

The

Issue 386 June 2020

CROQUET

Gazette

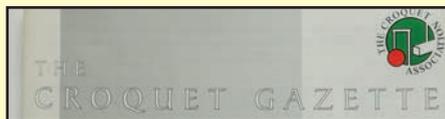


7.30 am, Wednesday 13 May
CROQUET RESTARTS!



From our files researched by Frances Colman

10 years ago - 2010



MacRobertson Shield 2010 – This is only the seventh time since its inception in 1925 that the MacRobertson Shield has been held in England. Our members have been hugely looking forward to hosting this supreme challenge for teams from Australia, New Zealand and USA as well as Great Britain. This year for the first time the event becomes the pinnacle of two additional tiers in the WCF Association Croquet World Team Championship . . . *Quiller Barrett*.

Heaton Park and Surbiton will become the 13th and 14th venues in the UK to stage a Mac test match. Rutger Beijderwellen will become the 58th player to represent GB/England . . . *Chris Williams, CA Archivist*.

GB team: Keith Aiton (Captain), Rutger Beijderwellen, Chris Clarke, Robert Fulford, David Maugham, Stephen Mulliner. Ian Lines (reserve).

~

Jerry Stark 1955-2010 (*named posthumously as a member of the USA squad*) – Jerry sadly lost his life to cancer in May. He played in all five of the previous USA Mac teams, and had been selected to play in the sixth. The USA team will wear Jerry's initials on the sleeves of their team shirts, as a mark of respect to their friend and team member.

~

New lawns and spectacular pavilion at Hamptworth – CA President Quiller Barrett officially opened the new facilities. The CA has helped to finance these improvements, and he warmly congratulated the club's life President, Richard Stevens, and the members on their enterprise in promoting Hamptworth to 4-lawn status. About 100 members and friends enjoyed watching exhibition matches between Rutger Beijderwellen and David Maugham . . .

~

Refurbished clubhouse at Sussex Co. – . . . Before cutting the (*ceremonial opening*) tape, Quiller remembered his first visit to Southwick more than twenty years before, when the club wasn't in such a good state as now. He rehearsed some of the developments since then, both in lawn care and innovations like the Croquet Academy, and the support which had been received from the CA development funds. . .

50 years ago - 1970



The Croquet Gazette –

Professor Neal regretted that the tone of the Editorial (*in Bryan Lloyd-Pratt's first Gazette, as reprised in the May 2020 issue*) seemed to be in conflict with the progressive aims and ideals of his Publicity Committee. His Honour Judge Karmel applauded the Gazette's artistic format and general readability.

The Editor, in his reply, observed that he, himself, had been profoundly depressed by the old-fashioned, nerveless and "tatty" pseudo-modernity of recent issues. (*From the report of the CA AGM of 25 May 1970*).

~

For the South African Croquet

Association – The entirely non-political tradition of the Gazette has always been rigidly, though tacitly observed and we have no intention of departing in the smallest detail from this admirable precedent. It is saddening, though, that we have to state explicitly what has up to now been taken for granted, when we address our sister Association in South Africa.

England seems, temporarily let it be fervently hoped, to have gone mad. A small clamorous minority, using the threat of disorder and violence, has caused the enforcement of a political ban on the forthcoming Cricket Test Matches.

We wish to assure fellow croquet-playing South Africans that the Croquet Association is as eager now as ever to welcome them here as it always has been. (*From Bryan Lloyd-Pratt's second Editorial*).

~

First Sextuple Peel – (Cambridge University report) . . . Later, at Colchester, we won a victory, 5-1, against the Heley Club, that was notable in that Keith Wylie accomplished the FIRST SEXTUPLE PEEL (and a delayed one at that!) to have been brought off under match conditions.

Warmest congratulations to Keith for his breakthrough . . .

The prospects for the Varsity Match this year seem rather bleak: no response to our overtures for a fixture have been forthcoming from the "other place".

Hon. Secretary (Cambridge Univ.),
Gordon Slater, Esq.

100 years ago - 1920



Ill-Natured Gossip –

Dear Sir, Last week a player remarked "I am not looking forward to the croquet; there were so many disagreements in the club last season."

But why not leave last season's unpleasant incidents to stew in their own juice instead of carrying them forward into this? There is too much ill-natured gossip in croquet clubs. How often do members sit down to discuss the kindly acts, generosity and forbearance of their fellow members?

But if a grievance – and it is so often an imaginary one – arises, the matter is seized upon and discussed ad nauseam . . . It is thus that discredit is brought on the game, and the moral of players is lowered. Let us lay this matter to heart, and start the coming season with a slate wiped clean.

Yours truly, an Old Stager.

~

Sidmouth – The Sidmouth Tournament has been and gone.

One Mr. Dooley, soliloquising, once said, Where are all the girls we wanst (*sic*) loved? Where are the men we lent money to? All gone! Might we say, "Are the croquet players gone too?", for we were sadly neglected - only 25 players answering the roll. With Col. Moir as manager and Mr J. Hughes as Provost-Marshal, what more could you want?

Tait, the groundsman, had his lawns in really first-class order, a little on the heavy side due to the recent rains. Why don't more players come West? Good hotels and rooms, good trains and glorious scenery. Take note for next year, please, as it is dull running tournaments at a loss. We were very grateful to the Budleigh Salterton 'gang' who came over in full strength, and showed us how to play the game, Mr A. N. Caldecott-Smith carrying off the cup in fine style, and we don't grudge it to him, for his play was most consistent all the week . . .

~

County Championship - Dear Sir, as I am hoping to raise a Derbyshire team, I should be very much obliged if any lady players who are duly qualified to play for Derbyshire and desirous of doing so, would kindly send me their names and handicaps.

Yours truly, Ernest G Heathcote

Editorial

Croquet is back!

And considering that we've been unable to play for these past two months, a quite unbelievable amount of action has been taken and progress made for croquet. Have we ever had so much positive media attention on our sport in such a sustained way?

It's certainly 'hats off' to Eugene Chang and his Marketing Team for seizing the moment with swift decisions and actions to capitalise on croquet's position as an ideal social distancing sport.

From the original Dulwich CC 'keep your distance' photo (see page 4) that sparked interest from the Sunday Times, through to the #LockdownCroquet video that encouraged improvised croquet at home, via press releases, TV and Radio interviews and CA members pushing for local papers' column inches – it was quite a machine!

This Gazette's centre pages celebrate all this media success in an issue full of varied articles and reports that leave few croquet stones unturned – save of course that biggest rock of all, actually returning to unrestricted play on our courts.

Our cover this time rewards High Wycombe's hard working pair, Chairman Richard Peperell and Treasurer Duncan Reeve who, like so many club stalwarts I'm sure, were ever present at their club throughout the lockdown, undertaking essential maintenance tasks.

The big result for this pair was that their efforts meant that the Wycombe courts, and Covid-19 adapted club facilities, were ready the moment the Prime Minister announced the lockdown easing on 12 May, and at 7.30 the following morning it was 'GAME ON'.

Elsewhere in this issue, we take a trip back to the 1925 with David Openshaw's history of the MacRobertson Shield and Mac himself and news of all that has been going on behind the scenes to keep the CA working for you, its members.



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Issue 386 June 2020

Front cover: Richard Peperell and Duncan Reeve, claim the 'We were first to play' title, at 7.30 am the morning after the lockdown easing.

This Page: The editor at Somerset West, Cape Town, South Africa, in February.
(Photographs by Chris Roberts and Jon Diamond)

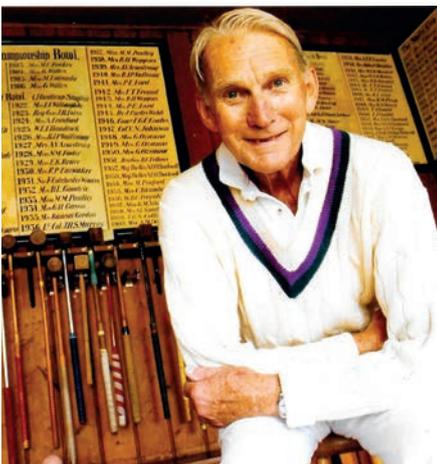
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Contents

- 4 Chairmen's Columns & EB jobs advert
- 6 CA Council meetings reports
- 8 Letters to the Editor
- 10 Obituaries and subscriptions notice
- 12 Mac and the MacRobertson Shield
- 14 AC & GC Tournaments updates
- 16-18 Fabulous media successes
- 19 Canary Croquet and Florida too
- 20 Should you become a CASC club?
- 21 (& 10) Development Grants
- 22 A new home, Community & Badgers!
- 24-27 Coaching Pages
- 28 Cheltenham prepare for 150th anniv.
- 29 Lawn Care
- 30 (& 13) Mallet Makers adverts
- 31 CA Contacts & link to website glossary

Major new CA Award remembers Bernard Neal



criteria for a CA Diploma and those for a Council Medal.

To fill that gulf Council has now approved a recommendation for a second CA Major Award.

The Bernard Neal Award for exceptional services to croquet is for contributions considered to be substantially greater than those qualifying for a CA Diploma but do not rank as high as the truly exceptional services required for a Council Medal.

It is not purely an award for long service. Details about how to nominate a member for a CA Major Award are published on the awards policy page (*see the end of this piece*).

This year
Peter Death and **John Grimshaw**
will receive Bernard Neal Awards
at the CA AGM

Peter Death has made outstanding contributions over very many years both at the Nottingham club and nationally on the CA Council, culminating in his wise counsel as CA Hon Treasurer from 2014 to 2020.

The Award to John Grimshaw, from the Kington Langley club, recognizes his over 40-year unstinting commitment to the development of croquet in the South West region.

Full citations will be published when the Awards are presented in the Autumn, will be posted on the CA website and will be carried in the Gazette issue that follows.

Quiller Barrett,
President of the Croquet Association

For the Awards Policy page on the CA website, follow this navigation: Home > About the CA > Governance > Policies > Awards.

It has been clear for many years that the CA has been unable to recognise fully all the contributions made to croquet in the domain by its members. There is a very big gap between the

CA Privacy Notice updated

The Croquet Association's Privacy Notice (which can be found on its website by clicking on the Security and Privacy link in the footnotes on the bottom right of each page) has been updated to Version 2. The significant changes are:

- Clubs may be joint controllers with the CA of data relating to their members.
- CA & Club membership added to list of categories of data held.
- CA Committees, Staff and bulk e-mailing services added to list of those with whom data may be shared.

Ian Vincent, Hon. Secretary

Chairman of the CA Council

CA Strategy in action

The CA Council has been busy developing a number of strategies. Some have been agreed and passed onto the Executive Board for implementation.

Others are being developed.

In creating each strategy, we are endeavouring to get involvement by inviting members outside of Council to participate in Working Groups specific to each subject.

Each group has been set up with Council representation supplemented by experts in the particular subject, and we have endeavoured to involve the committees who will be responsible for the implementation of a particular strategy.

So far, a Marketing and Communications Strategy has been agreed, including the need for a Communications Head to stimulate and increase awareness of our sport as part of our overall aim of:

"getting more people, playing more croquet in more places".

As part of the Technology Strategy review, support and resilience issues have been passed on to the Executive Board for implementation.

New Working Groups

Four further working groups have been set up covering Membership Strategy, Competitive Play, Relationship with the Federations and Safeguarding Policies.

The Membership Strategy Working Group, chaired by **Ian Burridge**, is following on from the excellent work done by Jeff Dawson and the Membership Changes Implementation Group.

Their brief is to review the work done to date, and to consider what improvements we can make for our members, and how it's administered.

The Competitive Play Working Group is currently being formed, and I'm delighted to report that **David Openshaw** has agreed to chair this important group.

It has three prime objectives:

- To recommend the overall CA strategy for the development of competitive croquet at all levels in our domain.
- To recommend a specific strategy to revitalise AC and arrest its decline.
- To recommend a specific strategy to further strengthen the growth of GC.

A Working Group to examine how we can **develop the relationship between the CA and the Federations** for the good of the game, is being chaired by **Ian Cobbold**.

A Working Group which is **developing our safeguarding policies** for both children and vulnerable adults, is being chaired by **John Dawson**.

The Structure of the Executive Board

When the Governance Changes were agreed, it was determined that the first step was to elect the new Council and let them find their feet.

During the first year the structure of Executive Board and its committees would be examined. This has been done and its future role defined.

The efficient functioning of the Executive Board is going to be critical to the future of the new governance structure.

Council have and are developing the strategies, and it will be the responsibility of the Executive Board and its committee structure to implement these strategies.

We are looking for volunteers with proven management experience to become members of this Board.

We need people who can get things done.

There is an advertisement seeking applications on the page opposite.

I am appealing to all members who feel suitably qualified to apply to help us implement our strategic plan.

You don't need to be an experienced croquet player to fill these roles.

What we do need are team players with management experience who get things done.

Marketing Successes

One example of the new Governance Structure in action is the start of the



Andrew Dymond & Peter Haydon at Dulwich

implementation of the Marketing and Communications Strategy.

During the second half of May, we have achieved more publicity in the media about croquet as a sport than I can ever remember during my 35 years playing croquet.

Stepping up our PR at local and national level is a key part of the Marketing Strategy.

What is happening at the moment is a clear example of what can be achieved when the CA, the Federations and the Clubs work together with a common aim.

My thanks go to **Eugene Chang** and his Committee for taking up the challenge.

Covid-19 Task Force

The second example has been the setting up of a task force to manage our way through the Covid-19 pandemic.

It was recognised at the outset that the CA needed a small body who were empowered to make quick decisions and lead croquet through the crisis.

We're not out of it yet, but so far we have managed to get croquet on the front foot, even to the extent that the English and Scottish Governments have recognised us as a suitable social distancing sport, and this has also been recognised in the media.

Covid-19 has brought a fundamental change to the running of the CA. Pre-Covid, the CA was very much organised around a pre-determined series of meetings, mainly held in the winter months.

Zoom Video Conferencing

As part of our new strategy, a lobby of opinion was encouraging the CA to use Video Conferencing as a medium for communication, and they have been proven right.

We've had to use this medium to continue our business during the pandemic, and in many ways it has been very successful.

Two main advantages have emerged:

- Avoiding the need to travel, in some cases great distances, to attend meetings. This has created an operational saving for croquet both in terms of cost and time for the volunteers.

- By using Zoom, we can hold shorter meetings throughout the year at times which usually suit the attendees. This has to be a significant advantage in running a pro-active sporting organisation.

To those whose clubs have reopened, enjoy your croquet.

To those who are still waiting, I sincerely hope you will be back on the lawns soon.

Jonathan Isaacs



Advertisement for Executive Board positions

Would you like to be involved in helping to drive the Croquet Association forward?

Do you have organisational and leadership skill?

Now, more than ever, we need people with the skills, experience and enthusiasm to help guide us through the next few years.

Working with people, leading a portfolio of activities and bringing out the best in experienced volunteers are the key attributes of a successful Board Member –

Croquet ability doesn't matter!

We need talented volunteers with suitable knowledge to lead and mentor our operational functions.

We have vacancies for Members of the Executive Board and we are inviting interested CA members to apply.

The Executive Board is responsible for day to day running of croquet in accordance with the strategy established by Council.

It is comprised of a Chairman and six volunteer Board Members, supported by the Hon Secretary, Hon Treasurer, CA Manager and Council Chairman.

The Board is accountable to Council for its compliance with CA policies but is not obliged to seek further approval from Council for its actions.

The role of the Board Member is primarily:

To be a member of the forum (Board) that manages the business of the CA and

implements the strategies as outlined above and described in the CA Practice Book (CAPB 6).

To lead a portfolio of responsibilities for particular operational functions, ensuring that the chairmen of specialist committees and other groups working in that area understand the strategies and to inform the Board of their operational decisions.

There are six functional portfolios which are grouped into a Sports Group and a Services Group (see the table below).

The precise structuring of the activities within each portfolio will be a matter for those appointed, however the broad areas of responsibility for each position are shown below.

Applications are welcome either on the basis of a general interest in managing CA

affairs, or expressing an interest in one or more specific portfolios.

Board members are appointed by Council annually, and can expect to serve for a maximum of four years.

Applications, in the form of a CV with a covering letter, should be e-mailed to the Hon. Secretary, Ian Vincent <ian.vincent@cantab.net>, to whom informal enquiries can also be made.

The deadline for receipt of applications is 12 July 2020, after which the applicants will be shortlisted, for possible interview, by Council's Nominations Committee, which will make a recommendation to Council.

Board Members will be appointed to serve formally from the date of the AGM, 17 October 2020, but should be available for induction activities before then.

Services Group	Sports Group
Marketing & Comms. Board Member Marketing Publishing Website/ Social Media/ Gazette PR/ Sponsorship	Standards Board Member AC Laws GC Rules Handicapping Equipment
Infrastructure Development Board Member Federations Development	Competitive Croquet Board Member Tournaments International Competition
Organisation Board Member IT Membership Finance	Performance & Selection Board Member Coaching International Performance Directors Selection

Chairman of the Executive Board

As I write this, we seem to be coming out of the tunnel. There is light!

The Government has announced an emergence from the lockdown and we are able to play croquet again.

I am profoundly thankful to our Task Force team who have helped steer us through a very tricky patch.

The CA is in good shape and there are over 50% of our clubs able to function and more will be opening their doors shortly.

Eugene Chang and the Marketing team have very successfully engaged with the media and we have achieved significant press exposure at a national level through the #lockdown croquet campaign.

The publicity has been good for us as we have seen increased sales of croquet sets through the CA shop.

My thanks also go to our office staff at Cheltenham. Throughout this period, especially when things were uncertain, the

CA Manager Mark Suter has led a devoted team, Sue, McKenzie and Mandy, who have kept our wheels of administration operating and ensured that our commitments to members have been satisfied.

Loss of many tournaments

Unfortunately, we have lost a major part of our competitive programme due to the Coronavirus restrictions, but the Tournament Committees have been busy to revising and re-scheduling where they can.

We are hopeful that some events will still be possible to stage but these are dependent on the availability of hosting venues as well as the ability to book hospitality in some cases. The CA website news area and the Fixtures Calendar are updated with the latest information regarding which events are available.

Could this be you?

Your Board has also been busy and the lockdown has given us a chance to look in detail at the strategies the Council have

decided on and to start implementing them. Most of the work will be done by the committees and working groups.

The Board has been re-organised and is appointed each October, and the CA is inviting members to apply to join the Board - see the advertisement above.

Some committee chairmen will be retiring in October and the CA committees are always looking for help, so these initiatives should help in recruiting new blood.

Could this be you?

Comments please

As always, your Board and its committees are happy to receive comments about how our sport is administered.

The recent governance revolution and the changes in responsibilities it brings, is still bedding in.

As usual the devil is in the detail but, suffice to say, the organisation is a lot more energised towards delivering a responsive outward looking administration.

Roger Staples

April

The March Council meeting resumed, for its third and final session (of the March/April meeting), on 18 April. While people were connecting to Zoom, Peter Nelson reported that Sidmouth CC had been given a grant of £10,000 from their local Council, under the Coronavirus Small Business Grant Fund, by virtue of having a rateable value.

The CA's task force will get further details and publicise this to other clubs.

Technology

Jonathan Isaacs then called the meeting to order and asked Ian Vincent to present the recommendations of the Technology working group's report.

He thanked those who had worked on it and emphasised that developments in this area were limited not only by financial considerations, but more significantly by the availability of suitably skilled members able and willing to undertake, and subsequently support, them.

In some cases hard choices would have to be made between bespoke software, which was better tailored to our requirements, but needed more effort to develop and support it, and generic alternatives.

Website & membership database

Work was already progressing on re-styling the website and it was agreed that a detailed proposal for hosting it should be developed.

It was also agreed that a bulk e-mailing facility should be a priority, but providing a forum for discussion by members could be deferred, provided that there was no contentious business at this year's AGM.

Initiatives to improve branding were also deferred until the higher priority items had been implemented. It was agreed that Video Streaming should continue to be developed, with a review after three years.

Clubs would be consulted to see whether they felt it worth putting the effort into supporting use of the CA membership database to store their own membership records (though using it to take subscription payments would be a further step, which may have financial regulatory implications).

On the other hand, it was agreed that Clubs should be supported to update their own entries in the fixtures book.

As an aside, a wider review of how information about tournaments should be made available would be instigated at the next meeting.

Social Media and other projects

A few projects, such as developing and supporting an electronic handicap card, tournament management and lawn booking systems, attracted some support, but were left on the table for the time being unless someone came forward to undertake them. It was agreed that usage of services like Trello and Google Docs should ideally be done under accounts that were in the name of the CA, rather than personal ones.

Finally, use of social media was felt to be important, but was considered to be more a matter of content than technology and hence should be a responsibility of the Marketing Committee.

Legal status of the CA

Discussion turned to the question of the legal status of the CA.

The Chairman reminded the meeting that this was not a new issue, having been raised in 2007, 2012 and again last year, but the Coronavirus pandemic and financial problems for an overseas association had re-focused attention on it.

Brian Havill had circulated two papers, which stated that any change would require significant effort, and possibly expense, in the short term (though the change could be staggered, rather than requiring a big bang approach), but the additional ongoing regulatory burden would be relatively small.

The choice was between straightforward incorporation, in which case he felt the way ahead was clear, or one of two forms of incorporation with charitable status.

His suggestion of the name "Croquet England" as (part of) the legal name of any new entity was agreed, though our public persona would continue to be "The Croquet Association", as full re-branding would be a major undertaking and opinions varied as its desirability.

The Secretary and Treasurer were asked to develop a firm proposal, taking advice as they felt necessary, with a view to putting something to the 2021 AGM.

Succession planning

Amendments to the Standing Orders and Practice Book were approved, to enact the changes agreed at the January meeting to designate chairmen, to provide an orderly succession, before they were formally elected and took up office.

Jonathan Isaacs agreed to requests that he continue as Chairman of Council for a further year: his term on Council ends in October 2021.

Patricia Duke-Cox, however, said that

she would prefer to step down as Vice-Chairman, due to other commitments, and Council reluctantly noted her request.

An Appointments Committee, headed by the President, was formed to propose a succession plan, and make other nominations.

Appealing to those outside Standard Membership of the CA

Ian Burridge then presented a paper which explained the apparent inconsistencies in membership data obtained from various sources, and suggested that the term "Eligible Individuals" should be coined to identify the group of club members who were eligible for Standard Membership of the CA, but had not applied for it (either consciously or by default).

It was agreed that further steps should be taken to encourage them to do so, and that membership policy should be the next strategy to be developed by Council.

After a brief discussion on communications policy, the subject was referred to the Efficiency working party, with a couple of other housekeeping items.

The marathon March meeting finally closed at 12.20.

Sadly we were unable to head off to the lawns, but maybe we missed a trick by not suggesting an open gardens scheme as an alternative form of competition!

Ian Vincent, Hon. Secretary

May

Council had a full house for its Saturday morning Zoom session on 16 May. Meeting frequency is likely to reduce as the lockdown eases further and members get back on the lawns.

However, Council is resolved that croquet administration should no longer close down completely for six months of the year, as it has tended to do in the past.

Chairman's review

Jonathan Isaacs, the Chairman, opened the meeting by giving a broadly positive review of the first eight months of the new Council. He felt that it had largely followed its mandate of developing high-level policy, strategy, scrutiny and transparency, and had done well to get to grips with some new tools, such as Trello and Zoom.

It did, however, have to guard against the temptation to procrastinate, on one hand, or micromanage, on the other, recognising that most of those involved in running

croquet were volunteers, who deserved respect. He stated that at times we found it difficult to distinguish between strategy and implementation.

He urged Council to self-police and, where we strayed over line, speak and ensure that the strategies are passed onto the Executive Board and its committees for implementation.

The Executive Board has had a more difficult start, but the plan was always to get the new Council up and running first, then focus on the Executive Board.

However, he was particularly pleased with the efforts of the Marketing and Communication team and Coronavirus Task Force as examples of what could be done when individuals work well together and were given their head to get on with the job. He ended by thanking all those involved with Council, the Executive Board and its Committees for their work during a tough time.

£10,000 Small Business Grant

Ian Burrige reported that his current prediction was that the financial outcome for the year should not be significantly worse than the budgeted deficit, thanks to fortunate timing, receipt of a £10,000 Small Business Grant, savings on meeting costs and better than anticipated shop sales.

There had been little call on the Coronavirus Emergency Support fund. However, the outlook for 2021 was less encouraging and we had yet to tackle the underlying deficit.

Constitutional matters and restructuring the Executive Board

Ian Vincent had, as requested, drafted amendments to the Constitution for Council to propose to the AGM (in whatever way we can hold it). Most were agreed as being uncontroversial housekeeping, but it was agreed that the proposed dissolution clause needed further thought.

Roger Staples had circulated a comprehensive report from the Executive Board, most of which was for information.

Its main proposal was to restructure the Board to have six Directors, three of whose portfolios would cover the CA's sporting activities, the other three its administrative functions, with a recommendation that the Directors should be appointed following an open recruitment process. The substance of the proposals had the unanimous support of the current Executive Board and were accepted in principle by Council.

However, there was a dissenting voice on

the Board who objected to the protocol that required Council approval of this proposal.

It was recognised that the review of the Standing Orders and Practice Book needed to happen in order to resolve the procedural issues.

Marketing & Communications, Efficiency and Technology reviews

Samir Patel then took the floor, to tidy up the loose ends arising from the previous consideration of the Marketing & Communications, Efficiency and Technology reviews. Two of the outstanding recommendations of the Efficiency group were passed to the Executive Board for action, but the one to clarify levels of authority for taking decisions, spending and budgeting needed a group to look at it, and would require changes to the Standing Orders and Practice Book.

A group of recommendations from the Technology review concerning support for and resilience of our infrastructure were accepted as being important and also passed to the Executive Board for action.

The other recommendations that had not been selected for immediate action will be noted for review in November 2021, on the ground that there were almost certainly higher-priority topics in other areas.

Three new working groups

Three new working groups were in various stages of formation: one, chaired by Ian Burrige, to look at membership issues; another, which Jonathan Isaacs was prepared to chair unless he can find a suitable alternative, to look at competitive play and recruitment; and a third, chaired by Ian Cobbold, to look at the role of the Federations.

New Public Relations Lead and a successor to the Webmaster

The longstanding issue of finding a successor to Dave Kibble as webmaster had been progressed by a group led by Samir Patel identifying eight component tasks and the relationship between them.

It was agreed in principle to appoint a Public Relations Lead who would have an overview of the CA's communications, and attempts will be made to recruit volunteers to the more specific roles where vacancies existed.

Having established that we need PR at both national and local level as part of the Marketing and Communications Strategy, it was agreed that the implementation of this role was a matter for the Executive Board.

New 'Bernard Neal Award' announced

The Awards Scrutiny Committee's recommendations were accepted.

A Bernard Neal Award for Exceptional Services to Croquet, funded by a very generous anonymous donation, will be instigated as a second major Council Award, to fill the current gap between the Council Medal and CA Diplomas.

Samir Patel: Vice-Chairman Designate



Looking to the future, the recommendation of the Nominations Committee, following consultation with Council members, that Samir Patel be appointed Vice-Chairman Designate, was accepted enthusiastically (*though acclamation by applause doesn't work well when muted in a Zoom call!*).

Roger Staples also agreed to continue as Chairman of the Executive Board pro tem, and the two Ians (Burrige and Vincent) to be nominated for (re-)election at the AGM.

However, the latter has been in the post for twelve years and so felt that thought should be given to finding his eventual successor, with a view to a significant handover period, assuming that a similar role will still be needed following incorporation and/or becoming a charity.

Call for positivity please

It was noted that the Efficiency review group had circulated recommendations to cut down on the number of emails circulating (the Chairman and other Officers were in danger of being overwhelmed by over 250 a day), whilst ensuring that people received the information they needed. They could possibly be encapsulated by the phrase "think before you send"!

Finally, the Chairman urged everyone to move forward with an air of positivity, and to eradicate signs of negativity at all levels of the CA's function.

Ian Vincent, Hon. Secretary

Earlier Clubs Survey pre-dates 'Grey Squirrel'

Dear Editor,

The April/May Gazette included a summary of Eugene Chang's comprehensive and interesting club survey.

It was billed as the First Survey of Clubs but it is not; I know of two others, the first in 1995, and the other in 2000.

I remember that the one in 1995 was very numeric in nature. Purporting to cover every club in the country, its questions were on topics such as: how many lawns, how many members and what the subscription fees were.

The 2000 survey was completed just before my twelve-year stint on the CA Marketing Committee began, so I have more information to hand on this one. It had a sample of 25 clubs and concentrated on recruitment methods. Interestingly, four of the clubs no longer exist.

I have found a summary report. It shows the 25 clubs started the year 2000 with 1,215 members between them, they recruited 223 and 124 terminated their memberships (these figures would have been inflated by some players changing clubs). So, the net increase for the year was 8%, which was quite respectable, given that this was in the era before the metaphoric grey squirrel was imported from Egypt.

One third of all new recruits were as a result of introductions by existing members and a half were from club's own advertising and PR – not much change there then, compared to what we are seeing these days.

I am sure that full details of the two surveys can be found buried somewhere in the CA archives. It is possible they might reveal some successful practices from the past that could be redeployed today.

Kevin Carter, Surbiton CC



Croquet makes a return to Tenerife and a warm welcome awaits you

Dear Editor,

My name is José Milena and I am the Vice-President of Tenerife Club de Croquet; with my president Agustín Bollo and thanks to the strong collaboration of Buenavistagolf and Hotel Melia Hacienda del Conde in Buenavista, we are investing heavily in Croquet in Tenerife.

Our aim is that people all over the world have a place to play croquet all year round and, of course, relax and enjoy our hospitality.

Tenerife Club de Croquet was founded in October 2019 and takes its inspiration from the British culture and tradition of croquet.

During the first part of the 20th Century, croquet was played in Tenerife in places

such as the Sitio Litre and the Taoro Hotel in Puerto de la Cruz.

Unfortunately the game was lost for several decades.

With the expansion of croquet in Spain, we decided to invest heavily in recovering the tradition of croquet in Tenerife.

Thanks to Buenavistagolf and the 5-star Hotel Melia Hacienda del Conde we can offer a luxury resort and spectacular views to practise croquet throughout the year in Buenavista del Norte in Tenerife.

Jose Milena, vice-president of Tenerife Club de Croquet

www.tenerifecroquet.eu

www.buenavistagolf.es

- Also see 'Canary Croquet' on page 19 -



Alison Maugham with a young beginner

Are our hoops are too difficult for young players?

Dear Editor,

May I suggest that the main reason for not attracting new players is that it is too difficult to run a hoop. At other games such as bowls, football, tennis, etc., early players are given a chance to at least do something when starting to play, but at croquet they can get nowhere unless they can get a ball completely through a hoop with a gap of no more than an eighth of an inch.

Young people are put off straight away! Any suggestions to make it more fun for them?
Tony Lee, Norwich CC

~

You make a good a point there, Tony, if by young people you mean very young kids, but for teenagers up, surely the challenge is part of the attraction. Sixth formers that I taught for a term valued the hoop score highly, precisely because it was difficult. - Ed.

'Access for All'

How would your club fare in an Access Audit?

Dear Editor,

Earlier in the year, in February and then March 2020, in that intervening period of limbo before the Covid-19 lockdown period prevented such excursions, I conducted Access Audits of Hunstanton and Nottingham Croquet Clubs.

The aim of the exercise is to identify any barriers to easy, safe access and suggest ways of overcoming them.

It's worth bearing in mind that if one is making access better for someone who has, for instance, a difficulty with walking or with seeing where they are going, then these alterations will improve life for everyone.

Each club will of course have its own idiosyncrasies, but I thought it might be useful to give a few general bullet-points for all to consider, as food for thought in these times of pause. . .

- * Make sure there is a clear, level route to every lawn and that there are no obstacles.
- * The clubhouse / hut should be accessible to all.
- * There should be a loo that everyone can use.
- * Ask individual members who have an impairment, for their suggested improvements.

Jonathan Toye, Peterborough CC

Is Jerry's 685 scalps a record?

Dear Editor,

In these dark days, with little prospect of croquet in the immediate future, one can look back at all the opportunities to play in tournaments and matches provided by croquet clubs and organizations.

It is thanks to the detailed information by Chris Williams, and previously by Stephen Mulliner, that I am able to claim a record: in competitive play in level advanced AC to have beaten 685 individual players.

Jerry Guest, Chester CC

685 is a lot of vanquished opponents, Jerry, and I'm pretty sure that I am one of them! I wonder if anyone will stake a claim to beat your tally. Or maybe readers have discovered other record feats whilst trawling through the rankings websites? - Ed

AC

www.butedock.plus.com/cgs/rank.php

GC

rank.worldcroquet.org/gcrankdg/rank.php

Cheltenham Quizzers publicise club on radio

Dear Editor,

Before the lockdown, the Cheltenham CC quiz team had a successful run on the BBC Radio Gloucestershire morning show.

Each morning we were subjected to a test of our Gloucestershire knowledge – did you know gold was mined here?

We tied for first place and although we were delighted to do so well, the main aim was to gain publicity for our sport and our club.

Mission achieved I think!

Klim Seabright, Cheltenham CC



Photo, from left - Jan Lugg, Bob Knight, Adam Moliver, Klim Seabright, Libby Stewart, Naomi Whitehead (Capt), and Pat Francis was also in the team.

1870 article made the 'Field Rules' made clear

Dear Editor,

I was interested to read the article "1870 - The year that Croquet came of age" by John Harris, in the latest issue (*Gazette* 384).

A few years ago, when I visited Chastleton

House near Morton-in- Marsh, I saw a plaque on a wall near the old croquet lawns (which were by then in a fairly poor condition).

At the time, it struck me as strange that it referred to the 'Field Rules' and just thought that perhaps croquet in the earliest days was called field croquet because it was played outdoors. I forgot all about this until I read the article, which finally made clear what the 'Field' referred to (i.e. the magazine 'The Field').

**Chris Southworth,
Worcester Norton CC**

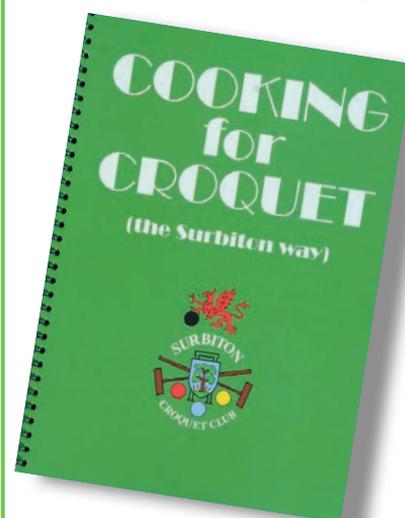


This is not a letter, it's a shameless plug for Surbiton CC's fabulous "Cooking for Croquet" in case you missed it when it was positioned rather tucked away in the last issue.

The A4-size publication is full recipes for many of the delicious dishes the club is famous for and all are suitable for your home or croquet club kitchen.

The book can be yours for just £10 (+pp) from Linda at surbitoncookbook@btinternet.com.

- Ed.



Obituary

Dr. Eric Solomon 1935 - 2020

Eric Solomon and I both joined Harrow Oak Croquet Club in the early 1970s.

Together with the chairman of the club, Graham Martin, and a few others including John Ruddock and later Phil Cordingley, we gradually improved.

However, there were no strong players at the club to give us guidance!

Eric was a member of the Harrow team which twice won the Longman Cup and, by the late 70s, he was a very strong player.

In 1979 he won the Presidents Cup, played regularly for England in the 1980s and for GB v USA in 1985.

He was a particularly creative player and was keen to experiment with new leaves, like hiding balls by hoops and the peg well before this became the norm.



He was also one of the first to experiment with reshaping the mallet shaft to fit the hands better.

Away from croquet, Eric played cricket well into his 50s. In his younger days he was a weightlifter, and a kendo and athletics enthusiast.

Eric's love of, and talent for, new and original ideas showed itself most as a games inventor.

He developed many games and probably his best two were Black Box and Entropy; the latter has featured regularly as one

of the top games in the Mind Sports Olympiads (an annual board game festival).

Professionally, Eric gained a PhD in Mathematics and worked on developing software, mainly in the Engineering Sector.

David Openshaw

Obituary

David Collins 1935 - 2020

A missed e-mail last month from Edward Dymock would have corrected an inaccuracy in David Collins's date of birth, 1935, and more precisely dated his Coach of the Year award to 1999.

My apology Ed – *Chris Roberts, Editor.*

~

Additionally Ed recounted David's earlier contributions at Dulwich CC as follows:

David was one of a small group of croquet members who kept the Dulwich club afloat throughout hard times and, despite the lack of funds, he found practical ways to keep things going, using his hands-on skills and the enthusiasm of club members to increase



the size of the two lawns and maintain the clubhouse.

He stepped up as club president when the then president died unexpectedly in 1997 and led the club for seven years with his usual calm and twinkle-eyed good humour.

He was delighted to host a visit to the club in 2012 from the Real Housewives of New York City as is shown in this photo.

He ran corporate events for the club for twelve years and was made an honorary member of Dulwich CC from 2014. As a player he represented Kent at the Counties for many years.

Edward Dymock



CA Grants

Penrith & North Lakes CC



In December 2015 the sports ground where Penrith & North Lakes CC have their lawns was flooded and both the pavilion and container, where we stored our equipment and mowers, was under three feet of water.

After the clean-up we determined that we needed to store our equipment away from where there is risk of future flooding.

We applied for and received a **Croquet Association Grant** to help purchase a secure box-trailer.

This meant that we can now store all our equipment safely off site, over winter.

This has proved its worth this winter when, in the wake of Storm Ciara and Storm Dennis, the River Eden overflowed its banks in February and the Langwathby lawns and pavilion were again flooded.

The photo shows the clean-up in progress.

The means to keep our equipment safe from flooding has, and will continue to be, a vital asset to our club.

The Grant from the CA will make a big difference to our club for many years.

**Ian Tupling,
Hon. Secretary and Treasurer,
Penrith & North Lakes CC**

Play Brookwood's 3D Virtual Croquet

now play games over the internet too!

Brookwood Croquet's 3D virtual AC or GC croquet computer based game allows you to play croquet from home even if you are in lockdown!

See the link below where you can register an account and get your virtual mallet swinging!

Designer Andrew Dutton (Woking CC) says that owners of Brookwood Croquet programs should note that games can now be played over the internet whilst Covid 19 movement restrictions are in place and into the future. Please refer to the 'Playing on the Internet' page on the Brookwood Croquet website for details of how it can be done:

www.brookwoodcroquet.btck.co.uk

A full article on this computer game was carried in the April 2018 issue (page 28, Gazette 373), which readers can look-up on the CA website with this navigation:

- Home > News & Press
- > Croquet Gazette
- > Issues of the Croquet Gazette

CA Subscriptions for 2021

~ Ian Burridge, Hon. Treasurer ~



Subscriptions for both individual members and member clubs will be unchanged in 2021, and remain at the 2020 levels.

Individual Members' Subscriptions				
Category	With Paper Gazette		Paperless	
	Full	Direct Debit	Full	Direct Debit
Premium	£ 43.50	£ 38	£ 36.50	£ 31
Supporter	£ 23.50	£ 18	£ 16.50	£ 11
Overseas or EU	£ 48.50	£ 43	£ 41.50	£ 36
Young Person	£ 15	£ 15	£ 8	£ 8

Club Subscriptions				
As before, only primary club members need be counted when calculating the amount due				
	adult per-capita rate		young persons' per-capita rate	
Small clubs	£ 9		£ 5	
Large clubs	£ 14		£ 5	
New clubs	Year 1: Fixed at £60	Year 2: Capped at £90	Year 3: Capped at £120	with minimum of £60 throughout
Affiliate clubs	£ 45			
School and University clubs	£ 30			



Sam Murray
(by Chris Roberts)

Have you considered leaving a gift in your will for your croquet club ?

Trying to find funds for unexpected problems can put real stress on a croquet club's finances.

Lawn weed and moss treatment
Urgent repairs
New updated equipment
The development and improvement of club facilities

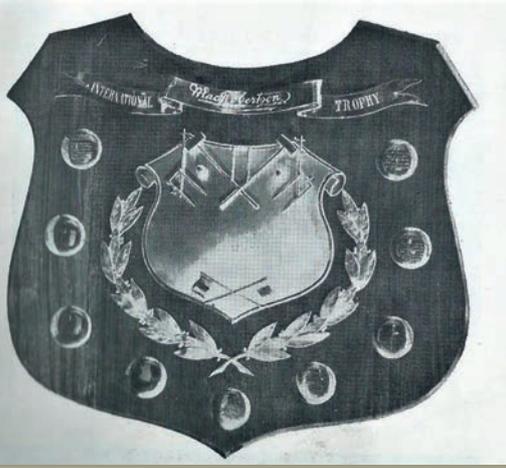
All these can put stress on the club and undermine its stability. Usually they can not simply be funded by increased membership fees. Croquet is a great game enjoyed in many ways by very different types of players and we all depend on healthy and stable clubs.

That is why leaving something in your will to your club can help members continue to enjoy playing the game we have all enjoyed so much.

It is simple to do and your club will really benefit from it.

The smallest contribution could make a massive difference.

The MacRobertson Shield and man behind c



The most famous trophy in croquet is the MacRobertson Shield, now the trophy for the World Croquet Federation's AC World Team Championship.

However it predates the formation of the WCF by many years having first been competed for in 1925.

Which teams play in this event and who was the man behind this trophy?

The MacRobertson Shield

An Australian team played in England in 1925, when three test matches were organised and an Australian by name of Macpherson Robertson presented a trophy for International competition. (Photo above).

The trophy, inscribed with the words "MacRobertson International Trophy" has become known as the MacRobertson Shield, as has the name of the competition, although it is popularly and fondly referred to as the 'Mac'.

The idea of the trophy was to encourage international play and for many years, competing for this trophy was the only form of play internationally.

After the initial 1925 event in England, a return test series was organised in 1927.

In 1930 a challenge from New Zealand was accepted by the Australians and a match for the Shield between those two countries was played in Melbourne.

Nowadays four countries Australia, England, New Zealand, and USA compete for the Shield.

The USA first played in 1993, as depicted in the wonderful drawing by John Prince! (below),



Since 2000 the Series has officially become the World Team Championship and other member countries of the World Croquet Federation are eligible to apply to compete.

The trophy itself has undergone four changes to reflect the length of time this competition has been played and now approaching its Centenary, it has been competed for on 22 occasions.

The original trophy carried nine small round silver shields on which the individual names of the players in the winning team are inscribed.

After the tenth competition was played in England in 1974, there was nowhere left to inscribe the winner's names, so the arrangement of the round shields was changed.

The modified trophy now with fifteen round shields is shown in a photo of Bernard Neal and John Prince, the respective captains of Great Britain and New Zealand during the 1979 series (below).



Later two more shields were added to bring the total to 17.

As the Championship continued to be held more frequently, a further major modification was made to bring the total number of shields for engraving to 29, which should allow capacity for winners' names up to 2040. (photo top right corner).

The first event - 1925

The first event in 1925 consisted of three test matches with teams of four players.

The inaugural match was held at the Roehampton Club and was played over two days, 26 and 27 June, and England won 6-0.

There were four singles and two doubles matches which were each a best of three format.



The 1925 MacRobertson Shield teams

The Gazette of the time records that 'Lawns 10 and 7 had been turned out in super excellent condition and on the former (the 'Centre Court' for the occasion) Miss DD Steel appeared in opposition to Mr W T McCleery'.

Around 200 spectators watched the match.

Further matches were played at Cheltenham in July and Southwick in September which England also won, 6-0 and 5-1.

These matches had provided great interest indeed and the Gazette reports that at Cheltenham 'the gallery was considerably larger' than for the first test, adding that 'it would be difficult to imagine a more delightful setting than the famous Cheltenham Club in the beauty of its surroundings perhaps second to none in the Kingdom'.

So it was not surprising that this interest translated into a tour to Australia being organised for the winter of 1927/28

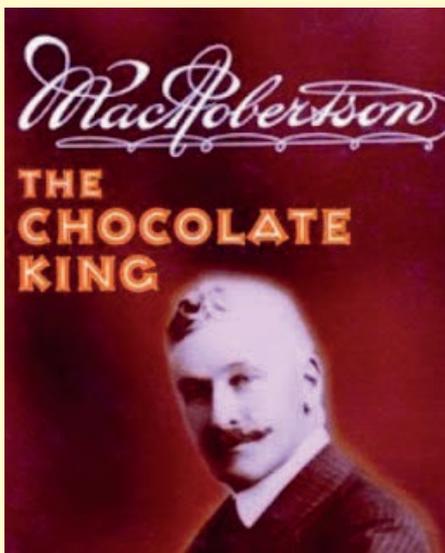
Three tests were played, all in Melbourne. England won the first 4-2, Australia the second 4-2 and the third was drawn 3-3.

Australia won the Shield by tie-break. One of our players, Mr W Windsor Richards wrote a diary of the trip which makes good reading in the early 1928 Gazettes. A short excerpt is shown in a photograph. (below),

So who was Macpherson Robertson?

The man who presented this wonderful trophy was an Australian entrepreneur who built up one of the most successful companies in that country.

Last Sunday we went to to play, where he has two la successful against Miss I Roberts twice, but Wemyss luck against Mrs. Prescott latter is the donor of the bring back to England, a King" in Melbourne as he l sweets. What a lovely prof trying for a billet with him



He was born in Victoria in 1859 to parents of Scottish descent and lived in Scotland for four years from age nine while his father worked in Fiji.

He was from a humble background and his schooling was interrupted by the need to support the family.

He and his mother returned to Australia when he was 14 and he was apprenticed in the confectionery industry.

In 1880 he started his own business, and went on to build up a very large chocolate and sweet company, "MacRobertson's" - a name he promoted with exceptional passion.

He spent time in the USA in 1893 investigating the newest trends in confectionery and learning new production and marketing ideas there.

MacRobertson The Chocolate King

He was regarded as particularly good at marketing and promoting his products.

Notice that the rather ornately written MacRobertson is the same as on the Shield - it's the way he wrote his signature and promoted his company. *(photo above)*

His business was a great success and it took business from the traditional importers of British sweets.

MacRobertson's invented and produced famous chocolate products such as the Cherry Ripe (1924), Crunchie (1929) and

November 28th, 1927.

Mr. MacRobertson's house
owns. McCleery and I were
Retallack and Mr. Glen
and Du Pre were out of
and MacRobertson. The
shield we are trying to
and is called the "Lolly
has made a fortune out of
ession! I am thinking of
as taster.

Freddo Frog (1930).

He expanded into other businesses such as glucose production, manufacturing of plant and machinery, timber casks, printing and production of condensed and powdered milk.

He was the majority owner and driving force behind Maize Products Pty Ltd. which pioneered glucose production in Australia.

He was interested in aviation and set up a joint venture company in that industry.

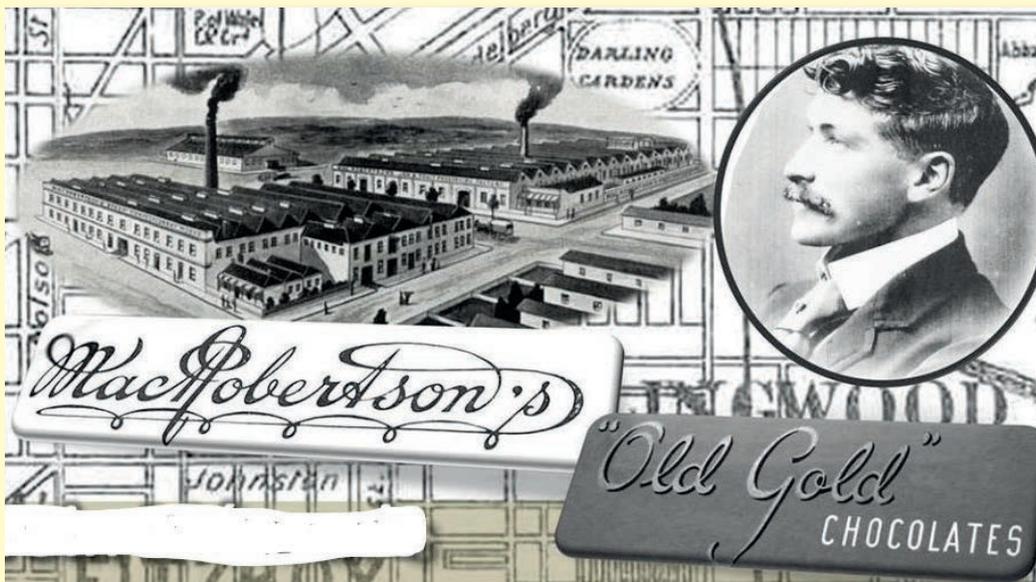
He was reputed to be the largest taxpayer in Australia.

His factories in Fitzroy, Melbourne were all painted white and the area was known as White City. *(photo below)*

Croquet, films and boxing

According to a biographer John Lack 'he lived unpretentiously and his tastes were simple: croquet, films and boxing at the Melbourne Stadium were abiding interests.

He rarely holidayed, but was an ardent



motorist from 1902 and owned a fleet of Packard cars.

He was keen to keep fit and took regular morning exercise with a punching ball.

He was an impressive looking man known as Mac or Mr Mac and very often seen in a white suit. *(photo on next page)*

I could find no photographs of him playing croquet but he does have a Crowther Smith caricature.

Mac the philanthropist

Mac was also a great philanthropist and supporter of workers' rights.

In 1928 he supported a Round Australia Expedition to show the potential for motor travel in the outback.

An Oldsmobile and two Karrier



The MacRobertson Shield, as it is today

trucks made the five month journey circumnavigating Australia.

The trucks contained cinematic equipment to provide entertainment in remote areas and also a supply of MacRobertson's products!.

He contributed to the British, NZ and Australian Antarctic expedition of 1929/1930 and part of Antarctica is named after him - *MacRobertson Land*.

He also donated the prize money and

trophy for the London to Melbourne Air Race 1934 - "The MacRobertson Trophy Air Race" - which was won in 71 hours but this MacRobertson Trophy did not survive as it was presented in 1941 to the Red Cross to be melted down to help the war effort.

For the Centenary of Victoria in 1934, he supported a number of projects in Melbourne.

This included building the MacRobertson Girls' High School (now promoted as the MacRob or sometimes the mac.rob), the MacRobertson Bridge as a new crossing over the river Yarra from Burnley to Tooruk and the development of the Botanic Gardens.

He always combined his philanthropy
continues overleaf...

more on *Mac*

continued... with promotion of his businesses and was described in The Brisbane Courier (January 1928) as "an athletic young man of 68 – white of hair, erect, kindly and brimful of energy. He is a democrat to the finger tips and takes a personal interest in his staff that is good to see."

He developed pension schemes for employees and encouraged unions, in particular the Female Confectioners' Union, and during the most depressed years around 1928 preferred using additional labour and not his machines.

It is interesting to see various descriptions of his promotional abilities, which included: 'a flair for product innovation, eye-catching packaging and skilful promotion'. 'Robertson was an

innovative businessman and a shameless self-promoter'. 'He had an 'unparalleled flair for marketing and self-promotion'. 'Never a shrinking violet, Macpherson Robertson named his business for himself but combined his two names into the catchier 'MacRobertson'.~

This is clearly a very impressive rags to riches story. I would have liked to find out more about his croquet playing but that will have to await more research!



David Openshaw

AC Tournaments Update

Each tournament is being considered by the AC Tournaments Committee as it approaches the allocation date.

The decisions we arrive at are based on the current government guidance, including any travel restrictions and the availability of accommodation and hospitality.

The host club, the tournament manager and the tournament director are involved in the discussion about whether to go ahead, to cancel or to postpone.

Update on the key changes *at the time of writing (5 June)*

06-07 Jun - AC Home Internationals – cancelled

10-14 Jun - AC Men's, Women's & Mixed Doubles Champs. – cancelled.

22-27 Jun - National AC Veterans Championship -cancelled.

04-06 July - AC Open Doubles Championship, Cheltenham – postponed to 01-06 September.

07-12 July - AC Open Singles Championship, Cheltenham – postponed to 01-06 September.

Clubs have been contacted about the various **AC Inter-Club competitions** (Longman Cup, Mary Rose, Inter-Club and Secretary's Shield) and as a result these competitions will go ahead but with a revised format.

The assumption now is that teams will consist of three players with an option to retain four players if both teams agree.

A new draw will be made and the extended deadlines for the rounds will be circulated to the participating clubs. The Short Croquet Inter-Club competition will be reviewed in mid-July.

Beatrice McGlen,
Chairman, AC Tournaments Committee

M C Percival Mallets



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

The heads are anodised (hardened) and will be available in a variety of colours including black, blue and red.

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

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

Michael Percival

07780 677943 Michael@croquetmallets.co.uk

World Events - revised schedule

Following the postponement of the lower tiers of the GC WTC, the WCF Management Committee has consulted with the event hosts for the WCF events planned to be held in 2020 to 2023.

All parties unanimously agree that the most practical and appropriate response to the impact of the pandemic is to decide now to postpone all WCF events by one year, starting with the Women's Association Croquet World Championship due to be held in November 2020.

It is hoped this will provide sufficient time for the situation to stabilise. However, it is also recognised that one or more further one-year postponements may be necessary if the global situation does not improve sufficiently to make holding international events feasible. The situation will be kept under review.

The table (*on the opposite page*) shows the initial amendment of the 10 year Championship Schedule.

Please note that the revised dates are approximate and subject to detailed agreement with the relevant event hosts who have all indicated their support.

- The MacRobertson Shield is due to be held in England in 2025 which will be the centenary of its founding. It was also agreed that, if possible, this event should still be held in 2025 with the forward calendar being revised slightly to accommodate this.

Stephen Mulliner,
Secretary-General, World Croquet Federation

GC Tournaments Update

As we all know, the COVID-19 restrictions have continued to have a major impact on the CA's programme of GC events.

All CA events up until the end of June have been cancelled and CA tournaments in July and August remain uncertain.

We will continue to consider the views of the host club when evaluating government advice alongside any restrictions on sports fixtures, player travel and accommodation.

For all future events, we intend to make a decision prior to the Allocation Date or four weeks prior to the event (whichever comes later) and we continue to advise entrants to avoid non-refundable expenditure until that date.

We will endeavour to avoid short-notice changes closer to an event, but this may be unavoidable if we have to react to changes in government advice in the immediate lead-up to or during an event.

Update on the key changes at the time of writing (2 June)

My report in the last issue (*Gazette* 385) mentioned the **cancellation of the England v Spain GC Test Match** 12-14 June. We looked at options to re-schedule later in the year but decided to postpone the schedule by a year (the Test is played annually and alternates between Spain and England). We are aiming to hold the 2021 Test at Hurlingham 18-20 June and the 2022 Test will be hosted by Spain, probably in March. Roehampton has offered to hold the event in 2023.

The GC Open Championships, previously scheduled for 16-21 June, has been postponed to 13-16 August and the venue remains Sussex County CC, at Southwick. The tournament has been reduced from six days to four days and will be Singles only. Those considering

entering should note that the Allocation and Closing dates are now 13 July and 27 July respectively.

The GC Home Internationals, due to be hosted by Wales at Nailsea 18-19 July, have been cancelled. We have decided to postpone the rotation by a year, so Wales will host at Nailsea 17-18 July 2021.

Following consultation with all the participating clubs, the **GC Federations Shield** (GC inter-club handicap competition between clubs representing each Federation) has been **cancelled**. It has been agreed that the competition will be carried forward to 2021, with all the clubs currently entered taking part next year.

While no decisions have been made (at time of writing) about the **GC Inter-Club** and the **GC Murphy Shield**, it is very likely that both competitions will have been adjusted by the time you read this. If you are involved in a club team and unsure about the status of the event, please check with your team captain.

Since my last report, one more of the eight qualifying tournaments in **The English National GC Singles Championship (for the Ascot Cup)** has been cancelled – the Hunstanton GC Championship 8-9 August.

Cheltenham's qualifier on 6-7 June has been postponed to August.

Four surviving ENSC qualifiers (all GC Championship events)

are STILL ON

27-28 June - National Forest (at Ashby)
11-12 July - Nottingham
18-19 July - Lancashire (at Pendle & Craven)
11-12 Aug - Cheltenham

Jonathan Powe,
Chairman, GC Tournaments Committee

Since the ABC Series column in the last Gazette, several more Series tournaments have fallen by the wayside due to the Covid-19 situation.

At the time of writing (6 June), the following additional tournaments have been CANCELLED:

A-Level Series at: no new cancellations.

B-Level Series at: Northampton, Woking, Leighton-Linslade, Colchester, Hunstanton, Bury, Bath and Nailsea.

C-Level Series at: Woking, Northampton, Camerton, Roehampton, Colchester, Hunstanton and Bury.

The following tournaments are STILL ON

A-Level Series (Open)

08-09 July – Ryde Open
18-19 July – Wiltshire Open (Hamptworth)
25-26 July – Dorset Open (at East Dorset)
01-02 Aug – Cheltenham A-Level (NEW DATES)
05-06 Sep – Wrest Park A-Level (NEW DATES)
12-13 Sep – Sussex Open (at Southwick)

B-Level Series (3+)

27-28 June – Hamptworth
01 July – Ealing
15 July – Nottingham
01 August – Guildford
07-08 Aug – Phyllis Court
08-09 Aug – East Dorset (NEW DATE)
15 August – Ashby
17 August – Wrest Park (NEW DATE)
22 August – Budleigh-Salterton
22-23 Aug – Hurlingham
05-06 Sep – FINAL at Roehampton

C-Level Series (7+)

07 July – Hurlingham
15 July – Cheltenham
16 July – Nottingham
26 July – Crake Valley (NEW DATE)
30 July – Broadwas
11 August – Wrest Park (NEW DATE)
14 August – Ashby
15 August – Hamptworth
23 August – Budleigh-Salterton
19-20 Aug – FINAL at Colchester

The latest GC picture can be seen on the CA website, either by highlighting the tournaments in each Series by using the NEW and very useful four Series buttons at the top of the online fixtures calendar, or by visiting each of the Series own dates / results pages using these navigations:

Fixtures calendar: go to 'Tournaments' > 'Fixtures Calendar'

Series Pages: go to 'Tournaments' > 'CA Events' > 'Ascot Cup', 'A, B, or C Series'

Chris Roberts,
Director ABC-Level Series

WCF Event	Host	Original	Revised
2020 GC World Team Championship Tier 2	Spain	May-2020	May-2021
2020 GC World Team Championship Tier 3	England	Jul-20	Jul-21
2020 Women's AC World Championship	N.Zealand	Nov-20	Nov-21
2021 Under 21 GC World Championship	N.Zealand	Jan-21	Jan-22
2021 GC World Championship	N.Zealand	Feb-21	Feb-22
2021 AC World Team Championship Tiers 2/3	England	Aug-21	Aug-22
2021 AC World Team Championship Tier 1 (MacRobertson Shield)	Australia	Nov-21	Nov-22
2022 AC World Championship	England	Jul-22	Jul-23
2022 Over 50 GC World Championship	Australia	Oct-22	Oct-23
2023 Under 21 GC World Championship	USA	Mar-23	Mar-24
2023 GC World Championship	USA	Mar-23	Mar-24

Croquet scores fabul

~ by Eugene Chang and

It's been a whirlwind two months for croquet over lockdown! Having struggled to get croquet in the national media for years, we've been catapulted into stardom as lockdown has eased, even being directly named in Government COVID-19 guidance and Parliamentary Group discussions. *Eugene Chang reports.*

This fantastic press success is due largely to the fantastic CA Marketing Team who set the ball rolling; we have met every week during lockdown to work on promoting croquet to the media.

The team have shared their achievements and how they did it, in this special feature.

I urge everyone to continue the great work to promote our sport - please get in touch if you need any support - we may be able to help!

Follow the CA on social media:
FB/Twitter/IG: @croquetengland

Media roundup

We were one of only eight sports allowed to reopen by Government on 13 May during initial lockdown easing; 56% of clubs were quick to restart croquet (none more so than Dulwich and High Wycombe); croquet set sales went up by 110% in the CA Shop and by 600% at John Lewis.

All these facts were newsworthy enough to attract an initial Sunday Times article on 24 May, and this snowballed into widespread media interest.

At the time of writing, we have featured in the following:

Nationals press: Sunday Times, Daily Telegraph, Daily Mail, The Spectator, The Scottish Sun and Thomson Reuters.

Television: ITV Granada & Meridian, BBC Points West & Midlands Today.

Radio: BBC London, BBC West Midlands, BBC Nottingham, talkRADIO.

Regional/local publications (too many to mention).

Federations and clubs have worked incredibly hard to follow-up on the positive publicity and have featured in many of the pieces above. I have been impressed by everyone stepping up and promoting our sport in such a positive and engaging way - in particular Adrian Morris of Kenilworth TSCC who delivered a fantastic radio interview (he has shared a few notes in an accompanying article on page 18).

Creating a #LockdownCroquet movement for those stuck at home

With the hashtag symbol being so popular at the moment, **Alison Maugham and Annabel McDiarmid** were charged with adapting a current website using #LockdownCroquet.

This was to create a go-to site for any currently non-croquet players searching for croquet in lockdown, including links to the CA Facebook page, where to buy your own croquet set (The CA Shop), Lockdown Challenges giving ideas for little fun challenges for the whole family, and a fun #LockdownCroquet promotional video.

While Alison re-designed and adapted the www.trycroquet.co.uk website, Annabel contacted croquet and non-croquet friends and family to film 10-20 seconds of them using household equipment to have some croquet fun.

This was then edited and the clips merged



to create an 80 second short.

The site became live and promoted through the media team, where the video was used by BBC to promote our sport in Lockdown.

Starting a Public Relations avalanche

Linda Gavigan made some diary notes of her activity and considerable success:

Wed 13 May - BBC Radio Sussex asked what was making people happy about the easing of restrictions.

Fuming over repeated announcements that golf, tennis and basketball were to re-open I called and pointed out, on air, that croquet was also

restarting and that is the perfect social distancing sport. I also got in plug for Southwick and croquet in general.

Thurs 14 May - A press release, including photos of members using mallets to measure social distance (thanks Dulwich), was dispatched to local press, radio and TV.

Sat 16 May - **I was given eight minutes live chat on BBC Radio Sussex breakfast show** with Mark Carter who had broadcast his show from Southwick on the first day of the GC World Championships last year. He understood what we're trying to achieve and asked good questions. I managed to get over all the main points I wanted to.

Week commencing 18 May - Local press coverage began and the snowball rolled!



ous Media Successes

and the Marketing Team ~



regional media contacts - these differed depending on the media type (TV, radio, newspaper) and also whether they were public or privately owned - and we then divided them up between the team for our distribution.

We included press releases in both the body of the email and as

an attachment. The press receive plenty of emails each day so we didn't expect responses and a certain amount of doggedness was required.

We are starting to reap the results as a 'Sport', with various news and media outlets following-up our approaches.

Making the 'BackToCroquet' video

Eugene Chang (Chairman of the CA Marketing Committee) reports. I was invited by Nottingham Croquet Club to film some footage of how their members were adjusting to COVID-19 guidelines.

The weather was perfect and the club looked resplendent with rhododendrons in full bloom.

I filmed the lovely Sophie McGlen cleaning/preparing equipment before use, and spoke to local members who gave their own stories of what it meant to be back playing croquet.

They were clearly glad to be back and the court booking system/arrangements were working fine. Having captured the members' interviews and been provided with stunning overhead drone video footage by Alex McIntyre, I set to work putting the video together using iMovie.

I wanted to showcase how croquet was ideal for social distancing and features a range of players - Nottingham made it easy to do both! I ended up with a two-minute video which I'm very pleased with.

The video has been viewed thousands of times across Facebook and YouTube and has done

the rounds within the worldwide croquet community. It can be watched on the CA's YouTube channel:

www.youtube.com/croquetengland.

Interacting with social media

Tobi Savage reports: As the CA gets to grips with the diversity and power of social media, we have quickly discovered that the newfound interactivity offered to the audience is of real benefit, and we have quickly been able to respond to croquet legends and intrigued members of the public alike.

It hasn't all been smooth sailing, however, for we have had to manage and moderate contributions that have been at best mildly misinformed and disparaging, and at worst defamatory and insulting.

On the whole, most online comments that cast common aspersions about the game (such as "vicious") can generally be handled with an upbeat, humorous response, and a quick bit of information, or a link that directs to more information on the matter at hand and, where possible, a link to the CA website itself.

The primary focus is that when posting online, we should remember to do all we can to make our wonderful sport seem welcoming, interesting and engaging.

The whole world can see what you post, share or comment on social media - so keep it positive and light-hearted... Negative comments should be saved for emails (or not at all!).

Photographs:

Top - David Walters getting croquet on TV whilst socially distancing at Bowdon CC.
Centre - A 'still' from the '#LockdownCroquet' video, encouraging playing at home.
Left - A 'still' from the 'BackToCroquet' video featuring ball cleaning at Nottingham CC.
Below - Keeping their distance at Bamburgh CC with their beautiful castle backdrop.

Eugene Chang and his CA Marketing Team worked their magic and publicity has been off the scale for nearly three weeks with great coverage across the country and even in the French press!

What to learn? - Speed is of the essence. No matter that clubs were only open to members (so were the other sports I mentioned), the aim was just to make our voice heard and we did! Carpe diem.

Getting through to the press

John Dawson and Klim Seabright report

that during this period the team produced two press releases,

a public-facing website and two purpose-made videos, distributed on social media channels.

We started by shaping the press release, setting the aims and desired outcome.

What was so newsworthy - was there an interesting angle?

Was there a human interest story to highlight - the youngest players, multi-winners, players with disability, famous people, charity links, etc.?

Our two releases highlighted that:

1 - Croquet was an ideal sport for people stuck at home to play in their garden.

2 - Croquet became one of the first sports allowed to reopen by the Government.

We compiled a list of national and



More media success ~ Adrian's Live Radio interview

Following some successful press coverage in recent weeks including a full page devoted to croquet and our own version of the Dulwich CC social distancing photograph,

I decided to send the photo along with some details to our local BBC Coventry and Warwickshire radio station.

They were amused by the photo and keen for me to talk to them on a local sports programme.

I agreed and then doubts crept in!

Could I put over the story LIVE on radio?

What if I mess things up?

Recognising the commonly held misconceptions about croquet, could I make things worse?

They had given me no brief apart from talking about the measures we had taken to be able to open.

This was of some interest, maybe, but I needed to get more across.

I spent considerable time preparing for the interview including a list of actions taken so I could rattle that off and move on to more interesting things.

I gathered statistics on top players, top countries and world champions to have ready, just in case and also added recent Inter-Counties results, as on the evening of the broadcast I would have been travelling home from Compton.

None of this was needed but I didn't want

to be caught out.

Making notes so I was prepared

I also made notes of what I wanted to get across about our club and most importantly how listeners could contact us or get more details.

I then concentrated on likely questions that would be coming my way and decided that I needed to describe GC and AC in just a few words and get across that it is a serious sport but also played socially.

I was ready to mention the high tech mallets that we have these days, by way of stressing that croquet is a modern sport and was ready to push that croquet was a serious competitive sport played internationally.

Other pluses I wanted to mention are that that men and women play on equal terms, we also have our handicaps to ensure an even contest and that croquet is a game for all ages with some stress on the young players but also recognising that the guile and experience of age can still compete with youthful exuberance.

Countering the usual misconceptions

Then I needed to be able to reply to the two most common comments people make when croquet is mentioned:

Alice in Wonderland – In 1865, when the book was written, croquet was the sport, and so popular that Lewis Carroll would

have had to have included some mention of croquet.

I also had the Boston anecdote ready. Apparently Boston banned croquet for its association with alcohol and promiscuity!

Dastardly/Vindictive – I was ready to accept this along with all other sports, for we try to win by beating the opponents in sport, and, indeed, snooker is even named after its most dastardly vindictive stroke.

Come the day of the broadcast, I was nervous but preparation alongside a generous interviewer allowed a successful slot.

It wasn't perfect and I didn't get all my points across but overall, a success.

The club received two enquiries the following day, and there will be more to come, I hope.

Adrian Morris, Kenilworth TSCC



Kenilworth TSCC players re-create their own 'distancing photo' - Philip Wood with his home-made mallet and Cliff Daniel is 'The Man in the Mask'.

Lockdown didn't stop Chester CC Press Officer Sally

Some clubs are more successful than others in getting copy into their local newspapers and Chester CC's press officer, Sally Slater, gets copy printed every week (in normal times).

She reports, "I always manage to get something in the paper.

It is usually rather small and tucked away but it is there and occasionally they put a photograph in too.

If something extra special is happening, we also send it to the editor so that it can go in the main body of the paper.

I send the copy every Sunday evening because if I leave it later than Monday lunchtime, it rarely gets published.

Each spring, I ring the paper to make sure that the sports reporter hasn't changed and check his email.

That's it - not difficult!"

Even though there has been no play to report on, Sally shows here what can be done, with a little creative thinking, to keep her club's name in the public eye. – Ed.

Mallets out on back lawn!



CHESTER croquet club has not been open yet this season and this is particularly hard for a sport that only plays for a relatively short time.

However members of the club, based at Westminster Park, have not let the grass grow under their mallets and have been keeping up their skills at home.

Sally and Chris Slater have set up a lawn in their back garden, and Sandy Finchett-Maddock (pictured left) swings her mallet at home.

"Croquet has a mistaken reputation of being for posh folk in large country houses, but it is a sport for everyone, everywhere," said Sally Slater (pictured right).

"When Chester croquet club is allowed to reopen its doors and start playing again, the members hope that people will come along to have a go."

For more information, anyone interested in joining can visit: chestercroquet.club



Report for Chester local paper, 4 May:

Chester Croquet Club, like all other sports clubs, has not been open for play yet this season and this is particularly hard for a sport that only plays for a relatively short time, especially as the weather has been so lovely. However, members of the club, based

at Westminster Park, have not let the grass grow under their mallets and have been keeping up their skills at home. Sally and Chris Slater have set up a lawn in their back garden, and Sandy Finchett-Maddock swings her mallet on a suitable patch of grass.

Croquet has a mistaken reputation of being for posh folk in large country houses, but it is a sport for everyone, everywhere.

When Chester croquet club is allowed to reopen its doors and start playing again, the members hope that people will come along to have a go at this fun, yet challenging sport where men and women, new and experienced play on an equal footing.

A warm welcome awaits. See our website www.chestercroquet.club for more information.

by Sally Slater, Press officer of Chester CC

Jill and Jonathan both discover Canary Croquet



The Gazette was pleased to receive two independent and enthusing reports of visits by members to a new croquet club on Tenerife recently.

Jill Shaw (Camerton & Peasedown CC) is a new member of the CA but is already seeking out croquet opportunities when travelling, much the same as seasoned member **Jonathan Toye** (Peterborough CC), and they both wrote in glowing terms about being invited to play during their

holidays on the island.

The new club is based at Buenavista Golf Club in the north-west corner of Tenerife, which has a course designed by Seve Ballesteros, where there are stunning views in every direction of the coastline and mountains. Jonathan remarked that he was amazed to learn that the lawn was prepared in September 2019, was being played on in October and by January it was in first class condition for playing - in perfect

temperatures around 21C with little or no wind. Tenerife CC is in its early days and is keen to invite players from overseas. It has negotiated a favourable package for visitors who might like to combine a stay at the nearby five-star hotel with croquet.

See the letters page 8 for a welcoming invitation from host Jose Milena.

For further details see

www.tenerifecroquet.eu

or e-mail Jose on info@tenerifecroquet.eu

David swaps The Lakes for Florida

First met Colin Irwin at the NW Federation level play golf competition in April 2019 and over lunch, the former GB international player mentioned that he and his late wife, Chris, regularly played through the winter at **Sarasota County Club in Venice, Florida.** (photograph below)

A few more communications followed resulting in my wife Sandra and I spending February this year over there.

The club was founded by Fred and Jackie Jones in 1990 and has grown to over 230 members and has six courts.

Although a busy club, there was always court space available and we benefited from various coaching sessions held by the experienced members including Colin.

We made new friends and had an enjoyable afternoon as guests at nearby **The Oaks Country Club** (photograph right) and we also bumped into holidaying Brits David and Jenny Molyneux, from Broadwas CC.

We will, for sure, be returning as

“International Snowbirds” later this year and we thoroughly recommend it as the perfect getaway from the UK winter.

I subsequently asked Colin why they chose Sarasota County – here is his reply -

When we retired we were looking for a place in the sun, with croquet naturally.

We had played on the east coast quite a bit, at the PGA, the National Croquet Club, the Polo Club, the Beach Club and the Breakers, and we even had an invitation to join Boca Raton.

We had also played in California and Arizona so we knew our way around.

Chris was treasurer for the Organisation Design Forum for 11 years, and a board member friend of hers had a place in Naples, so we had the opportunity to stay there for a month in 2011 and gave us the chance to see the west coast.

We found Sarasota County Croquet Club on the USCA website and came to visit.

It was more like an English club than an American club - very friendly, lots of social activity and a very eclectic membership and Venice is a really nice town, not too big (not then anyway).

In early 2012 we came back for a month to look at properties, rented a house on Pinebrook very near the club and joined for the month.

The lady we were renting from was a realtor, so she showed us some properties.

We had not really intended to buy on that trip, but we loved the place I have now, it was at the peak of the housing crash here so we got a good price and we bought it straight away.

At that time SCCC had three full size courts and it now it has six and over 200 members and lots of activities built into a busy weekly schedule. So lots of coaching, lots of play, lots of social - there is a pot luck supper every month - it's just a great club with something for everyone.

And now we are staging some major USCA events, hosting the US national GC Eights for the last two years and the Florida regional championships at AC and GC.

We are hoping to get some more courts when the County develops the park so we think the future looks bright. For further information visit <https://www.sarasotacountycroquet.com/>

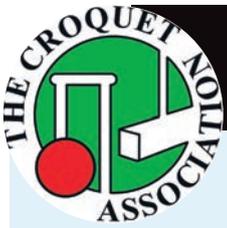
David Cornes, Crake Valley CC



The five splendid courts at Sarasota



Daniel Long, Sandra Cornes, Kevin Collins and David Cornes at The Oaks Country Club



Should your club register as a Community

The question:

Should my croquet club apply to be registered with HMRC as a Community Amateur Sports Club (CASC)?

The answer:

Almost certainly, yes, if the club qualifies. There is also the option of registering as a charity, which is a better “brand” but carries with it more burdensome Charity Commission governance and reporting requirements. CASC status only requires registration with HMRC.

The clues to qualification lie in the title

Community: The club must be open to the whole community with no discrimination in favour of, or against, any group or individual. Not only do the provisions of the Equality Act 2010 apply but there must be no other discrimination e.g. against people with no talent. An “entry trial” to establish competence is not acceptable. Neither is it possible to have a “proposer and seconder” system for becoming a member.

Amateur: The club must be “organised on an amateur basis”. There are limits on paying and/or subsidising members to play the sport. The total amount paid in cash or collateral benefits must not amount to more than £10,000 per year. Members may be paid as employees or independent contractors providing services on an arm’s length basis (e.g. as coaches, bar staff or grounds persons).

Sports: The main purpose of the club must be the provision of facilities for the participation in one or more eligible sports. Croquet is an eligible sport.

Club: At least 50% of the members must participate in the sport, i.e. play or otherwise participate (e.g. by being a referee or a committee member) at least 12 times per year. The club must be “non-profit making”, i.e. any surplus of income over expenditure must be re-invested in the club. The “managers” (usually the committee) must be “fit and proper persons” (as defined in the Finance Act 2010). Lots of people are excluded but if the committee members are not fraudsters or promoters of tax avoidance schemes or similarly tainted individuals, all should be well.

The detail

Membership fees (i.e. subscriptions and other charges such as lawn fees) for an individual must not exceed £1,612 per year. If the annual membership fees are more than £520, special arrangements must be made for members of modest means to pay £520 or less.

The club’s trading and rental income must not exceed £100,000 per year.

The members must not be entitled to a share of the assets of the club on any dissolution. On dissolution, the net assets must be handed over to another CASC or to the governing body (i.e. the CA) for distribution for use in community sport or to a charity. This requirement is the one which may need attention. Amendments to the club’s constitution may be required to cover this and the other conditions of CASC status. There must be suitable provisions. Silence will not suffice.

N.B. There are special rules for multi-sports clubs which may impact upon the potential CASC status of a croquet section.

The disadvantages

(1) The decision should be regarded as irrevocable since it is likely to be difficult to exit the scheme.

(2) A club cannot be both a charity and a CASC. Clubs may be able to register as charities (because they promote healthy amateur sport, which is now a charitable purpose in its own right) but the attendant requirements may be too burdensome to make it worthwhile.

If a CASC wishes to become a charity it must set up the new charity and transfer activities to that charity.

The biggest benefit of being a charity is that capital funding may be available from other charitable bodies.

A comparison of CASC versus charity status is available at www.cascinfo.co.uk.

(3) There will be a modest amount of extra work for the Treasurer.

Proper records of donations have to be kept.

Gift Aid declarations have to be gathered in and Gift Aid claims made each year, or more regularly if desired, either on line or by post.

(4) If the club has any aspiration to become professional it should not register. This is unlikely to apply to a croquet club.

The advantages

(1) There is mandatory 80% relief from business rates. A further concession (of up to 20%) may be given by the local authority in its discretion. Some give this, but many don’t.

(2) Gift aid may be claimed on “qualifying donations”. The amount is 25p for every pound donated. Donations obviously do not include subscriptions or other required payments in return for benefits.

However, there are several ways in which additional income can be derived from club activities.

It may be that members do not claim expenses in relation to travel or other activities undertaken on behalf of the club.

If, instead of foregoing their legitimate claims, those members were to make claims, receive the money and then pay it back to the club as a donation and complete a Gift Aid declaration, the club could claim 25% of the donation from HMRC.

When holding a social event with the subsidiary object of raising some money for the club, instead of fixing the ticket price so as to make a profit, the club could fix the price so as to break even and invite the attending members to make a donation in addition to the cost of their ticket.

The granting of honorary membership is allowed (as long as the grants are properly justified). If an honorary member chooses to make a donation each year and completes a Gift Aid declaration, HMRC will provide another 25%.

The donation must not be a condition of being granted honorary membership.

Many clubs hold social gatherings in members’ homes during the winter months for which no charge is made.

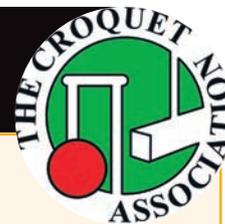
If the host were to place a collecting box or tray near the door for small donations (i.e. of less than £30) to be made anonymously to the club, “a top-up payment” could be claimed in respect of the accumulated sum.

This is because there is a “Gift Aid small donations scheme” which will allow the club to claim a top-up payment on cash donations, each of £30 or less.

It is not necessary for Gift Aid declarations to be made in respect of these, or for the “small” donors to be identified.

However, the CASC must also be claiming “normal” gift aid in that tax year.

Other, similar arrangements which result in donations may pass muster provided that the donation is not a payment for



goods or services; that no, or only minimal, benefits are provided to the donor; that it is not in any way required and that it is not repayable (and therefore a loan).

The amount claimable will obviously depend on the amount of qualifying donations received.

If this is maximised the claim may be quite substantial and worthwhile.

For example, in the year ended March 2018 the experienced treasurer of a small croquet and bowls club in Wales successfully claimed £1,686.

(3) There is exemption from corporation tax provided that the annual trading turnover is less than £50,000 and the annual property income is less than £30,000.

These limits may well be of little relevance to most croquet clubs.

Exemption is only given if the income is spent on sports activities.

(4) All interest received and chargeable capital gains are free of corporation tax.

(5) Individuals pay no tax on donations to the club. Higher rate taxpayers can claim relief.

The most significant advantage here is that a gift made in a will is free of inheritance tax or, putting it another way, the net estate chargeable to tax will be reduced by the amount of the gift (as it is when the bequest is to a charity).

(6) Companies making donations to the club are usually able to set them off against profits. This places donations to a CASC and to a charity in the same category. Companies do support croquet clubs, sometimes fairly generously. More may be encouraged to do so if there is tax relief involved.

(7) Community Action Funds (for example, the FCC Communities Foundation which may assist "amenity projects within 10 miles of an FCC Environment landfill site") are able to give grants to CASC registered clubs but not to clubs generally.

The CASC scheme was introduced in April 2002 and modifications were made in 2015.

In the period to 31 July 2015 the 6,824 registered clubs together benefitted to a total of £196.9m.

Around 25% of croquet clubs are CASCs.

Only a small proportion of registered clubs take advantage of Gift Aid and accordingly, less than 10% of the government subsidy is given in this way.

Most of the support for clubs comes in the form of relief from rates.

There are now over 7,000 registered clubs.

Reference should be made to Chapter 9 of Part 13 of the Corporation Tax Act 2010 and the Community Amateur Sports Clubs Regulations 2015. The pleasure to be derived from reading these is limited.

The "Detailed Guidance Notes" make for more interesting reading. Indeed, these notes would be essential reading for anyone seeking to apply for registration.

They are at www.gov.uk/government/publications/community-amateur-sports-clubs-detailed-guidance-notes.

The website www.cascinfo.co.uk also contains useful information on the CASC scheme.

~

These notes have been prepared by the Chairman of the Croquet Association Development Committee after studying the above and other legal materials.

He believes that the guidance is correct as at February 2020.

However, he takes no responsibility for any consequences of a user or club placing reliance upon it.

**John Reddish,
Chairman,
CA Development Committee**



CA Grants

Craig y Don

Craig Y Don is a suburb of Llandudno and the croquet club was founded eight years ago.

Towards the end of last season the committee identified developing problems of overcrowding in their two existing buildings, as the club continued to expand.

The small clubhouse and separate equipment store were becoming serious risk areas for the elderly membership and, to minimise this, the club planned the erection of a green Asgard steel shed.

This was completed on 12 March 2020 but unfortunately, within two weeks the club was forced to close for the duration of the coronavirus pandemic.

Craig y Don opted for a steel shed because there is a vandalism problem in the locality and this shed was approved by the police and the insurance company as "secured by design".

It includes a locking system which has a ten-year manufacturer's guarantee.

**The Croquet Association
granted £500 towards the
project**

and the members responded to a call for donations made in November 2019.

The purchase price of the 7 x 5 foot shed was £1,083 including VAT and erection, with the cost of the slabbed base approved by Asgard being £300, giving the total project price of £1,383.

Craig y Don has a playing membership of around 50 and we play on a crown green lawn which offers members three half-lawns or one full plus one half from April to September inclusive.

The clubhouse is full if we have a crowd of 25 for a competition or match and so club members will be looking forward to seeing the benefit of the shed (pictured left) when they are able to start playing again, hopefully by midsummer.

**John Hannah,
Chairman, Craig Y Don CC**

Tips for finding a new home for your club

Perhaps like me, you've read in the Gazette over recent years of a number of clubs which have had to find a new home for one reason or another, and thought . . .

"I hope that never happens to us"

Well, came the day last November when it did happen to us, here at Northampton CC.

It came as a complete surprise at the time, though our landlords did have a reputation of summarily giving their tenants notification to leave, as was evidenced three years ago by the departure of the golf club which also shared our landlord's land, after being there for 40 years or so.

The warning bells rang at that time and as there was a barely used bowls club in our region, we decided to approach the Borough Council about the possibility of us relocating there rather than wait for the axe to fall.

To cut a long story short, after two years of persistently trying to get the Council to respond following meetings, the terms they offered us were completely unacceptable and sadly, during those two years, the once magnificent Edwardian pavilion was vandalized beyond recognition.

But we did gain valuable experience which we were able to use later.

Six months' notice to leave

So with six months' notice to leave we set about the task of identifying a new permanent home.

By the time Christmas had arrived we had brainstormed a large number of potential sites and had listed them on a spreadsheet, and we had visited 30 or more to assess their suitability or otherwise at first hand.

The list grew to over 100 possible sites, but eventually we arrived at a shortlist of two, which we are now progressing towards the draft agreement stage.

The lessons we learned

If you ever find that your club is in a similar situation, then perhaps the lessons we learned will help you.

They are, in no particular order;

- Consult a local lawn-care or ground-care company to recommend sports clubs (cricket, rugby, football, tennis, bowls, etc.) that they know of, where there is underused land suitable for your needs. A marriage with an established club is a win-win for you and them.

- Contact Borough councillors and Parish Council clerks. The Borough Councils will know of underused bowls clubs and many

parish councils are receiving considerable cash sums earmarked solely for developing community sports activities from housing developers.

- Always talk to a local Councillor as soon as you can. Going through the correct approach of contacting the appropriate council department will mean you will be passed from pillar to post in an endless round of "not my responsibility" - but stick with it.

- Borough councillors have individual discretionary budget allowances which are often not used, so enquire with your Borough Council regarding registering for consideration.

- Appeal to your club members for suggestions and help in checking sites. You can't do this without them.

- Identify possible sites using Google Earth or Google maps satellite view. Sport fields and spare land show up wonderfully well.

- Contact local country estates and stately homes. Not all are English Heritage or National Trust, because we found that those still in private hands were very open and receptive to the idea of having a croquet club there.

- Make an appeal on social media, local radio and other media. Generous benefactors are out there and may come forward, they just need to be aware of your plight.

- On your spreadsheet, make a list of possible sites and flag-up the ones with potential as either a permanent or a temporary home. Our Borough council was approached regarding a couple of park bowls rinks and unused grass tennis courts which are regularly maintained but not used, as a possible temporary stop-gap. However they would rather see them not used than give us an affordable concession on a fixed price. It's likely you won't be playing on ground you eventually select as a home for 12 months or more, so look for a one or two lawn temporary site.

- Do not overlook your club's social aspect. Suggest trips out to other croquet clubs in your region, coffee mornings, pub quizzes, greyhound racing and anything else you can think of which will keep the social side of the club going.

- Issue regular news updates to your members so they know of the progress being made and feel part of the process.

And finally perhaps most importantly - look upon this as an opportunity and not a setback.

Lionel Tibble, Northampton CC

Corona, croquet

Over the winter, I watched our beautiful front lawn being targeted and dug up by the huge badger population that lives behind the derelict greenhouses bordering our front garden

Each morning I would find an area of total destruction which increased significantly over time to the point that our lawn looked like a ploughed field!

We have a tiny back garden, with the main body of lawn being at the front of the house, where some years ago my husband, Robert, levelled off an area with the idea to create a croquet lawn or an area for a wedding marquee to be erected sometime in the distant future.

This project provided the badgers with a huge dinner plate and the only thing missing were the knives and forks!

Lockdown = time to sort my lawn

After a very long and very wet winter, the Coronavirus lockdown struck and my club, Medway CC, was forced to close its doors, so I had no croquet there and a decimated lawn at home - things were looking very bleak.

However, I was not to be beaten, and Robert showed me how to use the ride-on tractor mower and off I went to try to get the grass into some sort of shape that vaguely resembled a mown lawn.

I started with the mower on the highest setting to prevent the blades being damaged by the huge lumps of turf and then cut and removed most of the dead grass, revealing deep holes where I could see claw marks and nose indents made by the 'dear' badgers.

After working through all the settings on the mower I managed to get the blade bed down to its lowest level and one could just start to see the lawn under all the destruction.



et and badgers!

Soil - I needed lots of soil

In fact, I needed two tons of it, all hand sieved, wheel barrowed and hand raked into position. This took four days of back-breaking work and two more days of mowing, and then the area resembled ... you guessed it ... "a croquet lawn" or a "wedding lawn". All I needed then was rain to wash it in and encourage the grass to grow.



We are fortunate to border onto a cricket pitch at the back of the house, so I collared the groundsman for a loan of a straight edge and some white line marker paint.

I spent a couple of hours with a metric surveyors' measuring tape, but because all croquet measurements are in imperial, I had some interesting mathematical calculations to make.

I managed to work out that I had just about enough room to create a short croquet court and, with string and a straight edge, I painted in the boundary lines, marked up the hoops and found a short peg to match the short lawn.

Two days later the badgers struck again!

This time, I Googled "Badger Deterrent" and the advice I discovered was very surprising indeed.

My lawn is now liberally scattered with crushed Scotch Bonnet chilli flakes!

Most Scotch bonnets have a heat rating of 80,000–400,000 Scoville units; the hottest variety known to mankind.

I can now report (with my fingers crossed) that there haven't been any more attacks on the lawn.

BUT I did find a huge hole dug on the north boundary full of badger doo-doo!

Latest score: Badgers 2, Caroline 1

Caroline Alexander, Medway CC



Croquet in the Community at Maldon

In 2018 Maldon Croquet Club adopted an initiative called 'Croquet in the Community'.

The aim was, and still is, to offer croquet to all ages, to make it more accessible and inclusive, to overcome the wider image of croquet being an elitist sport.

Our ethos is that 'Croquet is a game for the young, not so young, able, not so able, families and carers'.

The launch in 2019 included posters going up around the town, with flyers being handed out at events, to attract individuals to contact us.

A questionnaire was developed to ask pertinent questions when the calls came in, and to fit visitors into a taster session. Sadly no one called.

This was a setback, so we changed tactics and approached organisations directly.

For example, we contacted the local Stroke Survivors Club, who kindly asked us along to their monthly meeting.

When we arrived we realised that we

morning; not talking about what they can't do, but about coaching and improving their game next year.

Another group were people with learning difficulties and disabilities, and this was a boisterous affair, but so enjoyable for everyone.

By the end of the season we had had established links with Alzheimer's, Down's Syndrome, Maldon Pioneers and others.

We are also involved with Active Essex, attending quarterly meeting with many organisations, which is helping to spread the word about croquet.

We are also taking Croquet out to the Community. We have had donated a large boxed croquet set that will enable us to attend schools, old people's homes, parks, and really any grassed area.

For example we have been invited to take croquet to a local school, where teenagers are attending education under the 'SEND' scheme (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities).



were the guest speakers – fortunately we had our mallets and sets of balls; after our talk about the game and the benefits of croquet we handed out a slip to everyone, asking them to indicate if they thought croquet was of interest, plus contact details.

We followed up each interested stroke survivor with a telephone call, as well as inviting them to come along for a game, and over the next four weeks 18 people came to play with their partners or family, in twos or threes at a time to play with our members.

They loved it, and we had comments like 'I never thought I would be able to play a sport again', 'I really enjoyed playing; it took a long time to get around, but I did it!'

One unforeseen benefit of working with this group was giving the partners and families the opportunity to play at the same time.

After the games we all had coffee and a chat, which was very much part of the

Looking ahead, we now have a dedicated half court for people with restricted mobility. We need to purchase a bench, some stable chairs and a sunshade.

We have some funds from Maldon District Council, and are approaching local businesses and applying for grants.

Of course, none of this would be possible without the commitment of our members, who have worked so hard to support the project.

Ann Redican, Maldon CC



Coaching Awards in Lockdown

So, I hear you asking – how did Sarah Hayes gain further coaching qualifications whilst everything has been closed?

Is it simply a case of awarding herself shiny badges?

The simple answer to that is of course "No". There are procedures in place for both Graded Coach qualifications and Examining Coach appointments and these involve the CA Coaching Committee.

~

I received a message from an Examining Coach, Dave Kibble, as follows:-

"I wish to draw your attention to an oversight I have discovered whilst reviewing coach strength in the South West region: one of our top coaches, Sarah Hayes, has never been appointed as a Grade 3 or Examining Coach!

Sarah's coaching abilities, dedication to the art and activeness need no spelling-out from me: she is very well-known as a go-to coach in the whole region, if not country.

She delivers consistently great coaching at all levels, is always willing to help and is an excellent organiser.

As a player, she is a formidable opponent in any A-Class tournament and has frequently played in the British Open.



I know from personal experience that she fully understands the A-Class game and is able to discuss and explain all aspects of it well.

I have no hesitation in saying she should have been made a Grade-3 coach many years ago and is better now than then!

I have often discussed coaching and coaches with Sarah and observed that she exhibits consistently sound and fair judgement and I therefore strongly recommend that she be made an Examining Coach."

With that, the usual procedure kicked in – the request was sent to the relevant Federation Coaching Officer who, in turn,

Recent Coaching Appointments

Examining Coach

Sarah Hayes Cheltenham CC

AC Grade 3 Coaches

Sarah Hayes Cheltenham CC
Roger Mills Sidmouth CC

Please see the articles concerning the above awards

**Sarah Hayes,
Coaching Committee Chair**

sent the message to all of the CA Coaching Committee (not me obviously) so that all the CACC members could discuss and comment and ultimately vote on the proposal.

I was very pleased to not only receive their support but also to now be a Grade 3 Examining Coach (AC).

I feel it is important for readers to see that fairness and correct procedure is always applied to all applications and recommendations – the CA Coaching Committee do not take their work lightly and always do their very best.

**Sarah Hayes,
Coaching Committee Chair**

I suspect the great majority of clubs have had little or no coaching for many weeks now. Hopefully this is about to change and probably will have done by the time this article is in print.

Small group or one-to-one sessions have been allowed – all I ask is for everyone to ensure they maintain social distancing and to adhere to their own club's rules.

Remember your club officials are just doing what they feel is necessary to keep you all as safe as they are able – so – be nice and stick to the rules.

Small groups are fine but stick to 'the numbers' – (at the time of writing) the maximum group is 6 including the coach.

According to the 1 June guidelines from the CA Task Force (and a big thankyou to them for all their work), these 6 people may be on one lawn – please be sensible!

This does mean one full-size court – so please don't squeeze in cheek by jowl on your club lawn if it is small – use your common sense.

Coaching by Zoom and now at clubs too

Have you seen the CA website news item "CA Coaching – A New First" – posted 29 May?

Please do have a read because the article refers to the Croquet Academy (at Sussex County CC, Southwick) which held its first online coaching course using Zoom.

Entitled "Adopting a winning mindset" it was hosted by former AC World Croquet Champion, Stephen Mulliner, and lasted for 2.5 hours, including a half time break

There is some fantastic feedback in the article, which closes with the following comments from CA Chairman, Jonathan Isaacs: "Coronavirus has caused a lot of problems but has also created some excellent opportunities. Our thanks go to Richard Carline and Stephen Mulliner for implementing this new initiative."

I do appreciate that online coaching and Zoom meeting style courses aren't

everyone's cup of tea and, certainly, more practical courses are not suitable for armchair attendees; but you have to admit that Richard Carline has certainly gone that extra mile to provide a professional course under unusual circumstances.

~

The relaxation of restrictions has also meant that some cancelled/postponed courses are being rescheduled, albeit as one-day events.

You will find within these pages details of a whole lot of interesting courses at High Wycombe CC which will be available to enter online via the CA Online Fixtures.

Thanks to Ian Shore for the prompt attention he has given to getting all the little details right.

Whatever you do or don't do – don't go mad and do follow the rules please.

I hope to see many of you sometime this year! I am ever the optimist!

**Sarah Hayes,
Coaching Committee Chair**

About my Grade 3 Coaching Award

In May I was awarded a Grade 3 AC Coaching Badge, and was asked to write a few words, to cover how I felt about it, what the assessment process was like, and what I had done towards obtaining the award.

My goal for 2020 was to achieve my Grade 3 AC Badge, although I have been working towards this ever since I became a Club Level Coach in 2013. It was around that time that I found I was suffering from OCD – ‘Obsessive Coaching Disorder’.

Along the way, I have read as much coaching material as I could find and travelled widely, seeking out opportunities to be coached myself by some leading coaches. I have practised coaching continuously and developed my own style, and in doing so I have worked my coaching mentor, Peter Moore, really hard!

Now I have achieved my goal, and it feels really great.

No matter what goal you set, it is always a good feeling to achieve it, and the harder the process, the greater the satisfaction.

My Grade 3 assessment was in two stages.

First a lengthy meeting with Examining Coach Dave Kibble, which was a wide-ranging discussion on coaching in general, as well as coaching the triple peel (TP)

The second stage was the scary bit.



Dave had reviewed the TP course notes I had developed, and now I had to give him a two-hour mini-TP coaching course.

I checked his record in the Rankings – 470 TPs and 8 Sextuples. *Unreal!*

On top of that, Dave doesn't suffer fools gladly, and having been coached by him in the past, I knew he was going to be challenging.

On the day of the assessment, I was confident, but understandably nervous; Dave was even more challenging than I had anticipated, but it was fun, and I made it!

Now I have a new goal – to write a book – so watch this space!

Roger Mills

Are you the finished article?

**You're a coach. Excellent!
But are you the finished article?
Are you as good a coach as you can be?**

Coaching is a calling. You have to want to be a coach. Coaches are interested in their students learning and getting better at the game. That's why coaches are coaches!

However, coaches are also naturally curious people and always keen to learn more themselves.

So, I can't imagine you answering yes to the question posed in the title of this piece! What can you do to become the best coach you can be?

Here are five suggestions:

1 Learn, learn, learn

Be open to learning. Keep yourself fresh and ready for new ideas and challenges that take you out of your comfort zone. Seek out opportunities to learn.

2 Practise, practise, practise

To develop as a coach, you must practise coaching. This doesn't mean just do more coaching; it means trying out new ways of coaching, new techniques, new ways of imparting information to your students. Some things will work, some won't.

Continued overleaf . . .

Summer Coaching at High Wycombe CC

Day	Date	Time	Handicap Range
GC Improver			
Tue	16-Jun	Full day	GC 3-7
Tue	16-Jun	Full day	GC 8+
Wed	24-Jun	Afternoon	GC 8+
Sat	27-Jun	Full day	GC 3-7
Sat	27-Jun	Full day	GC 8+
Sat	11-Jul	Full day	GC 8+
GC Practical rules for players			
Wed	01-Jul	Afternoon	All
AC Perfecting stroke play - with Cliff Jones			
Sat	11-Jul	Full day	All
AC Improver			
Wed	24-Jun	Afternoon	AC 2-10
Wed	01-Jul	Afternoon	AC 10+

On 1 June, the CA gave the green light for small group coaching (up to five participants and one coach per court) and High Wycombe Croquet Club's CA qualified coaches are offering a series of courses, over the next few weeks.

Naturally participants can expect to be asked to apply all government social distancing rules etc.

There will be no access to the HWCC clubhouse; however, they have a toilet with 'hands-free' flush, wash basin tap and hot-air hand drier.

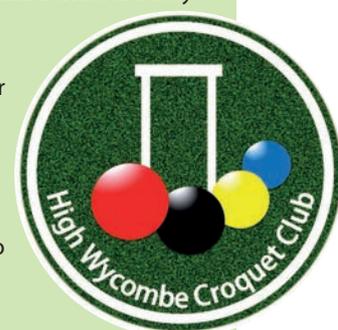
Participants are asked to bring their own food, drink, hand sanitiser, etc.

Anyone wishing to take part in any of the courses (limited to one course per person because there are only four places per course), should apply via the CA website Tournament Entry System (TES) on the Fixtures Calendar page, where full details are available.

When other opportunities are so heavily constrained, what a great chance to polish your game!

Places are obviously very limited, so it would seem best to book early!

Ian Shore, Coaching Lead, HWCC



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"They want to put WHAT on top of our reservoir?"



management at SWW who said "they want to put WHAT on top of our reservoir!", but three cheers for SWW.

There also must have been a period when "problem solving" was a day to day part of the Club activity, for there are a number of restrictions which would have many a lawn manager going to lie down in a darkened room!

The club is forbidden from using any machinery which requires the use of petrol or diesel fuel.

No chemicals must go

within miles of Hartley Park; and the club has one small tap for watering because no irrigation system is allowed.

The Lawn depth must not exceed 9".

So, I am just checking to see that I have everything required to play at Plymouth: flat soled shoes (tick)...handicap card (tick) .. old school swimming certificate (you never know)... I am good to go.

Does anyone know where I can get a Mae West in white?

The members aren't resting on their innovative laurels either..

Plymouth Croquet Club is in the process of acquiring an automatic mowing system which I have christened "Mowquet".

Mowquet is actually manufactured by



Husqvarna and I was taken by surprise for I have memories of BBC Saturday Grandstand in which the motor cycle scrambling events were nearly always won by a Lampkin brother on their (adopt a Murray Walker voice)" Husqvarnas".

I do hope no lawn damage will be caused!

Kilm Seabright

Photographs:

Left - Court 1 is at the bottom of this aerial view. The grey squares are alarmed hatches that access the reservoir.

Right - The reservoir under construction. The crane is on the eventual court 1.

(images by SW Water)

Are you heading to Plymouth to witness the 400 Mayflower celebrations?

Then take a detour to admire where croquet innovation and civil engineering have cleverly combined to form

Plymouth Croquet Club

Leave the A38, cross the Tecalemit roundabout, the ski slope (yes really!) will be on your right and head up the gently rising road towards Dartmoor. You will find the club on your right.

Plymouth CC sits atop a seven million gallon South West Water (SWW) header tank in the shape of a reservoir.

No doubt there were many tiers of

A bit more coaching ...

Continued... Either way, you will have learnt something!

3 Get feedback

Feedback does for the mind what healthy eating and exercise does for the body. In the same way as you will be constantly giving feedback to your students to improve their play, you will benefit tremendously from their feedback. After a coaching session, ask your students and assistants how it went. What went well? What could have been better? Make sure you get both female and male feedback – they can be quite different! Always ask your feedbackers to explain their answers.

4 Keep a coaching journal

This is a simple, but very powerful development tool. Record the details of each coaching session, describe the topics coached, how you went about coaching

them and what the outcome was. Did it go to plan? Did you achieve your objectives? What was the feedback? Those are the easy, factual bits to record. The key part comes next: your reflection on the session. What learnings can you take from it? What can you change? Write this all down and review it from time to time.

5 Get a mentor

No man or woman is an island. Find yourself a mentor with whom you can discuss your coaching ideas and challenges in a 'safe' environment. Your mentor can be an experienced coach or player, or even the Examining Coach you trained with. I didn't do this when I started coaching, but I have an excellent mentor now, and meet with him regularly. I wish I had done it sooner!

You will be able to add many more ideas to these suggestions I'm sure.

Set some goals and then get to it!

And good luck in your coaching endeavours.

Roger Mills, CA Coaching Committee

Top viewing tip

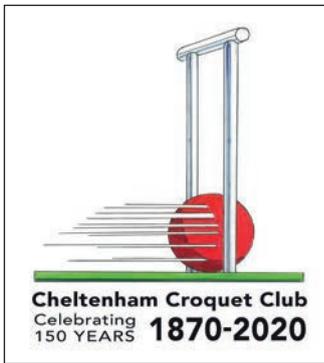
If you are unable to play just now, or even if you can, here is an ideal way to while away your spare or lockdown hours. Escape to the final of the U21 GC World Championship last summer, with this link to YouTube:

<https://youtu.be/vltbGIXEDD8>

It's the final between Edmund Fordyce (NZL) and James Galpin (ENG) and it's an exciting and high quality match in its own right. But as one Gazette correspondent remarked to me the other day, *"The thing which really sets this viewing apart is the exceptionally incisive and instructive commentary from Will Gee and – especially – Chris Clarke"*. – Enjoy! – Ed.

An alternative navigation is to go to **YouTube** and type in:

U21 GCWC 2019 - Day 5, Championship Final - Fordyce v Galpin



Cheltenham prepares to celebrate 150 years

Like many clubs, Cheltenham has a number of players who have been members for many years, but **is it a record to have one person who has played continuously at Cheltenham for 50 years?**

CA Vice President Andrew Hope is our member with that longevity of devotion to croquet and his Club, and I wonder if Gazette readers will be in touch with the editor to challenge this record.

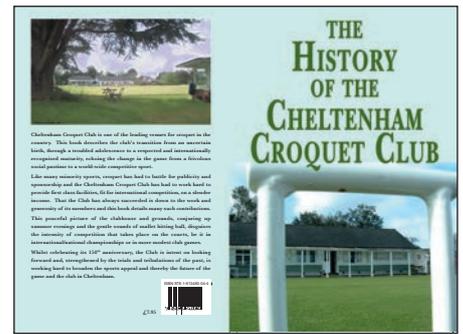
Unfortunately, the Open Day which we had planned for Saturday 30 May 30 has now been cancelled in response to the advice on the Covid-19 virus, but it is hoped the Club will still be able to celebrate our 150-year landmark later in the year.

Calling all former members

Inevitably there has been much looking back over such a long period, and there have been many individuals who contributed to the Club in its history.

If you know any former Cheltenham members or their descendants, please let them know; we would be very pleased to hear from them, and maybe some of you can tell us what happened to our founder members and their families?

Pat Francis,
Cheltenham 150 Co-ordinator



David Magee has taken the occasion of the 150th anniversary and generous sponsorship from Charles Russell Speechlys, a local firm of solicitors, to update his history of the Club.

In his book he records the Club's transition from uncertain beginnings, through periods of bleak financial insecurity to today's relatively stable position.

Of course I write these words as croquet enters a time unlike any in its past. For those who are self-isolating and wanting to lose yourself in some croquet history, hard copies of David's book are available directly from the author.

David Magee
davidandeileen.magee@gmail.com

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I was keen to install irrigation for my croquet lawn here in Norfolk where summers are usually quite dry.

The lowest quotation I was given was £3600 for a DIY installation, and on top of this would have been the cost of a concrete base for the storage tank and the hire of a trenching machine. So a spend of around £5000 would be required and that was out of my range.

DIY Duncan!

Then came the opportunity to attend a three-day training course on design and installation of irrigation systems, which promised to cover everything from pumps and pop-up sprinklers, to pipe size calculations and electronic controllers.

Once I'd attended that, I was able to go ahead with a DIY installation. I was able to buy a "shop soiled" tank and a nearly-new pump on eBay, and instead of a concrete base for the tank, I used a plastic grid filled with gravel as used for car parks, which cost about £100.

Then came lock-down

The only way to dig the trenches was by hand and I found I could dig about five metres in ten minutes using a narrow trenching spade. The depth was about 7 to 8 inches, but deeper to 12 inches where the four sprinklers were sited.

To reduce the trench length, I didn't trench all round to create a ring main, but instead ran a pipe to each sprinkler which saved about 30 metres of trenching.

There is a sprinkler head halfway down each boundary and each sprinkler covers a half-circle from corner to corner.

Pipe diameters and pump specifications had to be calculated to ensure the correct pressure and flow at each sprinkler.

System fully operational

By the middle of May the system was fully operational and it sprays 5000 litres across the lawn, which is equivalent to around 5mm of rain.

I was 80 years old in January but did the whole job including the trenching alone without any assistance whatever.

Spreading the install over a few weeks made it quite easy to do and for a club, more hands lighten the workload on the individual and make it a very manageable project.

The component parts that I used are all high quality and widely used for irrigation.

My tank is by Ecosure with a capacity of 5300 litres and is mains fed. The pump is a Lowara Well Pump which is submerged in the tank, so there is no need for a pump-house. The pop-up sprinklers and solenoid valves are by Hunter and the electronic controller is by Galcon.

The system is fully automatic and can be activated remotely from anywhere in the world by mobile phone. Thanks to buying some used items, it cost less than £2000 but works perfectly.

Interested? - Come and see for yourselves.

As a part of my service, I can design and supply a DIY system for around £2600 for a single lawn, or two lawns would cost about £3600. If you would like to visit my lawn here in Norfolk to see my system for yourselves, come and find out everything you need to know about installing your own irrigation system.

Duncan Hector ~ (contact details; see my advert, left)



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Robin Coates and Dianne Brown, social distancing at Phyllis Court

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The Croquet Association Website

www.croquet.org.uk

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

Croquet jargon

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

To find the glossary go to:
Advice & Technical/ Other Articles / Croquet Jargon

or use this link:

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

Publication Details

The Croquet Gazette is published six times per year, usually in February, April, June, August, October and December.

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

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

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

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

Please send digital jpeg or tiff format files.

Please accompany all images with a description of the subject.

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

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Bowdon in Bloom - supplied by Klim Seabright



Do not play if you are unwell



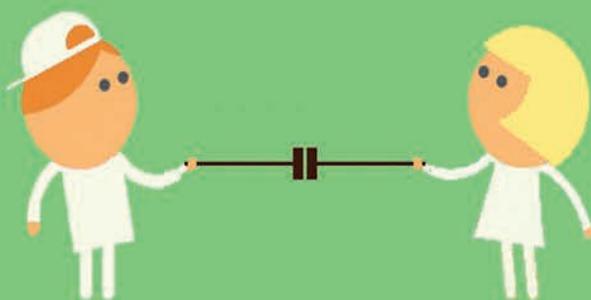
Use a lawn booking system



Max 4 people per lawn (if not from the same household)



Follow health guidelines



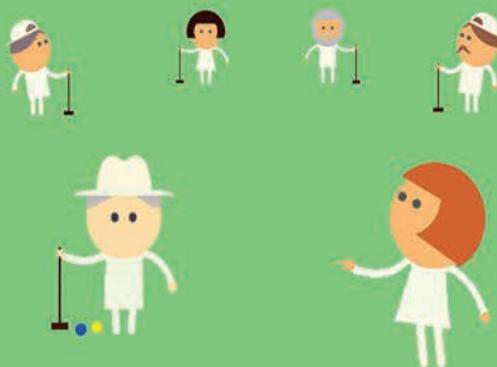
Keep 2 metres apart



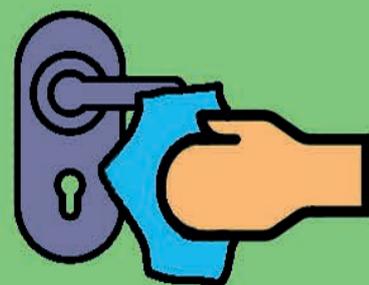
Guests and spectators must be recorded



Wash your hands, and any equipment you use

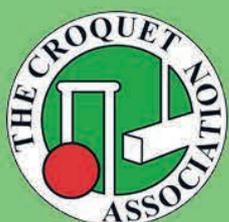


Coaching limited to 5 pupils per coach



Clean padlocks, keys, and door handles

#staysafe #backtocroquet



**@CroquetEngland
www.croquet.org.uk**