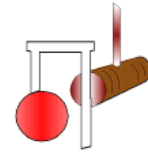


CORNWALL CROQUET CLUB

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Newsletter No. 43 May 2008

'Better late than never' they say, so here is your second newsletter for 2008, the late publication entirely the fault of your new editor. Ian W.

First, a letter I received on your behalf from Tony Backhouse: -



30 March 2008.

The Editor
CCC Newsletter.

Dear Ian,

The Club has behaved with the most extraordinary generosity and imagination on my retirement from the Chairmanship with the presentation to me at the recent AGM. I find it a total impossibility to express adequately my appreciation and can only say how much I enjoy looking at the beautiful Great Dane sculpture, now on display in our sitting room, and the cartoon croquet lawn with such recognisable participants. This will be on the wall in my study in the Doghouse at home once I have it suitably framed.

As for the entry to the Veterans' Tournament together with luxurious accommodation for both Pam and me for all five days, I can only do my best to show how much I value this by winning every competition. I would, however, advise anyone inclined to place bets on the results to save their money.

With heartfelt thanks from Pam and me and always the best wishes to you all and to the Club of which we are all members.

Tony



Now a few words from our new Chairman: -

With the last-minute withdrawal, on medical advice, of Tony Jennings's nomination for the post of chairman, I was persuaded to take on the job. My big disadvantage is living 25 miles away from the club, but I have been assured of support from members. However, Tony will be a hard act to follow and I can only try to keep the promise that I have made for many years in Scouting: namely that I will do my best. We owe a great debt of gratitude to Tony and I hope that he and Pam will enjoy their stay at Budleigh Salterton, and that Tony does well in the competition for which he has been entered.

The new committee has met since the AGM: there are two new members – one, Tony Dyson, was voted on at the AGM and will take on the job of Publicity from Rosemary, and one, Jenny Burrows was co-opted at the meeting. The main topics were the maintenance of the courts and whether we want a third one. A third court would obviously be a great advantage, but it would increase our maintenance costs, which can only be paid for by an increased membership. We need to increase, and retain, membership by at least 30 over the next two years, so we need a concerted effort from everybody.

The season is well under way and the courts have been well-used, thanks to some fine weather. The Open Day, on May 5th, was a great success, in that we had fine weather and lots of members there to help. In total, 27 visitors came to find out what croquet is all about, most of whom stayed to play more than one game.

Cont'd below

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Several played Association, having had some experience prior to coming. Six have signed on for the training sessions, but we are hopeful that some of the others will come back for more. Thank you to all who helped on the day and a particular thank you to Tony Dyson for his varied efforts to advertise the event. Let's hope that the next Open Day, on Sunday 29th June, will be as successful.

Congratulations to the teams in the Intermediate and 'B' Leagues and the Golf League; all of which won their opening matches. The golf team played its second match, against Sidmouth, and won it by 16 to 4. Thanks to Barry and Margaret and to David for taking on the running of the Golf team and Intermediate team respectively, and to Colin, of course, for continuing with the 'B' League team.

Thanks to the generosity of the Nailsea Club, we have acquired an electric mower. It will need to be housed at the club and then used for regular mowing of the courts. We, therefore, need to set up a list of those prepared to use the mower on a rota bases. The cutting should not be difficult, but the machine needs to be cleaned after use. Ian has had experience with this machine, when he was with Nailsea, and has offered to give training on its use. Stephen has offered to look after the welfare of our mechanical equipment – Thanks Stephen, and for all the work you have done so far. We nearly had a disaster with the grass cutter: would anybody who uses it make sure that the oil level is checked and corrected, if necessary, before using it.

Malcolm, with a lot of help from Tony B and others, has worked very hard to get the courts into shape for the summer – our thanks to you all. Tony has born the brunt of marking out the courts over the years: he would now like some volunteers to help with this – male or female.

Please note that the summer party will take place after the "Faith, Hoop and Hilarity" Fun Day on July 26th,. Could people bring some sandwiches or cakes etc..

Handicaps – We are trying to keep these up to date. If your handicap changes, please inform Tony Backhouse, for Association, or me, for golf. There is a list on the board at the southern end of the pavilion. It is essential that cards are kept up to date.

Finally, I'm sure that you will be delighted to know that Lynda is back with us. We hope that Tony Jennings will soon follow her.

Have a great season's croquet, whichever code you follow.

Ron George.



Technical Committee

This Committee (originally the Coaching Committee) was formally set up by the Club Committee on 6th June 2007 with the following remit:

1. The Committee exists to discuss matters directly related to the playing of croquet within the Club.
2. Membership of the Committee:
 - shall be determined by the Club Committee
 - shall be based on experience of playing croquet
 - shall include representation of both codes of croquet: Association and Golf
3. The Committee shall include the following as its Terms of Reference:
 - Devising and implementing coaching policies for new and existing members of the Club, in both codes of croquet
 - Advising the Tournament Secretary on Club competitions and inter-Club programmes and ensuring that playing policies are consistent with coaching policies
 - Advising the Club Handicapper on handicapping strategy and ensuring that handicapping policy is consistent with the coaching policies
 - Advising the Club Committee on lawn quality, maintenance and improvement
 - Advising the Club Committee on maintaining and improving the Club's playing equipment
4. The Committee shall meet at least twice a year and report to the Club Committee after such meetings

The current members are Nigel Grant (Chairman), Tony Backhouse, Ron George, Richard Griffiths, Malcolm Hooper and Ian Wilson.

The Committee last met in February 2008 and discussed: -

New 'Introduction To Croquet' course for beginners. This course will take place after each Open Day and comprise three sessions learning the techniques, tactics and laws of Golf Croquet, followed by one session as a 'taster' for Association Croquet. A 'Transition to Association Croquet' course, for any Club members, will take place later in the summer.

The Positive Play scheme, which will be as for 2007 and the Improver Coaching programme, which will be very similar to that of 2007.

The Club's competition programme for 2008. The new ladder format seems to have been a success in the Winter Ladder.

The allocation of Association Croquet handicaps and index points to beginners and high bisquers. The following arrangements will now apply:

- Beginners and non-Association Croquet players will have a handicap of 28 and a notional index of 750
- On completion of the Transition Course, a player's handicap will be reset to 26, with a notional index of 800
- No index losses to be recorded below the 850 index

Golf Croquet handicaps, which will now range from 0 to 12, rather than -4 to 6. Ron George is the Club's Golf Croquet handicapper and will supervise everyone's change of handicap to the new range.

Lawn improvement: Malcolm has drafted a document to support possible applications for grants. The most expensive improvement is levelling the lawns by a progressive programme of top dressing.

Demonstration Matches

It has been suggested that members might welcome watching some demonstration matches with commentary, as part of the Improver Coaching programme.

For instance, we could demonstrate how a higher handicap player should use bisques to attempt to beat a lower handicapper. We have volunteers from our lower handicappers to become "targets" for this exercise.

If you would like to watch such a match, what day of the week/time would be most suitable? If you are interested please let Nigel Grant know.

Amendments to the Laws of Association and Golf Croquet

For those of you who did not attend the session on the new laws given by Ron & Tony on the first session of the summer season (Sat 5 Apr) please note that both codes of play are now subject to amended laws. Please familiarise yourselves with these, especially before playing away. (See below for some of the changes to Association Croquet)

Association Laws Corner

Four explanations of important Laws, the first three refer particularly to changes in the new Association Laws red book, still the 6th Edition but (amended 2008).

1. Law 28

Most of you will be familiar with the Law 28 offences, e.g. crushing, double hitting, prolonged contact and other results of a hampered shot.

You will also be aware that such shots should be watched, preferably by a referee if you are playing a match.

In the event of a fault, the Law has changed somewhat: -

The opponent now has the option of rectification (i.e. replacing the balls to where they were when the shot was taken) or leaving them in situ. This choice is made in a handicap game before the striker makes his choice, if available, of whether to take a bisque.

2. Law 28 and Law 48

A hampered shot which risks committing a Law 28 fault, thereby ending the turn, should be watched in a match by a referee.

But in a friendly the watching will normally be done by the striker or, if he has, as he should, invited his opponent, by them both, both being referees of the game (Law 48(a)).

In making a decision about a dubious shot, the emphasis has now changed drastically: -

Law 48(d)(4) states that a fault is to be declared if it is believed **more likely than not** that the law has been infringed.

3. Law 33

Law 33 deals with any question of interference with a ball, this being particularly applicable in a double-banked game.

If your shot is likely to run close to a ball in the other game on the court, then, with the other striker's permission, that ball should be marked.

If you do not mark it but still touch it with your ball, however critical the shot may have been, **you may not take the shot again** but must, probably with the help of your opponent, judge where the balls would be were it not for the accidental collision and place them accordingly.

If however your ball hits a moving ball from the other game, then the shot, if critical, may be retaken.

4. Law 23

As the "out player", i.e. the non-striker, you will, of course, be keeping a careful eye on the game and may be in doubt as to exactly when you should or should not forestall your opponent, the striker, as he is about to take a stroke.

Law 23(b) is quite clear as to the three occasions when you may **not** forestall. These are: if he is about to run a wrong hoop, play a wrong ball or purport to take croquet from a dead ball.

In the first two cases, it is end of turn and the balls stay where they are.

In the last case, the error is rectified, i.e. the balls are replaced in the position they were in before the error.

Contributions to Newsletters

If there is any subject you consider might be included in our newsletter (or our Website) then please let us know.

The current editor is Ian Wilson, 01872 870793 (ian@slft.co.uk), or email the club at info@cornwall-croquet.org.uk.

The plan is to have a regular Laws Corner for Association Croquet and Golf Croquet. If there are similar topics you would like to see included please let the editor or a committee member know.

If you have any item that you think might have interest to the rest of us please send it to the editor and it can be included – it does not have to be croquet related.

Members' achievements

Many club members have done well in external croquet events but, more often than not, we fail to report this on the clubhouse notice board, the club website, newsletter or in our newspaper reports.

We think these achievements, modest or otherwise should be acknowledged and recorded by the club.

It is suggested that, like contributions to the newsletter mentioned above, these news items be sent (email preferred) to the newsletter editor for inclusion on our website and the next newsletter. The club secretaries will then post to the appropriate notice board in the club house.

These can, of course, include notable activities which are not related directly to croquet.

South West Federation matches *Team captains please note.*

We currently have a system for reporting match results and reports for website, and newspapers which seems to work well.

It would be helpful if captains would also post results and any reports on the club house notice board as soon as practical after the event.

A copy of the Federation return form is all that is needed as a minimum