



Cygnets

Issue: 36
June 2022



South West Area Newsletter

Quite a bit of news to catch up on in this mid-season issue, including some issues discussed at our recent Committee meeting – if you'd like to read the complete minutes and reports, you can find them on our website <https://www.swfcroquet.org.uk/>

SWF Spring Short Croquet Tournament: Nailsea 8-10th April 2022

Many thanks to John Grimshaw for running yet another truly successful Spring Tournament, and what a joy it was to be out there again in the sunshine. Here's John's report along with a few photos.

Twenty-five teams from fifteen clubs took part over three days, despite a number of individual withdrawals, mainly due to Covid, in the week leading up to the competition. We eventually managed to furnish all teams with four players, although there had to be guests in some teams to achieve this. The sun shone most of the weekend but this was countered by a bitter north wind, especially on Saturday.

The teams were placed in five divisions of five teams each, based on their finishing positions the last time the tournament was played in 2019. Divisions play on different days, so Division 5 were in action on Friday, Divisions 3 and 4 on Saturday, and Divisions 1 and 2 on Sunday.

Division 5

Exeter B were dominant, winning 13 of their 16 games, to earn promotion to Division 4. Exeter had in fact won by the end of Round 4, because, although Budleigh were only one behind at that stage, they had to sit out Round 5.



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Cygnets is emailed to our club contacts who are requested to pass it on to individual club members.
It is also available shortly after publication on our website: www.swfcroquet.org.uk

We welcome queries, suggestions and feedback about Cygnets or any aspect of the SW croquet scene.
Contact: lindawithani@hotmail.com

Division 4



East Dorset were two behind going into the final round, but Sidmouth Connaught (with the aid of two Nailsea guests) had to sit out the final round, so ED needed three wins to finish top and this they achieved, so they are promoted to Division 3. Bristol Allsorts are relegated to Division 5.



Division 3

Only two wins separated the top four teams going into the final round and the odds favoured Taunton Terriers who were due to play Exeter A, who had had a torrid time until then. But the tables were turned, Exeter winning 3-1, to allow Swindon (photo above) to come through and take the title, promotion to Division 2 and Sunday play next year. Exeter A are relegated.

Division 2

The most exciting finish of the weekend. Bath B and Sidmouth Fortfield were level going into the last round, and both had won two games, with one Sidmouth game (against Kington Langley Aardvarks) to finish.

The last game on court. Sidmouth's and KL's balls were on 6 and peg when the timed turns had expired, so golden hoop was required, but the Sidmouth player still had a peel to complete. He forgot this and ran hoop 6, only for his opponent to point out the error, and have an easy hoop to win.

So, now with Sidmouth and Bath B level, a shoot-out at the peg by all players in both teams was required to determine the winner. Unfortunately for Bath, two of their players had gone home by then, so they were left with two against four, and were beaten. Sidmouth Fortfield therefore win promotion back to Division 1 from where they were relegated in 2019. Bath A are relegated.



Division 1

Going in to the last round, Kington Langley Bruins had a one-point lead over Nailsea Trendlewood and they had to play each other. After much nerve-wracking play and some toing and froing, the match was tied 2-2, to allow the Bruins to retain the title they won in 2019.

Incidentally, they are also the current champions of the Autumn tournament at Budleigh, so clearly the Short Croquet supremos of the South West at the moment. Cornwall are relegated.



Final positions

Division 5		Division 4	
Exeter B	13	East Dorset	11
Budleigh Salterton Rushes	9	Sidmouth Connaught	10
Camerton and Peasedown B	7	Taunton Tiggers	8
Weston super Mare	6	Glamorgan	6
Winterbourne Valley	5	Bristol Allsorts	5
Division 3		Division 2	
Swindon	10	Sidmouth Fortfield	10
Taunton Terriers	8	Bath B	10
Bristol Boys	8	Kington Langley Aardvarks	7
Budleigh Salterton Roquets	8	Nailsea Avening	7
Exeter A	6	Bath A	6
Division 1		Unbeaten	
Kington Langley Bruins	11	Div 5	John Crowley 2.5 Exeter
Nailsea Trendlewood	10	Div 3	Tony Mayer 3 Swindon
Nailsea	9	Div 2	Jonathan Coombes 7 Sidmouth Fortfield
Camerton & Peasedown A	8	Div 1	Jon Knowler 3.5 Nailsea Trendlewood <i>A repeat of the feat he achieved at Budleigh in the 2021 Autumn tournament</i>
Cornwall	2		

Many thanks to the Nailsea club for providing the facilities and tea and cakes. An awful lot of work goes in to laying out 8 Short Croquet lawns and we are very grateful to the members who undertake this task.

FOR SALE

Cassettes for Dennis motor mower FT610

The following cassettes are available for sale:

Two different types of scarifier cassettes:

- One slitter and one scarifier (both originally cost approx. £1k with current list price £1k to £1.5k)

Both unused. £300 each

- One multi-dense brush, hardly used at £180 (original cost approx. £1k)

All are 610mms/24inches wide to fit a Dennis FT610.



Scarifier



Slitter

Please contact Tony Mayer at Email: aesmayer@yahoo.co.uk Tel: 07824 323935

Revitalising AC



We don't want to fan the sometimes quite angry flames between the AC and GC players – we are strongly of the view that both have an important place in the croquet world and are pleased that so many players enjoy both.

Rather we want to consider that AC play is diminishing as players relinquish this to focus on GC or maybe never get started on it.

The debate about how to encourage more people into playing AC has been rumbling on for a few years and at one point it was a CA key objective. There is still work going on at a national level looking at ways of revitalising AC and in a few weeks, we

are expecting clubs to be invited to take part in trying out some new ideas.

In the meantime, let's give some thought to what's happening in our own clubs.

- How do we coach AC to beginners – have we looked at the new CA Coaching Manual? It has lots of new ideas for making the game more accessible
- Do we encourage on-court competition and play between AC and GC players? One-ball AC and Pirates are games we are probably familiar with, but what about two-ball match play, or gymkhana-type activities

Do let us have your thoughts and we'll pass on information about the forthcoming trials in due course.

GC C Class Tournaments

We've become aware that while the popularity of GC Class tournaments is increasing, it is not easy for GC players without a ranking, to get selected for their first C class tournament.

We have sounded out the CA GC Tournaments Committee on this and they take the view that achieving a ranking is the key element to being eligible for selection.



A ranking is achieved by entering relevant level-play events. These include the Grass Roots tournament final, Inter-Club matches and Federation matches.

In the SWF we do have a Level Play league which is open to all handicaps, but we are giving some thought to introducing a Level Play league for high handicaps to help reduce some of the reluctance in playing really low handicaps.

What do you think of this? Do let us know and we can debate this as we get towards the AGM.

Charity 1 ball regional finals locally?

Many will be familiar with the National Charity 1-Ball Competition with regional finals leading up to a national final.

We've been approached to establish if there's any interest in hosting a regional final in the South West. We already know of one club that is interested in hosting such an event – are there any more out there?

Let us know not only if your club is interested in hosting, but also if your club takes part in the event and if you'd be interested in a more local regional final.

Charity 1-Ball at Nailsea

John Hancock (Nailsea) is another dab-hand at securing publicity and it is a rare week during the season when the local paper doesn't run an article and photo about club activities. This is what he submitted for this event.

Being a competition, it had to have a winner, and this year the honours went James Galpin with an unparalleled five wins out of five games. He will be invited to the national final at Surbiton on Sunday, May 8

This year's total was £141 and Marcus Evans, who organised the event, said: "I am very grateful for the support NDCC gives each year, but everyone enjoys croquet on a sunny afternoon."



St Agnes goes Platinum

On Sunday 5th June Members of the St Agnes Croquet Club attended their platinum jubilee celebration as seen from Sharman Rowe's photos.

It was well attended and a toast was raised to Her Majesty. A game of croquet was followed by a 'bring a plate' afternoon tea, and what a varied selection of food was bought. A good time was had by all.

Pictured: Mike Rowe the chairman with the laden picnic table and the members who came along.



Bradford on Avon CC enjoyed excellent weather for their inaugural Open Day



Moreton in Marsh – Bringing Croquet Home Sponsored Walk

The first world cup was held in Moreton and the rules of croquet were first codified by WJ Whitmore who lived in Chastleton House, a few miles from Moreton, now owned by The National Trust.

To celebrate the new croquet club in Moreton, raise funds for a clubhouse and publicise the game of croquet, we are arranging a team to walk from Moreton to Chastleton House.

The team will play a game of croquet on the lawns of Chastleton House with a group of volunteers and staff, then walk back to Moreton and play a game of croquet at Moreton Croquet Club.

The event will take place on Saturday 16th July. Moreton Croquet Club will be selling teas, coffee, soft drinks along with cakes and scones in the church next to Chastleton House.



We would like to invite croquet players to support this historic event by donating to

<https://www.spacehive.com/get-moreton-croquet-a-clubhouse>

If you would like further information on this event please contact -

moretoncroquetclub@gmail.com

Photo shows the unveiling of the plaque by CA the legendary John Solomon, of the Solomon grip fame.

The plaque reads:

The field rules of croquet were first codified at Chastleton House by Walter Jones Whitmore and published on 7th April 1866.

Plymouth City Councillors open the Croquet Season at Plymouth Croquet Club

Linda Lang created some excellent publicity for Plymouth with this press release (extracts only)

The beginning of April saw the start of the Croquet season and Plymouth Croquet Club invited local Councillors Charlotte Carlyle and Mark Deacon to join them to celebrate ... both quickly took to the game after a few minutes' instruction.

Plymouth Croquet Club Members turned out in force to welcome our guests and it was good to see our four lawns full again after the horrid wet winter when the Club had to close for two months because of waterlogged lawns. Our afternoon ended with tea and cake and lots of chatter as everyone was happy to be back playing again.



Councillors Charlotte Carlyle and Mark Deacon discuss tactics with Plymouth Croquet Club Chair Sue Marples, Secretary Linda Lang and coach Brian Wainman

Croquet can be an entirely sociable game or some of our more competitive members can enjoy playing in the South West Croquet Federation League matches. The Club enters three different leagues of varying levels of expertise so any member of the Club is eligible to be selected for a team.

This year we have matches in Taunton, Sidmouth and St Agnes to name just a few and it is good to get out and about to meet other Clubs. This year Plymouth Croquet Club will be defending its title of South West area champions which the Plymouth Golf Croquet Handicap team won in an exciting final at Sidmouth last year.

On the social side we arrange a Club lunch once a month where members can get together. There are also other social events planned in throughout the year. Would you like to play a game that is in the open air, one that is safe, friendly and fun? Then come along to Plymouth Croquet Club which has everything you need to try it out.

Homing Croquet Gazettes

It's great fun in the clubhouse between games to scan through old copies of the Gazette - some of those pictures... Does your clubhouse have a set?

At home, we've amalgamated our collections and accumulated sets from others so have up for grabs a set going back to the '80s and lots of odd ones.

If you'd like a set for your club (or yourself), please let me know. If you're missing a few issues to complete your collection, let me know which - we might be able to help you complete your collection.

DaveKibble@gmail.com

Coaching Corner

Spotlight on GC: Maintaining Harmony - Taking an extra stroke and warning the opposition

Under the GC Rules, a player can wait until their opponent's intention is clear and they are about to strike the ball before shouting out "I'll take an extra turn"; or their opponent might play quickly without allowing them a chance to decide.

These are two examples of behaviour that, whilst within the Rules, disrupt the harmony of a nice game of croquet. It feels unjust to wait until you see what your opponent will do next and then stop them and say you will have another go yourself.

It is a good practice, common in some clubs, to announce before playing a stroke that it might be followed by an extra stroke, but it is not required. However, to maintain harmony, players should not delay saying they might play an extra stroke as waiting can be seen as gamesmanship. Likewise, a player giving extra strokes should recognise that they are a more experienced player and give their opponent time to think.

If you are considering taking an extra stroke, say so without delay, it does not oblige you to take one, but it does avoid your opponent being upset. Even if you decide and say that you will take an extra stroke, you can change your mind and keep it in the bank for later. The better player can always ask if their opponent is thinking of taking an extra turn, and a "no" means they can't then do so.

The relevant Rules are:

- ✓ A player may play an extra stroke at any time following the end of a turn in which they played a stroke until their opponent plays a stroke. (20.5.1)
- ✓ A player considering whether to play an extra stroke must warn their opponent, either before or after they play, but before their opponent plays a stroke. (20.6.1)
- ✓ A stroke is the intentional contact of mallet and ball, it does not start by taking a stance or beginning to aim. (6.3)
- ✓ The opponent may ask a player who has just played a stroke if they are considering whether to play an extra stroke, and they must reply promptly. (20.6.3)

<https://www.croquet.org.uk/?p=games/golf/rules/gcRules6th#rule:20.6.1>

Spotlight on GC: Is a strike with a bevelled edge a fault?

Another common fallacy about the Rules is that a bevelled hit is always a fault - it isn't, unless done deliberately. Rule 11.2.3 says that it's a fault to hit with a bevel in a stroke that requires special care because of the proximity of a hoop or the peg or another ball.

Interestingly, this does not include a jump-shot (unless hampered as above), but the AC Laws make it a fault!

And it works!

Dave Kibble ran a well-received coaching pod at Bristol for aspiring B Class AC players and participants were not shy of getting down to the grass roots of it all as this photo of Wendy Wu (Cheltenham) demonstrates.

She found the course inspiring and looks at the photo to encourage herself to work even harder!



Why Not Become a Referee?



We need referees whenever croquet is played seriously, usually to watch a stroke that requires special care. It's not onerous to learn how to fairly judge such situations and it will help your play. All experienced players should get qualified.

An AC Assistant Referee can watch for faults and adjudicate wirings but is not expected to have a full knowledge of the Laws covering more unusual situations – in such a rare event, a full Referee is on hand by phone if needed.

To become an AC Referee:

- you attend a two-day training course that covers all the Laws and why they are as they are
- take a 20-question multi-choice test on the basic Laws (80% pass mark)
- take a one-hour on-court practical test (71% pass mark) [you are now an Assistant Referee]
- for full Referee, a longer written (or interactive) exam tests your deeper Laws understanding with some common situations (75% pass mark).

To become a GC Referee the process is similar except there is no Assistant Referee. None of the examinations is a memory test - you will have the Laws/Rules book to hand and a sympathetic examiner who wants to help you to qualify.

If you've attended a course before, but didn't take or pass the exam, you don't have to do the course again and you're only a very short step from qualifying.

Have a look at the online fun quizzes (AC or GC), which use questions from the referee tests. There's a simplified process for qualified AC Referees to become a GC Referee.

Your sport needs you so please register your interest by email to DaveKibble@gmail.com and name the clubs you'd be prepared to travel to (Budleigh, Cheltenham, Nailsea) stating your interest:

- ✓ to train and qualify as an AC or GC Referee
- ✓ if you've attended a course but didn't pass the exam and now want to pass
- ✓ if you are a qualified AC Referee and want to be a GC Referee

Online Information

Quizzes: <https://www.google.com/search?q=quiz&sitesearch=www.croquet.org.uk>

AC: <https://www.croquet.org.uk/?p=games/association/refereeing>

GC: <https://www.croquet.org.uk/?p=games/golf/refereeing>



Beautifully crafted mallets from South Africa.
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From £140 inclusive of postage

A Delight to Play With
Contact: Marie Stuchfield
Tel: 01392 757672
Mob: 0792940893
Email: mlstuchfield@gmail.com

Focus on the CA.

Hopefully, it hasn't escaped your notice that there's a few things happening on the organisational front at the CA.

Legal Status

First of all, work of the past year or so on agreeing the legal status of the Association is coming to a head at an SGM to be held by Zoom on 18th July.

All CA members will be receiving their ballot papers shortly and you can find all the background information you should need at <https://www.croquet.org.uk/?p=press/news&NewsID=7773&pup=y>

Regional Reps to CA Council

And secondly, it's that time of year when we need to return one of our three regional reps to the CA Council and this time it's Dave Kibble's turn to stand down.

He will not be standing for re-election, so we need someone interested in undertaking this role – the usual stint is three years. If you're interested in undertaking this role you must submit your nomination by 4th August. If there is more than one candidate for the post, an election will be held.

You can find all the information you need at
<https://www.croquet.org.uk/?p=press/news&NewsID=7788&pup=y>

Diploma time

Time to acknowledge some of the stalwarts whose work makes croquet so fulfilling at club level – the CA Diploma scheme is open for nominations to recognise club members who have given outstanding service to croquet over a long period.

Ffi: <https://www.croquet.org.uk/?p=ca/gov/policies/awards#CADiploma>

It's interesting to reflect on why some clubs feature regularly in the list of Diplomas awarded while others do not. Not every club nominates anyone – not because there's no one to nominate, but because there's so many!

What stance do you take and why? We'd love to hear your views.

Wanted: Good quality second hand secondary balls for the SWF's two new clubs

Happy to buy or borrow

Clubs have small budgets for purchase

Contact Paul

07411044109 or paulwfrancis@icloud.com



Advertising in Cygnet

All adverts must be sent fully formatted in such a way as they can be easily inserted (copy and pasted) into Cygnet. We are not in a position to undertake any artwork or correct for errors or omissions.

Charges include a 2/3-line entry in the Diary Dates column in up to three subsequent issues.

Charges

Full Page: £12

Half Page: £6

Quarter Page: £3