and developed a love for the game from my father, who decided to take the game up in 1980.

There are so many different facets to croquet with players all striving for 'that perfect game'.

As a PE teacher and having some natural predisposition for the components of fitness required for sport, even croquet needs balance, co-ordination and power, linked to the obvious requirement for the skill element of accuracy; and then there are tactics, but no need to develop that here.

I soon discovered that there was the Solomon grip, the Irish, the Standard and even a side saddle swing! And as my croquet career progressed, I discovered different mallet heads, lengths, shafts and the fact that some mallets even had holes in them!

All this innovation was for the elite player, striving for 'that perfect game'; that even some of us achieve occasionally. But all this is not for the beginner or less able player.

I have coached and taught at various mainstream colleges and schools where everybody has had some level of proprioception, therefore a level of achievement, and hence satisfaction for students was attainable. However, when I moved to the Cheltenham area and started working at The National Star College in June 2007, I was quite frankly unprepared for what I was about to witness in the sport sessions.

The National Star College is a place of learning in a residential setting for young people aged 16-24 who have learning disabilities or brain acquired injuries.

There are 145 students with a range of abilities that include those using electric wheelchairs and ambulant students (e.g. Down syndrome or on the autistic spectrum). So I had to rethink how I was going to change things to make croquet accessible to all.

Trying to engage these students in a meaningful activity such as croquet that they had never heard of was always going to be challenging. I asked the Estate Manager for an area of grass that I could use: one that would allow me to knock in proper hoops but not upset a groundsman. The hoops had to be proper steel ones as the wire ones would have been crushed by the weight of the electric chairs, not to mention some of the students' ability to run over one's feet!

Having acquired hoops, mallets and balls from the C.A. the next stage was to make the game accessible to the students. So I have shortened the area into about a quarter of a regular court, use shorter mallets (the sort used for pitching tents) and have created a skills game for the students to enjoy. They start from hoop

1 and play shots to achieve all six hoops once and then hit the peg; they count the total number of shots they take as they go round. I have also created a 5 Star scoring system so

the students can rate themselves. Under twenty shots would be equal to five stars, 21-30 is four stars and so on. Once this is mastered I introduce the concept of golf croquet and the need to take turns.

Remember though, that for these students this is a new experience, which is challenging due to their fitness issues; it also needs to be a quick experience as they are easily distracted. However, every year when the summer term comes the older students all ask to try again and pit their skills against the new intake of students.

It's good to know that even croquet can be made accessible to all, and that there is a level for everyone to aspire to, no matter what one's ability... or should I say disability?

Richard Brand (Sports Tutor, N.S.C.)



# The Greatest GC Game of all Time

## Bamford nails World title with movie style comeback

### Martin French tells the tale of the WCF GC World Championship 2013 (with additional reporting by Tim King)

This was my first world championship for 24 years, and a great experience it was too. I knew in advance that the Egyptian Croquet Federation (ECF) had been taking steps to give a smooth-running event even with the political uncertainties in Egypt.

#### Setting the scene

Consequently, instead of spreading the event out over the planned five venues with a total of eleven lawns, it was decided to run it on three venues with eight lawns. This made security easier to ensure. The downside was that play extended from 9am until 1.20am. All courts are floodlit, as the Egyptians usually play after sunset in the hot months, when it is cooler and I heard no complaints about the quality of the lighting. Most people seemed to enjoy the novelty of playing after midnight under lights!

All three venues had a similar layout: each lawn surrounded by a paved walkway raised a foot higher, with railings and steel mesh fencing to retain the balls.

For most of the week, the weather reached the mid-twenties during the day with a pleasant breeze, got a bit chilly by midnight, and you only fried if you were on the lawns just after lunch.

The hoops were very solidly made and solidly set – and it was usual practice for a ball-boy to tap in the hoops before each vigorous scoring attempt. Some lawns had bad rabbit-runs in the jaws, which were

filled with sand, and every court had two ball boys and a referee who I found to be excellent – they made a few minor errors (rather fewer than the players did!) but were friendly and attentive.

The first four days of play were in blocks of eight, giving each player seven matches. Following this there were then playoffs to settle any ties between players on the same number of match wins. The top four players from each block qualified for the main knockout. Of the English players, only Jacob Carr and Martin French reached the knockout, which is more a measure of how tough some of the blocks were, rather than how some of us played.

#### Bonfire of overseas players

Seventeen of the thirty-two players in the knock-out were Egyptian, and Round 1 was the 'bonfire of the overseas players', with only Chris Clarke and Duncan Dixon (both representing New Zealand), Australia's Terry Ericsson and John van der Touw, Jack Clingan of Ireland and South Africa's Reg Bamford surviving to the last sixteen. In the Quarters, Clarke went out despite playing very accurately against the impressive Ahmed El Mahdi. Young Clingan was unable to repeat his impressive block win against Bamford and lost to the previous finalist at this stage. Dixon fell victim to former world champion Ahmed Nasr.

So the semi-finals were an all-African affair, with Reg Bamford and three Egyptians. Bamford beat Ahmed El Mahdi in a high-class match and in the other semi; the contrasting styles of Hami Erian (a controlled, touch player) and Ahmed Nasr (an amazingly hard and accurate hitter) resulted in victory for the latter.

#### Thrilling Final

The final was a fascinating five-hour, best-of-five match between Bamford, the master of the inner game, and Nasr (the hardest, straightest hitter I've ever seen). The first two games were tense and slow – with a bit of gamesmanship on display. Then the third game really lit up the final and ended after an exciting battle with Bamford winning 7-6 to take a two games to one lead. The fourth game had some sublime shooting by Nasr, who went 4-0 up in a blink of an eye, including running Hoop 4 from the boundary in front of Hoop 7! When the ball

got to the hoop, 35 yards away, it was still travelling faster than most of us can hit a ball in the first place. Bamford stemmed the tide but eventually lost 4-7 leaving the match tied on two games all.

Nasr continued this blistering form into the deciding game, and was soon 6-2 up after some very impressive shooting. The crowd thought it was all over, but Bamford just played amazingly to claw back hoop after hoop. Yes, Nasr missed a couple of long clearances towards the end, but it can't be said to have crumpled.

#### Last two hoops astonishing!

After a good first clearance at hoop 12, Bamford then played a half-ball cut that put Nasr on the east boundary and his own ball on the north boundary. Nasr then missed his 14-yard clearance so that Bamford could run the 3-yard hoop 12 with Nasr's other ball lurking closer to the hoop. With Nasr only able to take position, Bamford ran hoop 13 with his boundary ball, winning on the deciding hoop of the deciding game.

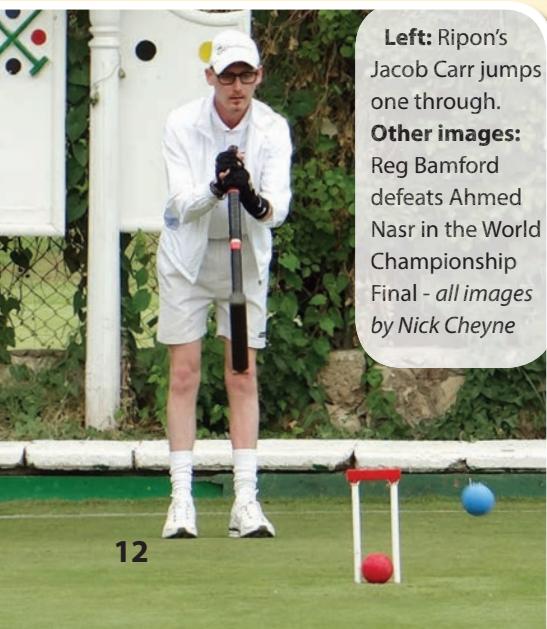
The crowd were exhausted from just watching the match! What fantastic croquet played at the very highest level.

A big thanks to the Egyptian Croquet Federation for staging a fantastic event, especially to Amir Ramis (President) and Mohamed Hassan Mahmoud (Tournament Manager); it was a privilege to play in the event. The next GC World Championship will be in New Zealand in 2015.

There was success for CA member Pierre Beaudry too. See page 8.

#### Flying high with Tobi

The Nasr brothers undoubtedly hit the balls the hardest but England's Tobi Savage achieved possibly the most noticeable feat of the Championship when one of his balls flew over a seven-foot hedge!





# The moment that history was made!

Marcus Evans interviews the new Double World Champion

**Q. Firstly Reg, many congratulations on your fantastic achievement. Naturally, winning either World Championship is the ambition of many top players, but when did you begin to believe it might be possible to win both?**

Thanks Marcus!

The goal to win both world titles started when I entered my second GC Worlds, after I had won my first AC Worlds in 2001. As everyone knows, it is impossible for a GC player to make the transition to AC and to quickly compete at the highest level.

The reverse is possible, though – a top AC player can compete quite competitively at GC in a short space of time (though they will remain tactically deficient for some time, and this will cost them in the close games). So the toughest bit was to win the AC worlds. I always believed that if I maintained my AC level, a GC Worlds win would present itself.

**Q. How did you bounce back from the disappointment of the last GC Worlds in 2011, when you lost in the semi-final after a highly controversial refereeing decision?**

A person always goes through the shock-anger-denial-acceptance cycle in situations like that. Some people go through it quickly, others slowly, and everyone in varying degrees. I had placed a large emotional importance on the event (you need to in order to win it), so I admit I went through each of those emotions. I suppose it took a couple of days to accept it and move on. It made me more determined, and I took the positive from it – that it had to take something like that to beat me!

**Q. I understand playing in Cairo is quite different from most other croquet venues; can you explain in what respects, and whether you adapted your approach (physically and/or mentally) to deal with this?**

There is nothing quite like playing on Court 1 at the Federation (the croquet club where the final was held), at night and under the lights, against an Egyptian in the late stages of a championship. And unless you've been in that situation before, it takes some getting used to.

The court is slightly sunken, surrounded by a green wrought-iron fence. The night light gives a surreal feel to it. To me it felt gladiatorial, particularly given who I was playing and his support. The noise level when he made a great shot was extraordinary and seems amplified. It is easy to get intimidated.

I've been to Cairo for the Egyptian Open, at the kind invitation of Amir (Amir Ramsis, Egyptian Croquet Federation President) several times, and been in that position before. So I knew what to expect. And much of my preparation was visualising the scene, feeling and soaking up the emotions, expecting the sounds, and going through the motions of playing and winning.

My coach had asked me to attach a title and a narrative to the tournament, and we spent some time in developing a story behind it. I don't want necessarily to go into the finer details, but it centred on me making it as dramatic and powerful as possible, in big, emotive words and imagery. It equipped me to handle the tough moments that I knew would come my way. And it involved me playing in those extraordinary conditions.

**Q. And did you do anything different physically? For example, are the courts in Cairo generally slower-paced than elsewhere, so you have to train yourself**

**to hit harder?**

No, I didn't do a lot differently. I'm happy playing on slower lawns, and my style allows me to hit soft or hard without changing the tempo or mechanics of my swing. I tried to keep more hydrated, and avoid certain foods and drinks

**Q. Some commentators suggested before the event that a non-Egyptian winner was a 50-1 outside chance; did this make you even more determined to succeed? Do you think this was a fair assessment given the difficulties described above?**

No, it made no difference and was irrelevant in my thought processes. These are things that I've discussed at length with my coach.

My coach talks about remarks that are introduced to stir controversy or elicit comment. I can choose to be attracted to them, or I can choose to dismiss them. I've had several thrown my way over the years. If you're not careful, you can end up believing them and they becoming self-fulfilling prophesies or a self-limiting belief.

So the 50:1 odds got mentioned. I chose to ignore it (although I could have made a nice return on those odds!). Was it a fair assessment? Of course not!

**Q. It looked from the scores like you were never under pressure until the semi-final; was that a help or a hindrance?**

It was neither. Pressure is something that you choose to feel, and is not imposed on you by anybody else. I chose not to feel any pressure – in the block games, in the knockout, or in the final itself. I practice hard not to feel pressure. (continues overleaf)



....The biggest wobble I had was after my first knock-out round, against Salah Hassan. I approached the match in exactly the same way I did every other game – going through my routines in the morning, in the build up, in the practice and in the match itself. And I played really badly. I missed several short hoops in the match, but won through largely because Salah played even worse.

Sporting belief can be a fragile thing, and that night I fretted over my poor play. But an email from my coach explained it to me. He said that the 'Chimp' in me – the emotional, instinctive and irrational side – had labelled my opponent as "poor" and so instructed the 'Human' in me – the logical side – to relax and lower the intensity. Being five times stronger, my 'Chimp' prevailed. That email from my coach set my mind at ease!

**Q. Now, the final – you got off to a good start but it was never going to be easy against Ahmed Nasr and it looked like he was totally in command at 6-2 up in the final game. How did you give yourself the belief that you could come back and win from there? Do you think Ahmed relaxed too soon and this gave you a glimmer of hope?**

I can't speak on behalf of Ahmed, and I don't know how he felt. He missed a couple of crucial shots, and I nailed some crucial ones. Every shot is just another shot, unless you choose to attach a consequence or an emotion to it. I believed in the narrative and the story I had prepared before the event.

The only time I attached value to a consequence was my clearance at hoop 12. It was an eight-yard cut, and I said to myself: "I have three shots to win this championship." It was an empowering and inspiring thought and I nailed the cut, putting my ball on the north boundary in front of hoop 13. Ahmed missed his clearance, and I nailed my hoop 12. Nothing was going to stop me taking my shot at hoop 13 and I knew I was going to make it.

**Q. Finally, an obvious question but it must be asked – having reached the undisputed pinnacle of both AC and GC, what is your next target in croquet? Or to put it another way, how do you follow that?**

I don't feel as if anything has changed. I have an opportunity and a potential, and I'd just like to see where it takes me. I don't want to have any regrets. And I enjoy challenging myself to keep getting better.

# Over 2000 Students enter the Cuppers at Oxford University

## How do we recruit young people to Croquet?

### Will Gee offers his thoughts

Since the CA published a survey that highlighted certain trends a couple of years ago, this question is being asked more and more often.

But there doesn't seem to be an answer that satisfies everyone.

Recently, Eugene Chang has been trying to organise a "youth circuit" in croquet, composed of a handful of informal events around the country.

The aim is to allow young players to socialise with other young players, in the hope it keeps them playing.

Of all the initiatives proposed so far, I think this has the greatest potential.

But is croquet actually interesting enough to young people?

Both in terms of size and youth participation, Oxford University Cuppers is a unique croquet competition.

This year 521 teams of four entered the competition.

This is modest increase from last year's 506 and with over 2000 young players taking part each year, representing around one tenth of all Oxford University students, Cuppers proves that croquet and youth are not fundamentally incompatible.

Remarkably the tournament is AC, which is less accessible to total beginners than GC.

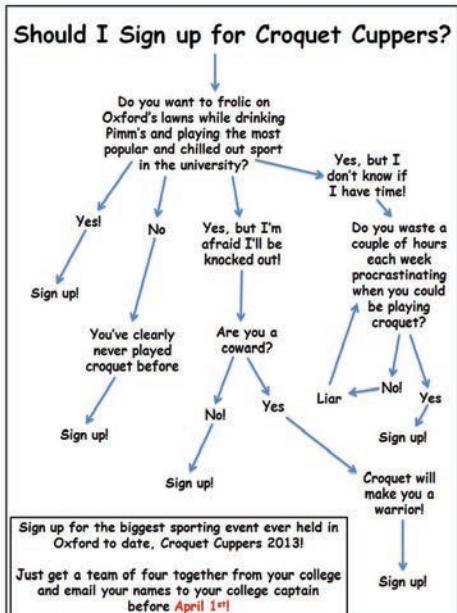
Moreover, there is no "average croquet player" at Oxford, with a range of club member interests and degrees.

How can Cuppers attract such an array of young players?

There are three main factors in Cuppers' success - awareness, availability and organisation. In summer term, croquet is everywhere in Oxford.

It's difficult not to be aware of Croquet Cuppers, with all the participants, matches and even newspaper articles that you see.

If every piece of grass that Croquet is



played on is called a lawn, then the centre of Oxford would have more Croquet lawns than all of London combined!

This makes it easy for people to pick up a mallet and try croquet.

Finally, the role of Oxford University Croquet Club in publicising, coaching and organising the tournament ensures that the momentum of the previous year's success is carried over to the next.

But can the lessons of Cuppers be applied elsewhere? I do hope so, but the amount of organisation required is large.

Croquet is already being introduced into the Sports' lessons of Magdalen College School and Nottingham High Schools, thanks to the enormous efforts of Chris Roberts, Frances Colman and David Brydon.

That provides awareness to youngsters, and local clubs are supporting these efforts, further providing availability.

The biggest obstacle will be organising youth events, and specifically finding someone to do it!

That's why I believe Eugene's Facebook idea is our best shot at introducing young players to croquet.

By getting young players to organise fixtures themselves, those who take up the game will be involved in recruiting another group of players a couple of years later.

All that's needed is a big push to get the ball rolling.



# Schools Round-Up ~ Chris Roberts & Frances Colman

## Papplewick Prep School

It's always good fun opening a new box of 'toys', as Frances Colman and Chris Roberts were reminded when they visited Papplewick Prep School beside Ascot race Course to launch the school's new croquet club.

Papplewick feed many of the top schools in the south, and Mrs Colman and Mr Roberts were soon introduced to prospective Etonians, Harrovians and Wellingtonians – all with well-mannered handshakes, of course. The boys, who are all between 10 and 13, had researched croquet for themselves, and had decided that they needed a lightweight croquet set that they had seen on the CA web site.

Their keen master Jonathan Cooper had then taken the advice of the CA staff to contact Chris Roberts, who is the Southern Federation development officer, for advice, and this led to the extending of an original budget in order to purchase a more durable George Wood Garden Croquet Set.

The box was opened by the boys with glee, and soon all the equipment had been thoroughly examined with excitement.

A rather 'too good for the job' cricket bat breaking-in type mallet was produced to bang in the hoops, and soon the croquet class was up and running on one approximately quarter-sized sized 'lawn'.

Sharing four mallets – and rather oddly five balls – between the 13 boys and 'Sir' was a challenge, but the delightfully behaved young men were soon shouting out 'roquet' and 'continuation', and asking detailed questions of their tutors!

An impromptu 'who can hit a ball the furthest' contest was probably the bit they will remember most, and all too soon it was eight o'clock and bedtime, but not before a team photograph to mark the evening that croquet came to Papplewick.



## Nottingham High Schools

Nottingham members Rachel Rowe and Will Gee are taking a team to Nottingham Girls' High School in June.

About a hundred Year 8 pupils will be given a taste of Croquet during their annual Sports Week.

There'll also be some after-school croquet with the boys of Nottingham High School across the road, alma mater to Will Gee, Keith Aiton, Gordon Hopewell and Geoffrey Taylor, amongst others.

All pupils and parents who take part will be invited to try their hand at croquet on Nottingham Croquet Club's lawns, at a special open day on Sunday 14 July.

## Oakham School

Ian Burridge chanced upon croquet being played at Oakham School in Rutland when he read an article in the old boys' magazine.

A swift inquiry found that four sixth-formers and an enthusiastic master had taken up the sport last year. Ian soon met up with them, and now attends to coach once a week.

They were entirely self-taught, and were playing AC to a very Aunt Emma style" said Ian, who continued, "They had actually done rather well by themselves, and had a good appreciation of the basic rules".

Typically for young lads, almost the first thing they wanted to know from Ian was about competition, and if there was another school they could play against.

Matching standards will be one headache, but more pressing is time, as the boys will be leaving school within a couple of months.



## Magdalen College School

As trailed in the last Gazette, croquet came to Magdalen College School in April as a proper sports lesson, and has continued twice a week at the Oxford seat of learning.

MCS joined the Croquet Association in May, and have made much of their new sports opportunity, which has been offered to just the sixth form girls initially.

A CA start-up grant of equipment should be in place after half-term, and this will supplement the stretched availability of gear that was generously loaned by the Cheltenham and Phyllis Court clubs, and both South and South-Eastern Federations.

The playing surface has been the biggest drawback, as the rugby field is far from ideal, and this has hampered the girls' progress as much as anything. And so too has the short duration of the one hour-long lessons, which seem to fly by in no time at all – maybe it's because coaches Frances Colman and Chris Roberts, and the 14 new players, are all enjoying ourselves so much!

MCS have been invited to visit the nearby Oxford CC courts by Ian Plummer, so that the girls can see what a proper lawn looks like, and similarly school old boy Keith Paiba, having seen the previous Gazette article, has invited MCS to visit his club at Roehampton. Before this, however, Colman and Roberts have plans for their pupils to visit Phyllis Court, at the same time that their Henley club again host the finals of Eton College's internal competitions.

## The Schools Championship

The Schools Championship has not run for quite a few years, but it is pleasing to report that a revival is on the cards this year as Oakham School (Rutland) and West Buckland School (Devon) are keen at least to play each other. Eton College is also a possible participant and Magdalen College School in Oxford and the Nottingham High Schools are good prospects for next year.

The plan (being finalised as the Gazette went to press) is for the Schools Championship to take place on Sunday 30th June 2013 and as we only have a small number of teams this year just a single day will be required. A suitably equidistant location in the vicinity of Bristol/Gloucestershire is being sought.

Depending on the final number of entries, we may also have time to hold the National Junior Championship on the same day. By the time you read this the date will be almost upon us, but there may still be time to enter, so please contact me on marcustevans@gmail.com if you are interested – or you can let me know of any interest in entering the 2014 event. **Marcus Evans**

## To shoot or not to shoot in Western?

**William Ormerod witnessed an interesting game in the Western Championships that threw up some crucial decisions for players and spectators alike to ponder.**

*He shares his thoughts with the Gazette.*

**T**he Scene: James Hopgood v Rutger Beijderwellen (pictured); game-all in a best-of-three, with one high quality triple-peel each.

### The final game - and it was enthralling!

Rutger, on 2-back, was pegged out by James, whose other ball was on hoop 4.

Yet Rutger, one of the finest shots in the world, declined to shoot at several longer and more dangerous targets, preferring to wait for shorter safer lift shots (in super-advanced there is a lift after hoops 4, 1-back and 4-back).

He missed the first two, one owing to the 'curvature of the earth', so with James laid up at 3-back, Rutger again declined to shoot.

Was his patience in still declining to shoot



decided by luck, chance or serendipity?

He was of course hoping for another shorter lift shot, should James run 4-back. Well, his patience finally paid off.

James was out on a two-ball break from 3-back, but he ran 4-back too hard and a cut-rush to penult was three yards short.

His partner ball was sent to within one inch of the peg, and he was hoop-bound after running a tricky penult.

Rutger hit the 13-yarder near the peg.

One precise take-off for a rush to 2-back earned generous applause and he finished on a brilliantly crafted three-ball break to win.

Commiserations must go to James who played exceptionally well, with some neat wirings.

But (and the main point of this report) I believe that Rutger correctly and skilfully relied on chance for a breakdown by James.

Luck is incalculable; serendipity in croquet implies a situation that in this case Rutger was not specifically hoping for.

However chance is mathematically calculable and Rutger's patient decisions won the day.

Bad luck to James, or was it chance or serendipity that affected his ability to foresee a possible error?

For the record, in the semis:  
R Beijderwellen beat SN Mulliner +26sxp  
+20tp, JR Hopgood beat DB Maughan  
+17tp +17tp. Final: Beijderwellen beat  
Hopgood -24tp +20tp +3



## TOURNAME

### Fowl Play at the Hunstanton AC

**F**ingrrs Eardley won the Annual Robert Prichard Tournament at Hunstanton in the most unseasonable weather for many years – and the Manger even received a complaint before the Tournament started: "We have arrived in Hunstanton and are shocked to discover that it is warm and sunny. Can we have our money back?"

On Saturday, arriving players were amused to find at least 14 ducks and ducklings at play on the well-mown lawns (Jeff Race) set with firm tight hoops (Martin French). They were mainly playing on Lawn 1 until Philip Fingrrs Eardley roqueted one, then they moved to Lawn 2.

Late starter Ian Vincent was pleased to complete his first ever combination peg-out in his opening game, bombarding his partner onto the peg from over 7 yards.

It was noticed on Sunday that there appeared to be one less duckling in the field. This did not deter Fingrrs, who continued to play very steady Croquet to reach 7/7 by the end of the day.

On Monday morning Eardley disposed of the Manager Nick Harris (your reporter) and, having beaten Martin French on Saturday, was then in an unassailable position. However, in order to provide him with an 'oppo' of suitable stature, the 'Secretary's Shield' (French the WCF Sec v Vincent the CA Sec) was postponed so that Vincent could play Eardley, where the former demonstrated his suitability by winning +10tp. **Nick Harris**

### AC Tournament Briefs

Omid Hallam scored a perfect 100% to retain his title at the **Nottingham Spring Handicap** weekend in mid-May. Belsay's Geoff Clements lost only one in eight to take the **Middlesborough Handicap** Tournament also in mid-May. At **Budleigh** it was all very tight and third time lucky for David Marsh from Wrest Park, who took the spoils in the B-Level handicap. Keith Aiton won a very close **Colchester Open** weekend with the highest percentage score, whilst Jonathan Kirby lost out by a single percentage point. The student beat the mentor at **Cheltenham** when Jaimie Mussi won a thrilling final at Easter. Caroline Denny from the Bear of Rodborough won the Latham Cup at **Bristol**. See also page 22.

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# NT REPORTS

## Winchester Double at The Peels



Rita Nunn and Roger Barnacle took both the Womens and Mens Peel Memorials trophies back to Winchester in mid-May. And there was a clean sweep for the Southern Federation member clubs, as East Dorset's Roger Hesketh and Jane Matthews won the doubles.



## More AC Briefs

An unusual four-way tie in the premier event at **Budleigh May Week** meant that manager Julie Horsley earned her corn before she could finally declare Dave Mundy the winner. Marcus Evans won the **Nailsea & District** Advanced Tournament; becoming the first player to do so 3 times.

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## Déjà vu at Sidmouth GC Open

Ryan Cabble beat William Ormerod in the final of the Sidmouth GC Open again to repeat his success of last year.

In fact it was Cabble's third win on the trot and the local engraver must be getting used to marking the Haste Cup with the name of 'The Boy from Nailsea'.

But Cabble hadn't had it all his own way this time and only qualified from his block in second place behind the on-form Sue Lightbody, and similarly Ormerod only qualified for the semis behind the other block winner, Lionel Tibble.

But the block winners had peaked too soon and both lost their semis to leave Lightbody to defeat Tibble into third place and improve her ranking still further on the back of an excellent performance in the previous Ascot Cup qualifier at Surbiton.

## Welsh GC Open win for Evans

John Evans won the inaugural Welsh GC Championship at Dyffryn Gardens in April to become the double Welsh Croquet Champion, having won last season's AC Championship. John, who had previously won the Norwegian GC Championship, beat Chris Williams in a tight final



## Cowman takes Womens GC crown

Margaret Cowman won the GC Womens Open at Ripon ahead of a disappointingly small field, defeating Ann Brookes in the final, with Freda Vitty and Jane Pringle beaten in the semis.

## Reg warms up his GC at Surbiton Open

Reg Bamford warmed up for the GC Worlds the week beforehand with a win at the Surbiton Open in Mid-April.

He defeated Pierre Beaudry, also using the event a springboard for the worlds, in the final.

In Block A, there was an early 7-1 for Bamford, Stephen Harbron (3 h'cap) beat Simon Carter (0), as did both Tom Weston (1) and Richard Brooks (1). Bamford wobbled a little, losing both to Brooks and Nick Cheyne, but finished with 9/11 coming second to Brooks on the same score.

Block B opened with a marathon 90 minute affair in which Richard Smith (2) beat Rutger Beijderwellen (0) at the 13th. It really wasn't Rutger's day as he also lost to Chris Roberts (1) and Nelson Morrow (0).

Beaudry and Sue Lightbody started picking up wins and Lionel Tibble beat Tim King and all below him to record 9/11 and win the block with Beaudry edging out Lightbody, both on one win less.

The manager (and reporter) **Don Beck** is unsure how happy Tibble was to win a block and still get Bamford in the semi!

In those semis, Bamford made short work of Tibble but Brooks and Beaudry played out a scrappier affair, with Beaudry's clean hitting eventually came good. The final was decided by Bamford's consistency as Beaudry competed at many hoops but never put a run of points together and was closed out 7-3, 7-5.

George Noble spent two hours each day trying to keep Mother Nature from flooding the lawns - with some success.

The weekend before, Nick Cheyne won the **Lancashire Open**, beating Tim King in a very close final 7-3, 6-7, 7-6.,

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## How it all started

**Richard Stevens**

When Hamptworth opened our third and fourth lawns and a new pavilion, I thought it time to record the events that have brought us that far. I wasn't to know at the time of writing that we would now have a fifth lawn due to debut this summer and have gone on to host numerous CA Tournaments and the prestigious Solomon Cup International. It has all happened so quickly.

### Here is how it all started.

My wife Diana and I bought our neighbours' house in 1982 and became the owners of a green sward and, as a deal clincher, a sit-on mower. It struck me that my investment would be much enhanced if I were to create a croquet lawn; so a few hints were made and I received a Jaques garden croquet set for my birthday.

We formed a social club circa 1984 with nearby friends and played garden croquet with copious Pimms on many an evening. We later formed a sub-committee to investigate the building of a proper lawn somewhere nearby.

I then learnt that a new golf course was to be built at Hamptworth. I persuaded the promoters to see me, in some very plush Architects' Offices in London. They outlined their plans for a very pukka club in which the Roux brothers would be doing the



# Focus on HAMPTW

## From Pimms in the garden to International croquet

cooking. All the Croquet Club had to do was to produce £10,000 as a show of good will. Many friends and the CA found the money

It all came falling down with the late 1980s crash, the well-respected golf course contractor was left holding the baby, and was given the lease in lieu. Although the golf course had been constructed it proved to be very wet and the make-do club house was a Portacabin.

We invited the new owner, Brian Pierson, who constructed the course, to attend one of our croquet soirées in 1996 and he had such good fun that he laser levelled the site for four lawns with huge bulldozers. French drains of enormous depth surrounded the area and a stone base was established.

A takeover occurred, a clubhouse was built and there was the promise of 'stripes on the lawn' in a matter of weeks. They duly appeared and members enlisted.

In the early days, I was able to appoint myself not so much a Chairman but more a despot, as no one else knew anything about Croquet. However, players such as Dickson, Tuttiett, Lacey and Williams arrived and could do it better and a flourishing section of Golf Croquet was started. I realized that I was no longer Mr Big and soon we had both a committee and constitution. All was flourishing and I was flattered to be asked to be President for Life. I now enjoy coaching (to have started off an Apps Bowl winner gives no little pleasure) and I have more time to play on the tournament circuit.

James Tuttiett deserves a mention in this early history as he has managed the Hamptworth Winter AC Series since 2005 and this has been taken over this season by Brian Fisk.

The excitement of achieving a further two lawns and a very smart modern looking

pavilion came to fever pitch in 2010 when CA President Quiller Barratt, officiated at the grand opening. We also had a most entertaining exhibition match between Rutger Beijderwelen and David Maughan, who played a game of GC and AC, whilst David Nicholson obliged the crowd of over a hundred with a most amusing commentary.

The third and fourth lawns, along with centrally positioned the new pavilion were enabled by a grant from the CA and the very generous Mark Lawrence, the main shareholder of the Golf & Croquet Club.

Hamptworth's reward for providing a modern club house, all day food and drinks, four fast lawns and the pavilion, was to be asked to host the Solomon Trophy in 2011. This caused a real thrill throughout the whole club, including the (small ball) golfers and the event was seen to be as close to the Ryder Cup that Hamptworth was likely to get.

During the Solomon, it was suggested to Mark Lawrence that the club was ideally positioned to run the Home Internationals, if only we had five lawns.

This fifth lawn is now in place and we are enjoying another very busy season.

## Club Chairman - Janet Trueman

Now with five lawns, Hamptworth are well into another busy season, hosting CA Tournaments, Southern Federation fixtures and, of course, our own programme of tournaments and matches. and of course our social play too. We very actively promote

GC/AC crossover and competitive play and we are so lucky to be located in such beautiful surroundings and to have an excellent relationship with the golf club management and staff. We are located just off the A36 and about 15 minutes from junction 2 on the M27, on the edge of the New Forest, 12 miles South of Salisbury. All can be sure of a warm welcome.



# HAMPTWORTH

## Boom time for Hamptworth GC Tournaments

- Richard Jenkins

**T**he popularity of GC Winter Handicap, 'B' Level and now 'C' Level Tournaments at Hamptworth, seems to know no bounds. Richard Jenkins explains how he grew 'something from nothing', and encourages all Clubs to follow his lead and give hosting tournaments a try.

It all started when Hamptworth was a two-lawn club, and in November 2009 we took a chance on the now very popular GC Handicap Singles Winter Tournament weekends.

We had been running AC versions since 2005 and these had been successfully attracting up to eight players each time. So I decided to give GC Handicap tournaments a try, created an advertising poster and e-mailed it to all Club Secretaries in the South of England. The result was very encouraging and the first GC winter event took place on a Saturday only and attracted the eight players we needed. I enjoyed particular support in those very early days from

Roger Barnacle of Dogmersfield. Soon we progressed to play on Saturdays and Sundays once a month and for the rest of the 2009-10 winter, we averaged eight players each day.

So after a successful first season (and by this time, with four lawns), our first full

GC Winter Tournament monthly weekend series started in October 2010 and entries virtually doubled with 12 to 16 players for every day we ran an event. These high numbers remained constant each month in the 2011-12 season as well and this last winter saw 'full houses' each time. The startling fact is that the October and March dates were full within a month of being advertised as long ago as last summer!

Interestingly all our tournaments have always attracted players of both high and low handicaps and early last year I realised that over 50%

of entrants were handicaps 7 to 12. These are the high handicap players I had been told were generally not competitive and not willing to travel. Yet here they were, enjoying taking part in tournaments and travelling long distances to do so in the winter; some from as far away as Cornwall and Kent.

I concluded that if they would play handicap in the winter, surely they would come and play in a level play in a 'C' Level (7-12 handicap) tournament in the spring.

I was right and sure enough all 32 places were taken within two weeks!

Word spread that to be included one had to be quick off the mark and this year the April tournament was fully booked within 48 hours!

Our neighbours, Winchester ran an overflow tournament to deal with the demand. I will be organising another 'C' Level tournament weekend for September and am prepared for the stampede!

We now have GC 'B' Level tournaments as well and these have a bright future now that they are qualifying events for the new National GC 'B' Level Series.

We are honoured to have been chosen to host the inaugural National Final of this competition on 12 October this year.

I would certainly encourage any two lawn clubs to try regular tournaments for the mid/high handicap player, whether AC or GC (particularly GC C-level). It will encourage competitive play as well as raise funds for your club. **We did it, so can you!**



## The main share holder's perspective – Mark Lawrence

**H**aving a croquet section at Hamptworth Golf & Country Club brings many advantages both in terms of the business and the social make-up of the club.

The croquet side has grown and grown over the years and, like the golf club, our investments in the lawns and facilities are starting to pay dividends in both membership and catering.

Now we are one of relatively few clubs that can offer five lawns, so we can run our very popular tournaments and still allow our members to play. We have had a lot of good comments about the quality of our playing surfaces, the warmth that our visiting competitors and visitors receive, and the general atmosphere of the club.

It was when we went from two to four lawns that things really started to happen for Hamptworth. We were asked to hold many regional and national competitions and, for me, hosting the Solomon Trophy was a massive honour for Hamptworth, given how long we have been established.

It is the same as with the golf course: the more work we put in and the higher the standard we achieve, the more we attract members and visitors, which in turn means the club house is always full.

*Editor's note: It is clear from Mr Lawrence's enthusiasm that the Croquet/Golf combination is one that works for his business as well as providing diversity at Hamptworth. It is an enterprising model that could be replicated many times over around the country. Golf clubs have lawn care expertise on hand and usually have areas of 'dead land' that are too small for golf use but which could easily accommodate at least one croquet court, if not more.. Is there one near you?*

**Top left:** Richard Dixon at The Peels. **Head shots:** Richard Stevens (left) & Richard Jenkins, and the background image - all by Chris Roberts **Center:** Ian Burridge at the Solomon Cup - by Julie Kaye

This panorama shows Hamptworth's split level site to good effect - photo by Julie Kaye



# Why the trial GC Wrong Ball Law?

## Bill Arliss replies to two Gazette letters

Dear Editor,

The two letters that you have published this month (see page 9) are very typical of many that are received by the GC Laws Committee. I am sure that all the authors have the best of motives in mind but I regret to say that once their suggestions are fully checked out under all normal circumstances, there are always some very serious defects. They may work under some conditions but fall down badly under others. I can assure all our readers that the watchword of the GC Laws committee is simplicity and if there is a simple solution available that not only works but is seen as fair, then the committee would have found it by now, as they have spent the last year analysing many such suggestions.

Let us forget for the moment, playing what some have termed as a 'very' wrong ball, i.e. playing an opponent's ball, and concentrate on normal 'out of sequence' play. The existing law tries to deal with this in the simplest of ways. Once it is noticed, the offending ball is put back, along with any others that it has moved, and play



continues by the correct ball being played.

I agree, what could be simpler? If this is the first ball to be played out of sequence, then it is also very fair as it effectively replicates what would have happened had no error been made. However, if you look at the same procedure when several balls have been played out of sequence, a different scenario can be found.

It is easy to find a situation where the correct ball to play is sitting plum in front of the next hoop in order and, if the legal procedure is applied, then the last player to play is gifted that hoop. Both players have been in error, so why should one player receive such a helping hand purely because someone has recognised the 'out of sequence' play at the wrong time?

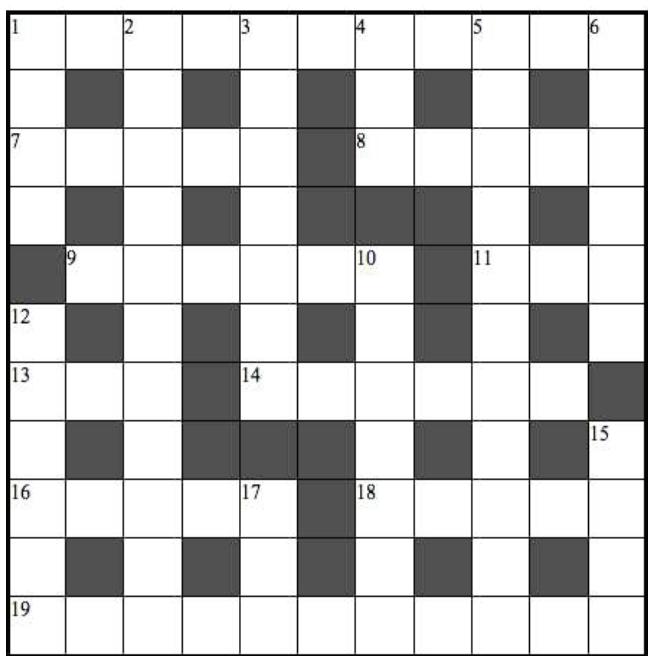
The aim of the trial law is just an attempt to remove this potential unfairness by offering the opponent an alternative procedure under such circumstances which prevents the gifting of the hoop. As such, the trial is not a major change to the existing law but a simple development of that present law, to ensure a fairer solution which I am sure will appeal to not only the

A class player but also to the ordinary club level player.

It has been suggested that various changes of the law could make it more likely for players to notice 'out of sequence' play and thus stop play before multiple 'out of sequence' occurs. I very much doubt this as we see so many incidences of multiple 'out of sequence' situations which then revert to the 'correct sequence' without any of the players involved realising things have been wrong. Multiple 'out of sequence' plays are a fact of life and have to be dealt with. We already have some limited data collected from events using the trial law which suggest that at least one third of all tournament games require the intervention of the wrong-ball law at some stage. One final point I would make about the trial law is that there are two issues really on trial. One is of course the optional procedure for resuming play after an 'out of sequence', but the second is the way the law is presented. The trial law is worded so that all action starts from the forestalling of play and works backwards in exactly the same manner as 'The Idiot's Guide to the Wrong-Ball Law' which has been used by many as a simple way of explaining this complex law.

**Bill Arliss - Chairman GC Laws Committee**

## CROSSWORD - 'Making a double' by Dis



**Across** 1. Playing almost all of MacRob I'd itch to have red and yellow perhaps. (11) 7. Blue, peeled by opponent, is led astray. (5)

8. It wasn't a fault, honest. (5)

9, 11. We'll keep the red flag flying here. (6,3)

13. Grass starts to tear at one back. (3)

14. Plan of action: test my breaks. (6)

16. Split, losing head – but still split. (5)

18. Old style of croquet requiring nether garment to be shortened. (5)

19. Proper treat – that bounced off the peg. (4-1-6)

**Down** 1. Properly, in the month of the Seniors', daughter stands in for Jack. (4) 2. You could be lucky here behind Rover perhaps. (3,4,4)

3. RoT ends turn. Rats! (7) 4. Rainwear for Glasgow member. (3)

5. Once a winning score, a perfect number. (6-5)

6. Girl is into trick shot. (6)

10. RoT is to cook something for lunch. (7)

12. It's a fag to approach a hoop from distance. (4,2)

15. Leading player with diverse arts. (4)

17. Time for doubles pair is up. (3)

*The Chambers Dictionary (2008) is recommended but does not give all of the croquet-related terms. The solution to this puzzle is on page 22.*

# COACHING CORNER

by Roger Staples

The season is now well under way and the Croquet Academy, along with some of the Federations are running coaching courses. Now is the time to hone those skills and to acquire some expert advice to improve your game. We have some newly qualified coaches to help you. Congratulations to the following for gaining coaching awards.

## Club Coach (Yellow)

Des Honey (Cornwall), David Edwards (Fowey and Cornwall), Lillian Holdsworth (Littlehampton).

## Golf Coach (White)

Jacob Carr (Tyneside), Jill Mayes (Rother Valley), Bob Connop (Culcheth), Janet Hopetroff (Sussex County), Rupert Catt (Dogmersfield), Frances Colman and Chris Roberts (both Phyllis Court).

## Grade 1 Association (Blue)

John Reynolds (Ealing), Derek Knight (Beverley), John Crossland (Brodsworth Hall), Mike Cockburn (Compton), Ray Hall and Steve Levendon, (both Sussex County).

## Grade 2 Association (Green)

Sarah Burrow (SW Federation), John Taylor (Sussex County), Roger Staples (Middlesbrough)

Additionally, David Boyd who is a non-associate, maybe added to the above list of Club coaches if he joins the CA as an individual.

Finally, I must correct a statement in the last Gazette. The concept of "The Flying Circus" was actually introduced into the NW Federation in the late nineties by Neil Williams (now deceased).

# Croquet Gymkhana

by Anna Giraud

This issue's coaching article is the novel idea of a Croquet Gymkhana in which players are assigned a series of tasks or 'events' to test their skills and perhaps identify the things they need to work on. The gymkhana can be used in two ways: to create a fun competition for any number of players or to introduce individual events, when appropriate, to form part of a normal coaching lesson.

Participants should ideally move from event to event in pairs to aid ball retrieval and scorekeeping, and a pairing of an experienced player, explaining the shots to a beginner, makes a good partnership.

A specimen set of ten events, scores and equipment needed is given below. They may be easily adapted or adjusted to suit the level of ability of a particular group of participants.

### Event 1. ROQUET (Equipment: 2 balls, 4 bisque sticks)

From corner 3, four shots at a ball placed on the yard line of the east boundary at increasing distances (say 2, 3, 4, 5 yards) marked by the bisque sticks. Score: 2 points for each roquet.

### Event 2. RUSH (2 balls, 2 markers)

Near the south boundary, place two markers about one foot apart so that two balls placed on or near them would give a straight rush to the peg. A 4-foot length of cord could be tied to the peg to measure the accuracy of the shot. Four attempts to rush the forward ball to the peg. Score: 2 points for each ball within 4 feet of the peg.

### Event 3. CUT RUSH (2 balls, 2 markers)

As above, except place the markers in order to give a suitable cut rush to hoop 5.

(The degree of cut maybe adjusted to the level of ability of the players but should not be too severe for beginners.) Four attempts to rush the forward ball to hoop 5. Score: 2 points for each ball within four (or three) feet of the hoop.

### Event 4. ROLL (2 balls, 1 marker, cord, bisque sticks)

Near corner 4, place a marker on the yard line. Set up two lines of cord parallel to the south boundary, one between hoop 4 and a bisque stick on the east boundary, the other between bisque sticks two yards further to the north. Four attempts to roll both balls from the marker into the area between the two strings. Score: 1 point for each ball within the target area.

### Event 5. DRIVE (2 balls)

From corner 1, four attempts at a croquet shot to place the croqueted ball by the peg and the striker's ball by hoop 1. Score: 1 point for each ball within four feet of the peg and hoop respectively.

### Event 6. SPLIT (2 balls, 1 marker)

Place a marker near the middle of the north yard line. Four attempts at a croquet shot to place the croqueted ball by the peg and the striker's ball by hoop 2. Score: 1 point for each ball within four feet of the peg and hoop respectively.

### Event 7. STOP SHOT (2 balls, 1 marker, cord, 2 or more bisque sticks)

Place a marker near corner 1. Lay cords parallel to the south boundary with the help of the hoops and bisque sticks. These cords could be laid from hoop 1 and hoop 2 to the west boundary, but the layout should be adjusted to the level of the ability of the participants. Four attempts at a croquet shot to send the croqueted ball beyond



the further cord but with the striker's ball stopping before it reaches the nearer cord. Score: 1 point for each ball that lies within the targeted areas.

### Event 8. THIN TAKE-OFF (4 bisque sticks, 2 balls)

(a) Place four bisques as markers on the west boundary line, say, 1, 2, 3, 5, and 8 yards from corner 3. The bisques could have a cord attached (say, one foot long for the nearest marker and two feet long for the others) to check the accuracy of the shots. Four take-offs to be played from corner 3 to get close to these markers. (b) Repeat the above along the east boundary, from corner 2.

For this event, the striker's ball should be placed outside the yard-line area, as a test of skill and to ensure that a genuine thin take-off is played. This also brings home the benefit of placing the striker's ball on the boundary side for most croquet strokes in this situation.

Score: 2 points for each striker's ball that lies within the target area, but no score if the croqueted ball fails to move or goes off over the boundary.

### Event 9. HOOP APPROACH A: (From playing side) (4 or more markers, cord, 2 balls)

Mark out a fan-shaped area in front of a hoop either with pegging-down markers and cord or with white lining. The fan shape could extend back about two feet and should cover an area from which a ball would normally be expected to make the hoop. On the far side of the hoop, mark out a rectangular area about two feet by three feet starting about two feet from the hoop. Place four markers in an arc three to four feet from the hoop starting at the left hand side of the hoop and finishing on

## The CROQUET Gazette

the opposite side, all of them being on the playing side. Four attempts at an approach shot, one from each of the markers, to place the striker's ball within the fan-shape and the croqueted ball within the rectangle. Score: 1 point for each ball that lies within the target areas.

**Event 10. HOOP APPROACH B:** (From non-playing side) Equipment: 4 (or more) markers, cord, 2 balls.

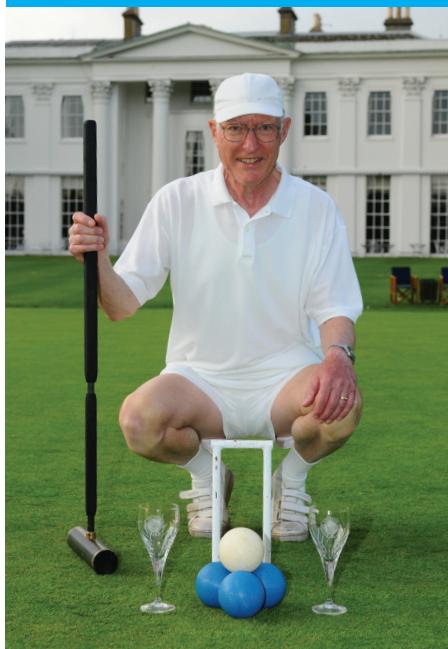
Similar to the above

And finally

When several events are set up, it can be helpful to place a card describing what to do beside the start of each event. The points to be scored can be included in the description.

**Anna Giraud** - with acknowledgement to the Croquet Coaching Manual

## Bigg Win



Malcolm Bigg of Woking won the A Class Block at the Hurlingham May weekend ahead of a very strong field.  
Photograph by Chris Roberts

### Crossword Solution

**Across.** 1 dichromatic (anag-b); 7 (b) lu(e); red; 8 clean; 9,11 corner two; 13 oat (initial letters, rev); 14 system (anag); 16 (c) leave; 18 tight(s), tight croquet was when you put your foot on striker's ball to play a croquet stroke; 19 prêt-a-porter (anag).

**Down.** 1 duly (July); 2 car boot sale; 3 rodents (anag); 4 mac; 5 twenty-eight (see under 'perfect' in Chambers, winning score when there were two pegs); 6 cannon (Ann in con); 10 risotto (anag); 12 roll up; 15 star (anag); 17 era (are rev).

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Queries regarding the delivery of the Gazette to members should be directed to the Manager of the Croquet Association and not to the Editor.

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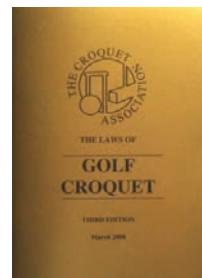
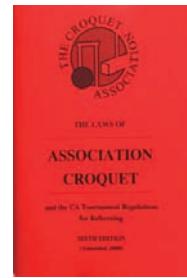
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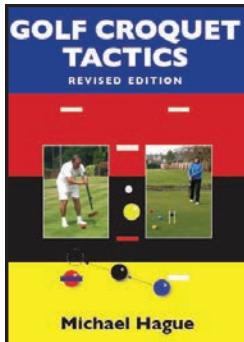
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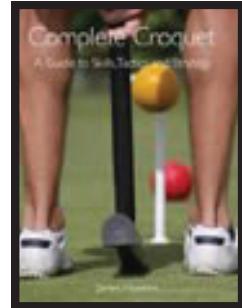
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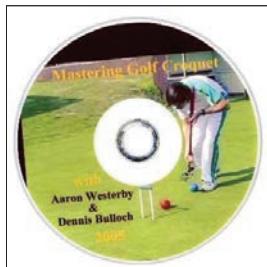
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