

# Croquet Section Scrap Book.

Started as a result of being given  
a lot of old croquet-related photographs  
— to which collection other members  
added on request — this scrap book  
is not a chronologically correct record  
as much as a glimpse into the life of  
the croquet section over the years up to 2000.

G.D.

Compiled from 1992 - 2000

By

Gwynneth Dart

Secretary 1990 - 1993

And

1995- 1996

Gwynneth's scrapbook digitalised in July 2023 by Chris Donovan [Chairman 2019 – 2022]  
Content re-ordered to date order. Some items re-shaped to better fit pages but only 1 photo added  
otherwise all Gwynneth's work.

*Croquet' first mentioned in the Club minutes of 1900. For more detail see 'History of Croquet in Sidmouth' compiled from Club records. GD*

### SIDMOUTH CROQUET CLUB

- 1929 - 1940)  
1950 - 1956) Open tournaments held.
- 1956 -1966 With a drop in membership, only one lawn in use.
- 1960 -1966 Junior tennis club formed. Six grass courts used for annual tournaments. Small pavilion was built and given to the junior club.
- 1966 Junior club disbanded.
- October 1966 A croquet meeting was organised `by Mrs Michelmore wife of the Club President.to encourage several members of the club to join the croquet section.
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- February 1967 First meeting attended by Mrs Michelmore Chairman, Maurice Glover, Secretary Pat Tunmer, Elsie Corbett, Iris Dwerryhouse, Rev. Hobson, Horace Hodgson, and Mr Russell the club secretary and Mr Shelton.
- As this was the centenary year of the C.A. it was decided to enter an All England Handicap event. Mr Shelton won and also won the Area final at Budleigh Salterton and played in the semi-final at Hurlingham. This created interest and at the end of the season there were 28 members.
- The main committee agreed that the croquet section could take over the small pavilion, and one tennis court was used as a second lawn.
- 1968 Maurice Clover was elected Chairman, and Pat Tunmer Sec. Pat worked hard to build up the club facilities.



1971 Iris Dwerryhouse receiving a cup for services to the club, from the Club President, Arthur Skinner. Picture includes Maurice Glover (Chairman of the Sidmouth Club, Pat Tunmer (sec.)

1972 Croquet Association President Maurice Reckitt visited the club and was most impressed with its 'Re-birth'.



1972 Photograph

Seated front row: - Horace Hodgson, Len Fletcher, Maurice Reckitt President of the C.A. and Maurice Glover Sidmouth Chairman.

Other members include: - David & Sue Rawkins, John & Maryon Holt, Marion Ovens', 'Tommy' Hodgson, John Hagger, Mrs Vincent, Molly, Cathy Catling & Mo Becket

1973 50 members, 2½ lawns and the first Apps-Heley award.



An early training session. Included in the picture are:- Sue & David Rawkins, in the foreground Marion & Maryan left.

*Past Subscription Levels!*

**Sidmouth Cricket, Lawn Tennis and Croquet Club**

All Correspondence to the Cricket Pavilion, Fortfield Terrace, Sidmouth. Tel. : Sidmouth 3229

Hon. Secretary :  
Miss M. GRENSIDE  
Tel. Sidmouth 4719

Patron :  
Dr. R. G. MICHELMORE

President :  
A. G. SKINNER

Hon. Treasurer:  
J. H. F. PAGE  
Tel. Sidmouth 3912

Hon. Fixture Secretary :  
C. E. WILLIAMS  
Tel. Sidmouth 4627

Dear Member,

As you will know from the Annual General Meeting report last April, it was agreed that Subscriptions should be raised commencing 1st January 1977.

This is a reminder, particularly to Members who pay by Bankers Order so that suitable instructions are given to coincide with the new financial year.

Subscriptions as from 1st January 1977

Vice-President	...	...	...	...	...	£10.00
Non-Playing Member	...	...	...	...	...	£ 5.00
Tennis or Croquet Playing Member	...	...	...	...	...	£ 8.00
Cricket or Hockey Playing Member	...	...	...	...	...	£ 5.00
Lady Hockey Playing Member	...	...	...	...	...	£ 2.50
Junior Member (15 - 18 years)	.	...	...	...	...	£ 2.00
Juvenile Member (under 18 years - no change)	...	...	...	...	...	£ 1.00
Country Member (living outside Devon)	...	...	...	...	...	£ 2.00
Joint Cricket & Hockey Playing Member	...	...	...	...	...	£ 8.00
Husband & Wife (Non-playing)	...	...	...	...	...	£ 7.00
Husband & Wife (ONE playing)	...	...	...	...	...	£ 9.00

\*Family Memberships are discontinued\*

In wishing you all, on behalf of the Committee, a very happy New Year may I include the hope that subscriptions are paid at the earliest opportunity.

Yours sincerely,

*J. H. Page*

Hon. Treasurer.

# THE CROQUET GAZETTE

Number 145

Autumn 1977

*National recognition for Sidmouth.*

## The Official Organ of the Croquet Association

Patron: Her Majesty The Queen

### The Sidmouth Shot Game

The Croquet Gazette for August 1976 included an Article on a "Croquet Gymkhana" organised by the Bentley Club. The Sidmouth Club has evolved a form of tournament that should interest those wishing to improve their game and, at the same time, enjoy a relaxed afternoon. Robert Case felt that it would be a good idea to arrange a club event that would provide an opportunity for players to improve their stroke technique and to meet other players in a relaxed, but competitive atmosphere. He devised a series of 8 pre-determined hazards incorporating the following strokes: roquet, peel, thin take-off, drive, running hoops, split, rush and roll. These strokes were laid out on one lawn, standardised ball positions being marked by the ingenious use of coloured plastic golf tees. Each hazard was essayed in turn by teams of four players, the measure of whose success was recorded by a points valuation for each stroke, five attempts being allowed for each player at each hazard, with a possible 3 point score for each attempt. The whole tournament, including a break for tea, took three hours and involved a total of 20 players (32 players could have taken part in the same total amount of time). The final result was obtained from individual score cards which had been filled in progressively by each team during the game. Out of a possible score of 120 points, the highest achievement was 72.

This type of event was considered by all those taking part to be of greater value than golf croquet in the training of stroke techniques relevant to the full Association game. Its success hinges upon the correct preparation of the lawn and the briefing of the team leaders to ensure a standard basis for scoring. In this context the Club must pay tribute to Vincent Stirrup and Fred Moores, who master-minded this part of the operation.

### What the game is and how to play it

In 1976 the Sidmouth Croquet Club successfully tried out a new type of Group Game. It has been christened the "Shot Game" because it incorporates nearly all the standard shots employed in croquet. The game consists of 8 events, marked serially upon the ground and on score cards. Each player takes 5 shots in each event to score a maximum possible 15 points. The "leader" starts with 5 shots in each event, and his team members follow in any convenient order.

On the appointed day the prospective players are counted and divided into groups of 4 or 5, so arranged that each group has a "leader", who is an experienced player acquainted with the game. A cane, marked off in feet, is provided for each group to make such measurements as are required. Each player is given a score card, similar to a golf score card, which is divided vertically by "events" and horizontally by 5 scoring columns, plus a "totals" column. Each player's score is entered, shot by shot, either by the leader or a fellow player. A group starts at any convenient position and rotates between the various positions until all the events have been completed. The total of each player's score is then posted on a notice board. Apart from showing each player's position in each competition, each player will automatically have a record of progress (if any) throughout the season's play; this in itself provides an additional element of competition.

The Shot Game was devised with definite objects in view. It was intended to provide an interesting afternoon for all grades of players. Up to 32 players could be accommodated on a single court. A single court has the social advantage of bringing the Club Members together. The game would provide a test of skill in every standard shot in croquet. The court could be prepared for play easily and quickly. Variations in the degree of skill required, handicapping etc. could be introduced without difficulty. Beginners could watch and emulate skilled players in strokes of an identical type. Rules would present no difficulties for beginners, or for guest players, because they would be attached to "leaders" acquainted with the game. There would be no need to book entries in advance, or to allocate players either by courts, partners or times, provided that there was an agreed starting time. Location of the events on the court is largely a matter of convenience. The locations and scoring used at Sidmouth are given below, together with a few other details.

### The Events

#### EVENT I: ROQUET

*Location:* Shots at the Object Ball 'A' are taken from 5 points, marked by balls 'B', 'C', 'D', 'E' and 'F', each 1 ft. apart along the West Boundary Yard Line. The Object Ball is placed on the Yard Line on the North Boundary.

*Scoring:* Each roquet of the Object Ball scores 3 points. Possible total is 15 points.

#### EVENT II: RUSH

*Location:* Start from West Boundary, opposite to Hoop 1. Shoot from 3 marked positions in line with Hoop 1, and from 2 marked positions in line with the peg.

*Scoring:*

Rushed ball within 3 ft. of Hoop 1	3 points
Rushed ball within 3-4 ft.	2 points
Rushed ball within 4-5 ft.	1 point
Rushed ball within 6 ft. of peg	3 points
Rushed ball within 6-8 ft.	2 points
Rushed ball within 8-10 ft.	1 point

#### EVENT III: ROLL

*Location:* 5 points in line are marked 3 ft. apart, starting at 6 ft. from Hoop 4.

*Scoring:* If both balls lie within 3 ft. of the hoop — 3 points. Otherwise, nil.

#### EVENT IV: SPLIT

*Location:* Position 'A' is at the point where the line running from Hoop 3 to Hoop 6 and beyond intersects the line running between Hoops 1 and 2. Position 'B' lies further along the first line, continued 2 yards back.

*Scoring:* 3 shots from 'A' and 2 shots from 'B'. Each shot scores 3 points if the balls come to rest within 3 ft. of Hoops 2 and 6 respectively.

**EVENT V: DRIVE**

*Location:* The starting point is the 3rd corner, with the peg and Hoop 3 the objectives for the two balls.

*Scoring:* 5 shots, scoring 3 points each if the Object Ball lies within 12 ft. of the peg and the Striker's Ball within 4 ft. of Hoop 3.

**EVENT VI: PEEL**

*Location:* On a line from Hoop 5 to Hoop 6 mark positions 'A', 'B' and 'C' at 1 ft. intervals. In addition, mark position 'D' at right angles to 'A' and 1 ft. from it, and on the opposite side mark position 'E' 2 ft. away from 'C' and at right angles to it.

*Scoring:* Two shots from each position. Both balls must be put through the hoop in each turn in order to score a maximum possible 15 points.

**EVENT VII: THIN TAKE-OFF**

*Location:* Take off from 4th corner to positions 'A', 'B', 'C', 'D' and 'E' marked with bisque pegs and placed 6 ft. from 4th corner, opposite to Hoop 4, opposite the peg, opposite Hoop 1 and on the 1st corner spot.

*Scoring:* Aim at each of the object balls marked. The ball from which one takes off remains in the 4th corner and must not go off. The striker scores as follows:

3 points if the ball lands within 1 ft. of objective; 2 points if the ball lands 1-2 ft. from the objective; 1 point if the ball lands 2-3 ft. from the objective.

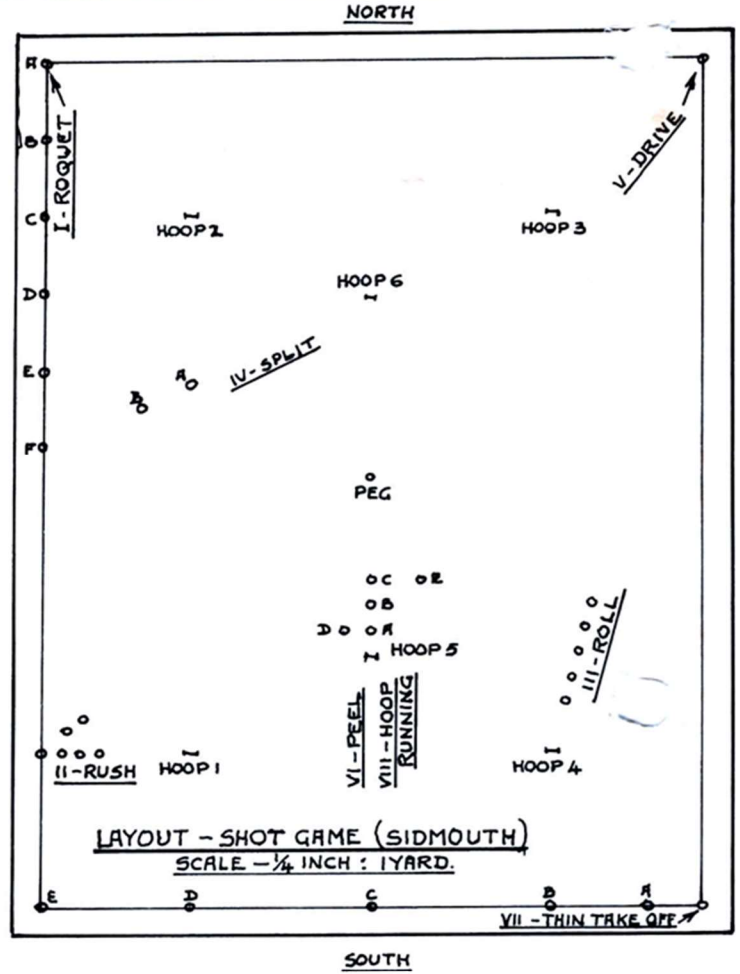
**EVENT VIII: HOOP RUNNING**

*Location:* Same positions as given for Event No. 6 (Peel).

*Scoring:* Run the hoop from each of the positions, for a maximum possible score of 15 points.

**Miscellaneous Notes**

1. 15 points can be scored from each of the 8 events, to make a maximum possible total of 120 points.
2. Standard Bridge Scoring cards can easily be adapted for keeping the scores.
3. Playing groups need not adhere to a fixed sequence of events, and can play from any position that happens to become vacant.
4. Events VI and VIII take only a short time and can, if desired, be played in sequence.





## Two trophies for croquet couple

**HUSBAND and wife Philip and Iris Dwerryhouse are quite a force when it comes to playing croquet.**

**In the Budleigh Salterton open tournament Mr. Dwerryhouse beat his wife into second place to take the L.G. Walters Cup in the singles competition.**

**It was the second time that Mr. Dwerryhouse had won the cup and the fourth consecutive year that the title had gone to a member of the Sidmouth Croquet Club.**

**In the doubles event, Mr. and Mrs. Dwerryhouse combined their talents to win the Leonard Daldry Cup by beating a couple from Woking in an exciting final.**

## Results *May 1978*

### AMERICAN HANDICAP SINGLES

**BLOCK A R.S. Stevens** (2) bt H. O. Hicks (½) =17, Mrs G. T. Wheeler (½) +14, H>G>Bolton (1½) +9, Mrs E. M. Lightfoot (2) +13, R. A. Simpson (2½) +23 and lost to B. G. Perry -7, 5 wins. 4 wins Bolton, Perry.

3 wins: Mrs Wheeler, Hicks. 1 win: Simpson, Mrs Lightfoot.

**BLOCK B. C.M. von Schmieder** (4) bt Dr W. R. Bucknall (½2) +14, Mrs R. A. Simpson (3) +23, C. Edwards (3½) +24, Col G. T. Wheeler (4½) +2, and lost to Mrs C. Bagnall (5) -2 (T), Mrs N. A. C. McMillan (3) -3. 4 wins (+58 pts). 4 wins: Mrs Bagnall (+ 13 pts). 3 wins: Wheeler, Edwards, Mrs McMillan. 2 wins: Bucknall, Mrs Simpson.

**BLOCK C Mrs P A Tunmer** (5) bt P. K. Devitt (5) +4, J. G. Warwick (5) +3, Mrs B. G. Neal (5) +6, K. S. Schofield (5) +22, Dr. H. A. Pym (5½) +10, and lost to H. E. Ovens(5½) -5. 5 wins. 4 wins: Ovens, Schofield. 3 wins: Devitt. 2 wins: Warwick, Mrs Neal. 1 win: Pym.

**BLOCK D. Mrs P. A. Dwerryhouse** (14) bt Mrs. R. S. Stevens (10) +7 (T), Mrs. L. S. Davies (11) +8, Mrs. E. Pursey (11) +9, V. Robinson (14) +17, Mrs. L. Wharrad (15) +20. 5 wins. 4 wins Mrs. Stevens. 3 wins Mrs. Pursey. 2 wins Mrs. Davies. 1 win Mrs. Wharrad. Nil V. Robinson.

### PLAY-OFF FOR THEJ. K. BROWN MEMORIAL CUP

**Mrs Ovens** (D) bt Mrs. Tunmer (C) + 14.

WINNER OF THE L. G. WALTERS LONG HANDICAP TROPHY: Mrs Dwerryhouse.

### DRAW *June 1978*

Semi-Final: **Mrs. E. Pursey** bt Mrs. R. F. A. Crane +11 **Mrs. P. Dwerryhouse** bt Mrs. R. S. Stevenson +1(T)

Final: **Mrs. Pursey** bt Mrs. Dwerryhouse +14

### Process

Semi-Final **Mrs. Stevens** bt Mrs. Pursey +5, **Mrs. Dwerryhouse** bt Mrs. Crane +12

Final Mrs. Dwerryhouse bt Mrs, Stevens +1(T)

PLAY-OFF Mrs. Dwerryhouse bt Mrs. Pursey +1 (T)

Budleigh Salterton 21 -23 September *1979*

(entries 30) (5 Blocks of 6) (3 Hr. Time Limit) (Handicap Singles)

Block A: **P. A. DWERRYHOUSE** (12) 3 wins +25 pts, 0) 3 wins pts F. T. Moores (8) 3 wins +23 pts, J. H. J. Soutter (0) 3 wins +8pts. P.K. Devitt (4½) 3 wins, Dr W. R. Bucknall (3) 2 wins Mrs C. W. Marshall (9) 1 win.

Block B: Dr T.J. Haste (2) 4 wins +32 pts, R. S. Stevens (1½) 4 wins +21 pts, R. A. Peirce (8) 3 wins Mrs. E. M. Pursey (9) 2 wins H. E. Ovens (5) 1 win, M Hawthorn (12) 1 win.

Block C: H. G. T. Bolton (2) 4 wins Mrs D. Wallace (14) 2 wins B.G. Bucknall (6) 2 wins, Mrs D. Exell (10) 1 win, Mrs R. S. Stevens (8) 1 win.

Block D: E. L. Gardiner (9) 5 wins, Mrs J. H.J. Soutter (7) 4 wins R.A. Simpson (2) 3 wins, C. Edwards (3½) 2 wins Mrs P. A. Dwerryhouse (11) 1 win, Mrs M. Hawthorn (16) 0 wins.

Block E: Mrs C. Bagnall (4½) 4 wins, S. F. Blackler (12) 3 wins F.J. Exell (12) 3 wins, N. Morrison (7½) 3 wins, H. G. Drake (2½) 2 wins, Dr C. W. Marshall (9) 0 wins



*A Dwerryhouse page*

# March 1980 Annual Luncheon



Dr. David Rawkins  
 ↓  
 'x' Mr. E. E. Whitton  
 President of the  
 Sidmouth Cricket Club.

SIDMC

Iris Dwerryhouse

Sue Rawkins

'G' Cunningham &  
 her husband

**Trial  
 offer  
 from the  
 Croquet  
 Club**

IN a bid to attract more members, Sidmouth Croquet Club is inviting anyone interested in playing the game to join them for a month's "trial", free of charge.

During the month they will receive instruction and coaching from a club member, and learn that croquet is not so simple as it looks, but a skilled and quite complicated game.

At the club's annual luncheon at the Royal Glen Hotel, on Thursday, the chairman, Dr. D. Rawkins, said that membership stood

at just over 40 and it was hoped to increase it to 60.

He appealed for existing members to encourage friends to join the club, a section of the Sidmouth Cricket, Lawn Tennis and Hockey Clubs, sharing the picturesque thatched pavilion on the Fortfield ground.

Dr. Rawkins thanked everyone for their support during the year, and said he hoped the 1980 season, which starts in April, would be a happy one. The club now enjoyed the use of three high-

grade courts, and members could look forward to a full and exciting programme of events.

He also spoke of the happy social atmosphere that existed.

Among the 50 members and guests was Mr. E.E. Whitton, president of Sidmouth Cricket Club.

He wished the club success for the coming summer, saying: "I hope it is a fine one. Then you can all enjoy playing your game of croquet, and I can watch my cricket."



## Golf Croquet 1980



LtoR: [Back Seated] Alex Cunningham, Freda Harding

Back Row : Betty Moores, John Holt, [crouching] Katherine Holroyde, G Cunningham, Maryan Holt, Jack Packman, Fred Moores, Mary Hart, Eileen Collier, [behind whom] Len Sage [to the right] John Haggar

Front Row: Sylvia Norton, Grace Graham, Kathleen Togni, Valerie Collier, Dick Packman



## Golf Croquet 1980

LtoR:

Freda Harding

Mary Kirke

Lesley Kirk



LtoR:  
 Grace  
 Graham,  
 Dick  
 Packham,  
 Mary Hart,  
 Jack  
 Packman,  
 Eileen  
 Collier and  
 Freda  
 Harding

PAGE EIGHTEEN, SIDMOUTH HERALD, SATURDAY, APRIL 4th., 1981.

*Annual Luncheon*

*1981*



## Stroll in the sun before lunch

ENJOYING spring sunshine on the lawns of the Royal Glen Hotel on Wednesday are the committee members of the Sidmouth Croquet Club.

They took a stroll in the grounds before joining the club members and guests for the annual luncheon.

In the picture (from the left) are: Mrs. G. Cunningham (vice-chairman), Mr. Leslie Toye, Mr. R.C. Case (secretary), Mrs. Marian Holt, Mr. Reg Peirce, Miss Katherine Holroyde and Mrs. Iris

Dwerryhouse (chairman).

The lunch was attended by 60 members and guests.

The club is believed to have started more than 100 years ago, with one lawn and 11 members. Now it has more than 60 members who play on three lawns. The season begins at the end of this month and there are a few vacancies for new members, who will be offered a course of tuition free of charge and without obligation until the end of May.

# Fund Raising

## GALA DAY JUNE 1982

The club set up seven different events that would have tested the skills of even the best players, and with the public invited to take part at 10p a go, it provided an excellent insight into the game.

For example, there were targets drawn out on the grass with 10 points on the outside increasing to 50 in the centre and the competitor had two croquet, tennis and golf balls with which to score as many points as possible.

Although that game need-

ed a good sense of distance, the next one was a test of accuracy. Six hoops were placed in a row with a post at the end and you had to play the

ball through the hoops to hit the post in the least number of shots.

### Promoting

The club secretary, Mr. Robert Case, described the day as an opportunity not only to raise funds, but also as a way of promoting the game.

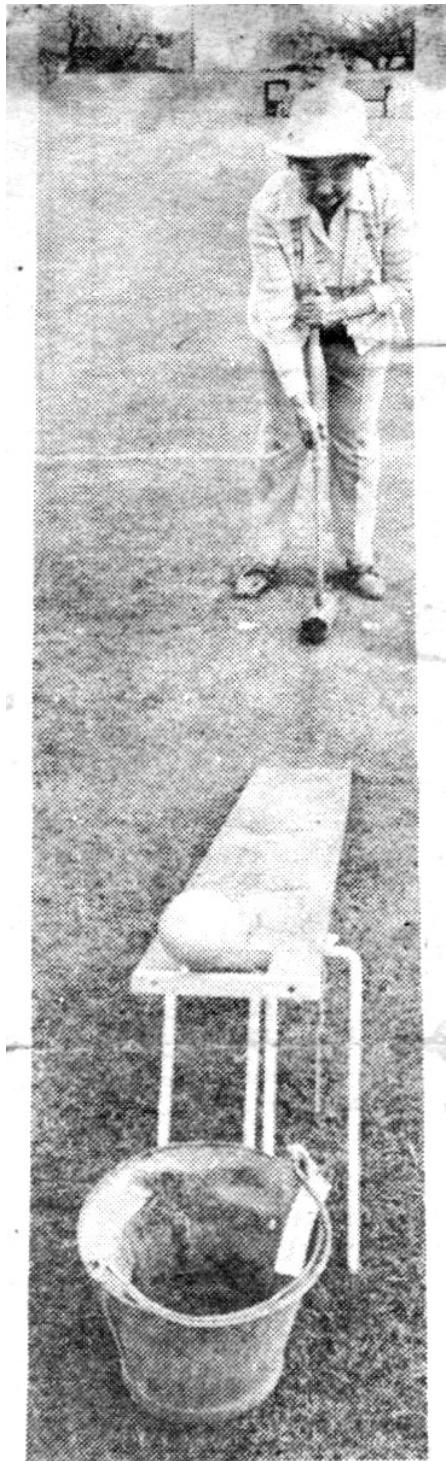
He said: "I was pleased with the way it went and I think everyone enjoyed their day."

The club hopes to stage a similar event in August.

Mr. Case added: "We are always looking out for new members and we will hope for greater support from the public next time."



● Mind the hoop — secretary Mr. Robert Case watches with interest. JUNE '82



● Better luck next time — the ball neatly evades the hole in the plank. JUNE '82



● Mrs. Mary Fox and Mrs. Ethel Sanford buy plants from an Edwardian garden. Selling them is Mr. Eric Kitchener.



● Croquet players had many opportunities to show their skill — and win cash prizes. Here, one of the stall runners, Mrs. Valerie Collier, shows her husband John (right) and Professor Bernard Whitmore the ideal croquet mallet grip.

## Genteel way to while away a few hours

Sidmouth Cricket Club's pavilion restoration appeal reached £11,700 at the weekend following an Edwardian garden party held on the Fort Field.

It was a genteel afternoon with croquet-orientated games dominating the attractions.

Several members raked through their wardrobes to find outfits to suit the occasion.



*Robert Case*

*Aline Davis*

*Michael Davis*

*"Fun & Games" at the Garden Party 1982*

SIDMOUTH CRICKET, LAWN TENNIS  
CROQUET & HOCKEY CLUB

Approved SUBSCRIPTIONS (including V.A.T.) from 1st JANUARY, 1983

		<u>BASIC</u>	<u>PLAYING</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>	
<u>PLAYING:</u>	Cricket	£8.00	£15.00	£23.00	
	Tennis	8.00	15.00	23.00	
	Croquet	8.00	15.00	23.00	
	Hockey (Season 1982/3)	----	----	16.50	
	** (With effect from 1/10/83) **	Hockey	8.00	11.00	19.00
	Tennis & Hockey	8.00	19.00	27.00	
	Cricket & Tennis	8.00	22.00	30.00	
	Cricket & Hockey	8.00	19.00	27.00	
	Tennis & Croquet	8.00	22.00	30.00	
	Juniors (16 & under 18)	----	7.00	7.00	
	Juniors (Under 16)	----	3.00	3.00	
	Country	3.00	5.00	8.00	
<u>NON-PLAYING</u>	Social	8.00	----	8.00	
	Social (Husband & Wife)	11.00	----	11.00	
	Social (Player's Wife)	3.00	----	3.00	
	Social (Country Member)	5.00	----	5.00	
	Social (Country Husband & Wife)	8.00	----	8.00	

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1983

Robert

Case's

90<sup>th</sup>

Birthday





● A novice croquet player picks up hints from the technique of a more experienced counterpart.

## Triumph for experience

CROQUET novices from Hele's School, Exeter, found the wiles of the experienced Sidmouth club members too much to overcome on Tuesday in a special challenge match.

Croquet has been introduced to the Hele's School curriculum by Mr. John Toye, a teacher who

also holds the lowest handicap in the Sidmouth Club.

He brought along a team of six 13-15 year old boys for Tuesday's match.

Despite their defeat, by 27 games to nine, the boys showed skill with the mallet and a lively understanding of the technicalities of the game.

Scorers: Sidmouth — R. Peirce 4, Mrs. A. Davis 3, F. Moores 5, M. Davis 5, P. Dwerryhouse 4, E. Kitchener 6.

Hele's — W. Hopton 0, H. Dunstan 3, L. Toleman 2, N. Dawson 1, S. Woolcott 2, I. Belcher 1.

# Golf Croquet in 1983

Gwen & Stan Hewitt

Nan Bamford



G' Cunningham



Bernard Langley

Nan Bamford

John Holt

John Hatherley

Mary Kirke

G' Cunningham

Mary Ellis

Grace Graham





*Len Sage*



- 1 John Hatherley
- 2 Maryan Holt
- 3 Mary Kirke
- 4 John Holt

- 5 'G' Cunningham
- 6 Bernard Langley
- 7 Grace Graham
- 8 Sue Rawkins

- 9 Gwen Hewitt
- 10 Dick Packman
- 11 Stan Hewitt

*1983 AGM - Mrs Elsie Corbett presenting the Club Trophies*



*The Corbett Spoons  
presented for the first  
time - 10 and under Iris  
Dwerryhouse*



*11 and Over  
Elsie Kitchener*

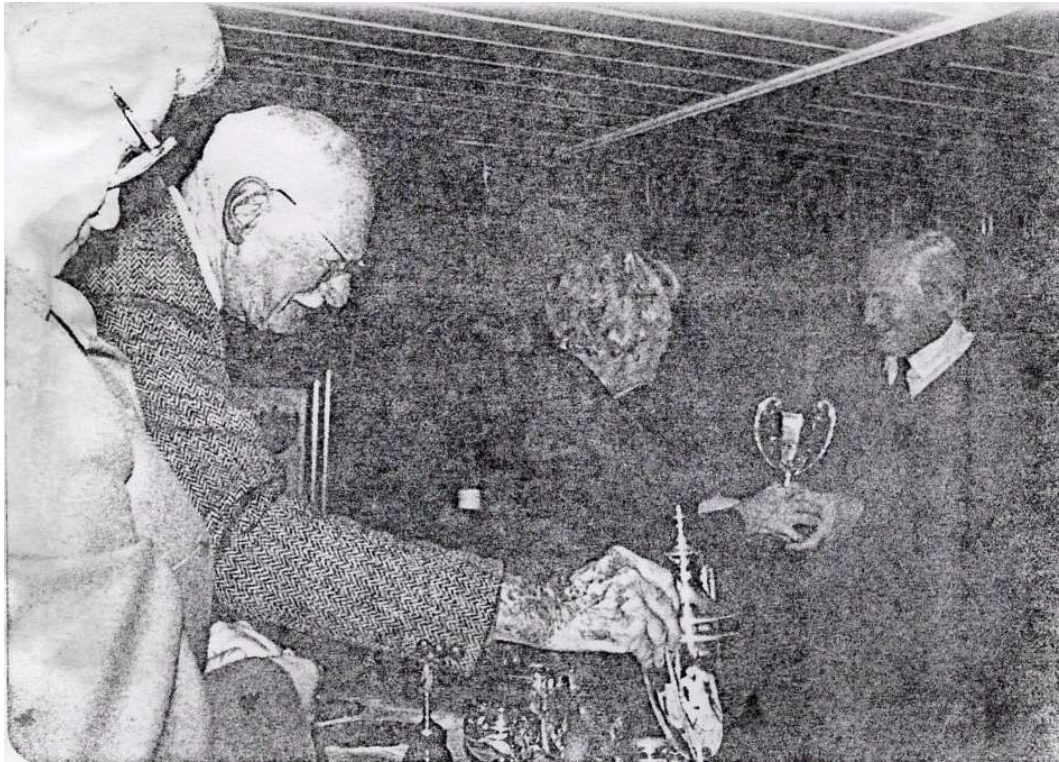


*Connie Verity co-winner with John  
Hatherley of the Golf Croquet  
Doubles Salver  
In picture Katherine Holroyde -  
Tournament Secretary  
Also Joan & Alan Reid who for a  
number of years ran the Military  
Whist afternoons for the Croquet  
Section during the winter.*



*Philip Dwerryhouse receiving the Sidmouth Croquet Club Cup.*

*From '71 - '83 given for 'service to the club'. This was the last time the cup was so presented.*

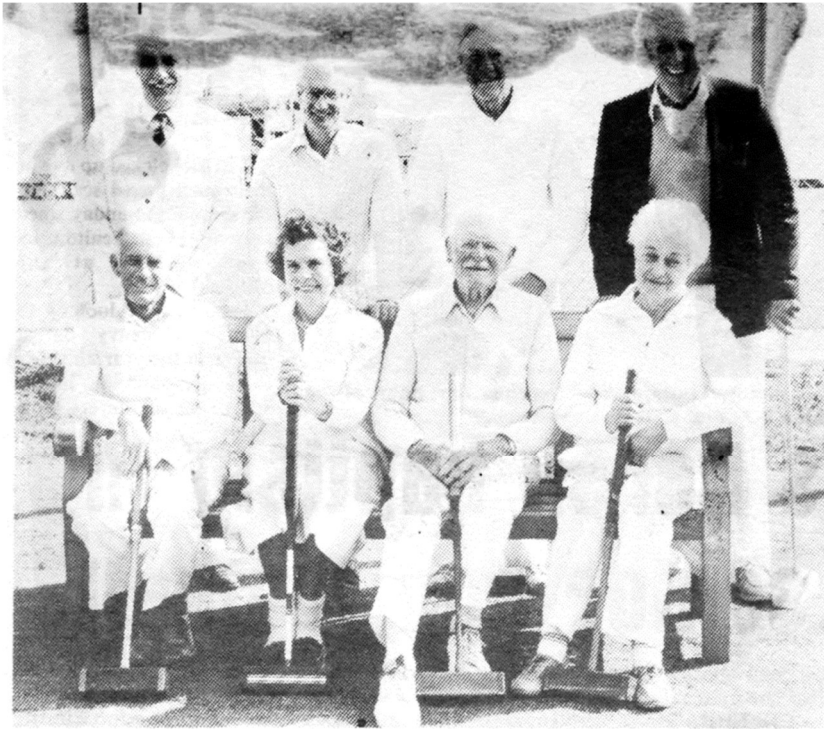


*Michael Davis receiving the Sidmouth Croquet Club Handicap Doubles Challenge Cup in partnership with Robert Case whose right hand is on the twin Doubles trophy - The Sidmouth Croquet Challenge Cup*



*John Toye  
winner of the Belmont Cup*

1984



Sidmouth Croquet team, who pulled back from 2-0 down to force a 3-3 draw with local rivals Budleigh Salterton at the Fort Field on Tuesday.

Pictured (from left to right): (back row): Alan Harding, Eric Kitchener, Philip Dwerryhouse, Len Sage, (front row) John Hatherley, Valerie Collier, Robert Case, Iris Dwerryhouse.



Eric Kitchener – David Rawkins – Bernard Clark – Cliff Taylor – John Toye  
John Hatherley – Joanne Good – Marianne Holt – May Stephenson – Len Sage

# Beginners' luck

MARGARET Isard and Tom Ward made sure of victory for Sidmouth Croquet Club beginners' team in their game against Budleigh Salterton.

The pair easily won their doubles game and then recorded victories in their singles match to leave their club triumphant 3-2. Aline Davis lost the other two singles.

Sidmouth's senior team could not repeat that feat when they met Budleigh Salterton and were beaten 5-2.

Michael Davis and Joan Goode were the only Sidmouth successes in the singles.

1985



● Mary Hardman (right) after her victory over Iris Dwerryhouse (left) in the ladies' Fernor Bowl at Sidmouth Croquet Club.

1985

## Playing with Toye

JOHN Toye, one of Devon's top players, will be leading Sidmouth Croquet Club into battle against Bristol in the Cheltenham and Gloucester League a week tomorrow.

Play begins at 10.15 a.m. at the Fort Field and Sidmouth are expecting Bristol to send a side littered with A class players. Two matches are being played, one between the senior league teams and the other involving the beginners.

In the club's challenge cup finals, Mary Hardman produced the biggest winning margin of the day, defeating Iris Dwerryhouse by +16 to clinch the Fernor Bowl.

Eric Kitchener and Sall Harker were the other singles winners, while John Hatherley and Cliff Taylor won the doubles event.

## Confident start by croquet players

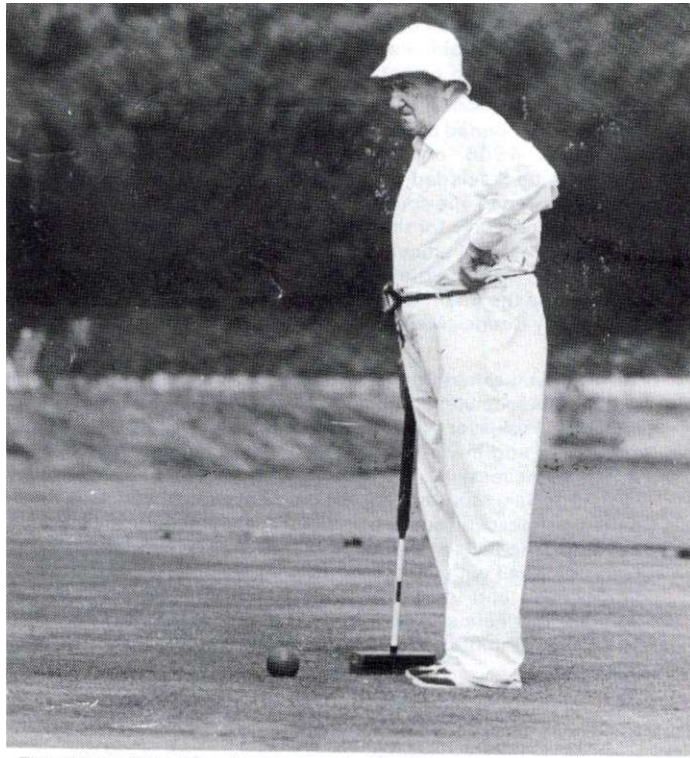
SIDMOUTH Croquet Club got off to a confident start in their first ever match in the Cheltenham and Gloucester South West League Beginners Division when they defeated Bournemouth 5-2 at the Fort Field on Sunday.

The home side eased into a 2-1 lead at lunch with Tom Ward and Enid Taylor winning their doubles match and Aline Davis chalking up a singles win.

In the afternoon Sidmouth soon got on top with Linda Kitchener and Sally Harker picking up comfortable victories. Enid Taylor added to her earlier success with a singles win.

Sidmouth's senior and beginners teams were away to Budleigh Salterton on Thursday and their next matches will be at Parkstone in July.

1985



The veteran Humphrey Hicks, deep in thought on the lawns at Bowdon

## Croquet couple retain title



● Iris Dwerryhouse.

For the second year running a Sidmouth couple have won the doubles event in the open Veterans Association Croquet Championship at Southwick.

Iris and Philip Dwerryhouse, of Lime Parc, Bickell Valley, beat off strong challenges from Cheltenham and Southwick players before eventually winning the final by one point in a tense match lasting over three hours.

Thirty couples took part in the event.

Iris has been playing croquet at Sidmouth for 20 years and introduced her husband to the game when he retired 13 years ago.

The couple are two of the Sidmouth club's five coaches.



Picture shows Philip & Iris receiving the 'Sussex Trugs' the National Veterans' Doubles Trophy [at Southwick]

## Obituary

### Humphrey Hicks

Humphrey Hicks died on June 9th 1986, aged 82; a funeral service was held at St Andrew's Church, Colyton, on June 16th.

He was born in 1904 at Esher and was educated at Osborne and Dartmouth. From 1943 until his death, he lived at Colyford in Devon.

A keen golfer, he was at one time secretary of the Axe Cliff Golf Club. He had been at various times a member of the Hurlingham Club, Budleigh Salterton Lawn Tennis & Croquet Club, and Sidmouth Cricket & Tennis Club.

He was elected to the Croquet Association as Cadet H.O. Hicks in 1919 and rapidly became a first class player. In 1930 he won the Champion's Cup (now the President's Cup) and two years later the Open Championship, whereupon he disappeared from croquet until 1939 when he won the Open Championship again.

He reappeared after the war, winning the Open Championship five times in the next six years from 1947 to 1952. His record of wins in the various Championships from 1930 to 1973 was as follows: -

Opens, 7 times. President's Cup, 5 times. Men's Doubles, 8 times. Men's, 9 times. Mixed Doubles, 4 times. Total, 33.

He was a member of the Test Match teams which travelled to New Zealand to play for the MacRobertson Trophy in 1950 and 1963, and in the 1956 series in England.

Humphrey with his very acute croquet brain devised tactics which made life very difficult for his opponents - he was regarded by some of his contemporaries as the master tactician and their most feared opponent.

Every game has its great characters and Humphrey was undoubtedly one of the greatest characters in the world of croquet. His eccentricities were many, not least his habit of knitting while his opponent was in play; though not a stitch was dropped, he was always completely in touch with the state not only of his own match but also those on surrounding courts.

He was outspoken in his condemnation of the slightest breach of etiquette; he was at the same time a valued friend. His kindnesses were many and his memory will not soon be forgotten.

Bill Perry



**Humphrey Hicks**  
Croquet player, England,  
1904-1986

Humphrey Hicks won his first national croquet championship in 1930 and his last, the doubles, in 1973. Despite disappearing from the game for seven years before the war, he emerged after it as the best player of the time. By 1952 he had won the Open singles seven times and was subsequently beaten in the final five times by John Solomon (qv). Not renowned as the sweetest of opponents, Hicks was a master strategist and a subtle croquet psychologist. He frequently eschewed the brilliant shots of which he was capable in favour of prolonged and patient manoeuvring ("Like Wellington at Salamanca," a contemporary recalled) that ground his rivals into error and allowed him to make a decisive strike. A man of esoteric wit and outspoken opinions, he often appeared otherwise immersed while his opponent was in play, but was said to be able to recall every shot. **DH**



*Humphrey in retirement at home in Colyford*

#### An appreciation

Dear Sir,  
Having just received the July issue, I would like to express my sorrow after reading of the death of David Prichard and Humphrey Hicks.

I met them both while in England in 1974 and partnered Humphrey in the Doubles Championships and then later met both David and his son Colin during competition for the Chairman's Salver at Southwick.



*Humphrey Hicks acknowledges applause whilst playing in the 'Champion of Champions' competition at Hurlingham in 1967, watched by Her Majesty the Queen.*

Humphrey proved to all and sundry in the Doubles that he was as good as ever - I will never forget the match against two young New Zealand Test players Murfitt and Anderson. As the 'Gazette' said:

'Murfitt and Anderson met Hicks and Maslen and had lost the first game before they realised they were up against the most subtle tactician in the game - even Hicks's partner at times appeared mystified'

HOW TRUE - any way we won the second game by 1 point to achieve what was, I suppose, an upset. WHAT MEMORIES.

Croquet must be the poorer for the loss of these two fine gentlemen.

George Maslen,  
Mandurah, Western Australia.



Humphrey Hicks was an Honorary Life Member of this Club and before he died he presented the mallets with which he had won his championships to us. After his death, his god-daughter, Mrs Hilary Mabon, donated his medals. These have now been arranged in an excellent display which was completed in time for the Croquet Section AGM in October, to which Mrs Mabon was invited. '86.

*Humphrey's medals and mallets were loaned in 1997 to the C.A. to form part of the CA Centenary Exhibition at Wimbledon*

*Golf Croquet Tournament v Budleigh Salterton*



1986

*LtoR: Budleigh - Budleigh - Gwen Hewitt - Buzz Palmer*

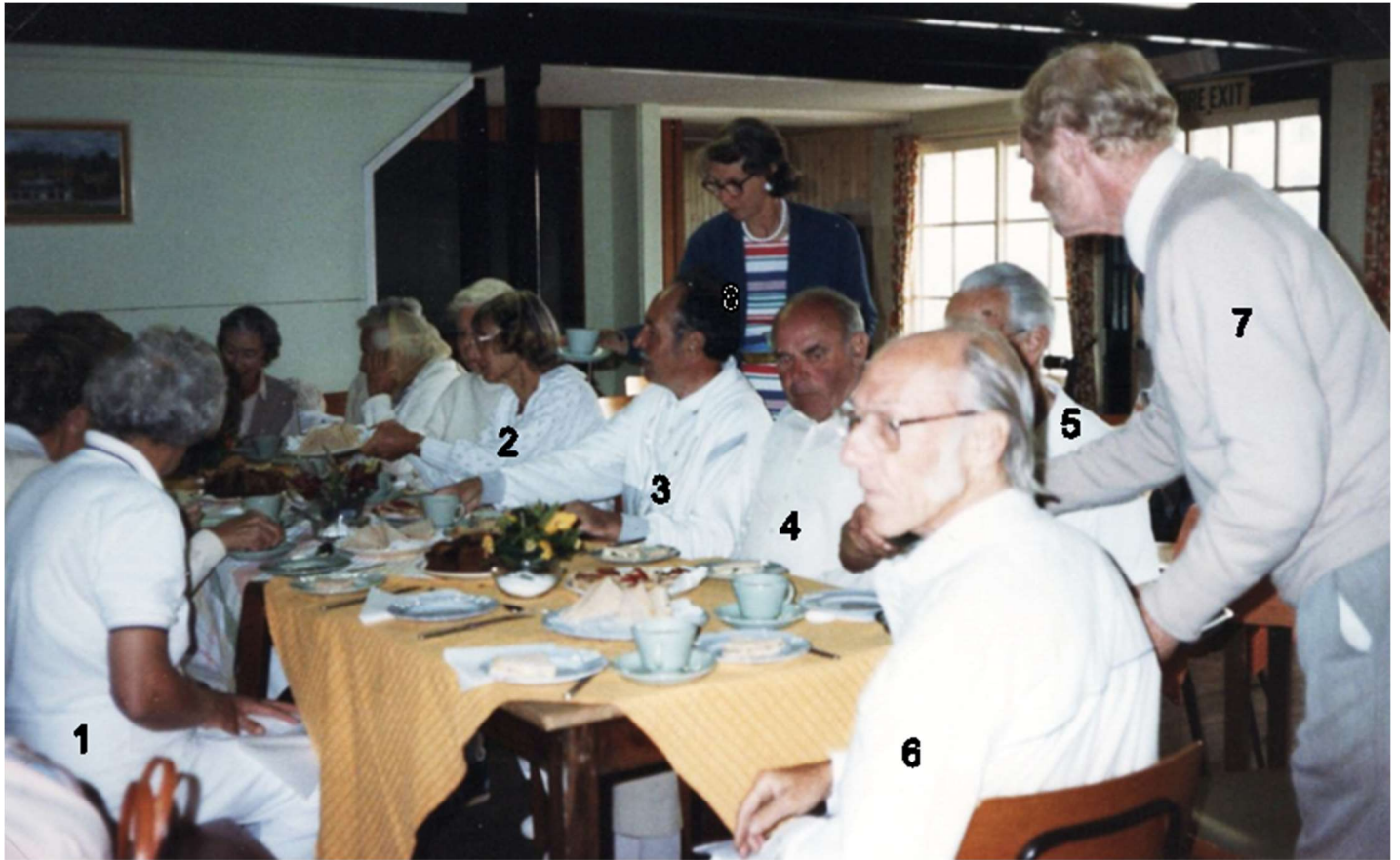


*LtoR: Buzz Palmer (Sid) Derrick Derge (B.S.) - Gwen Hewitt (Sid) - Joy Derge (B.S.)*





Tournament Tea



1 Gwen Hewitt, 2 Esme Owen, 3 Derrick Derge, 4 Arthur Ward, 5 Don Barwick, 6 Ted Owen, 7 Fred Moores, 8 Katherine Holroyde

*SPECTATORS!*



*LtoR*

*Freda Harding  
Linda Kitchener  
John Hatherley  
Allan Harding  
Eric Kitchener  
Michael Davis*

*PREPARING FOR A TOURNAMENT in 1986*



*LtoR*

*Jack Jeeves  
Sheila Scarr  
Len Sage  
John Hatherley  
Phillip Derryhouse*

*A GALA AFTERNOON in the 1980s*



*LtoR*

*Esme Owen  
Joan Goode  
Len Sage  
Ted Owen  
?*

*A CROQUET LUNCH IN THE ROYAL GLEN HOTEL IN THE 1980s*



*1 Gwen Hewitt, 2 Muriel Rose, 3 Mary Ward, 4 Arthur Ward, 5 Joan Ward, 6 Hilary Hatherley, 7 John Hatherley, 8 Eric Kitchener, 9 Linda Kitchener, 10 Gordon Wilcox, 11 Jane Wilcox*

*VISITORS AND PLAYERS IN OPEN TOURNAMENT AT BUDLEIGH IN 1980s*



*LtoR*

*Mary Hardman  
Iris Dwerryhouse  
Katherine Holroyde  
Eric Kitchener  
Phillip Dwerryhouse  
Pat Tunmer (Budleigh)  
(Tournament Manager)*

*B.B.C. VISIT TO SIDMOUTH INITIALLY FOR SONGS OF PRAISE 1986*



*1 Robert Case, 2 Sheila Scarr, 3 Katherine Holroyde, 4 Reg Peirce, 5 Cliff Michelmore (B.B.C.)  
6 Bill Scarr, Others B.B.C. Personnel*



*August 1986  
The T.V. presenter being introduced by Reg Peirce to the pleasures of Croquet.  
Michelmore was in Sidmouth in connection with a "Songs of Praise" programme.*



Mrs Mabon, Humphrey Hocks' God-daughter presented his mallet and medal in time for the October AGM and these were set-up in 'Humphrey Hick's Corner'

Sidmouth Cricket Club has a photograph in its pavilion commemorating legendary batsman W.G. Grace —

1986

and the Croquet Club has a memorial in the same room to a famous son of its game — H.O. Hicks.

Humphrey Hicks died in June at the age of 82. He had lived at Colyford for 43 years, and was a member of Sidmouth Croquet Club. He was a dear friend to the Sidmouth players, and was also a world class champion.

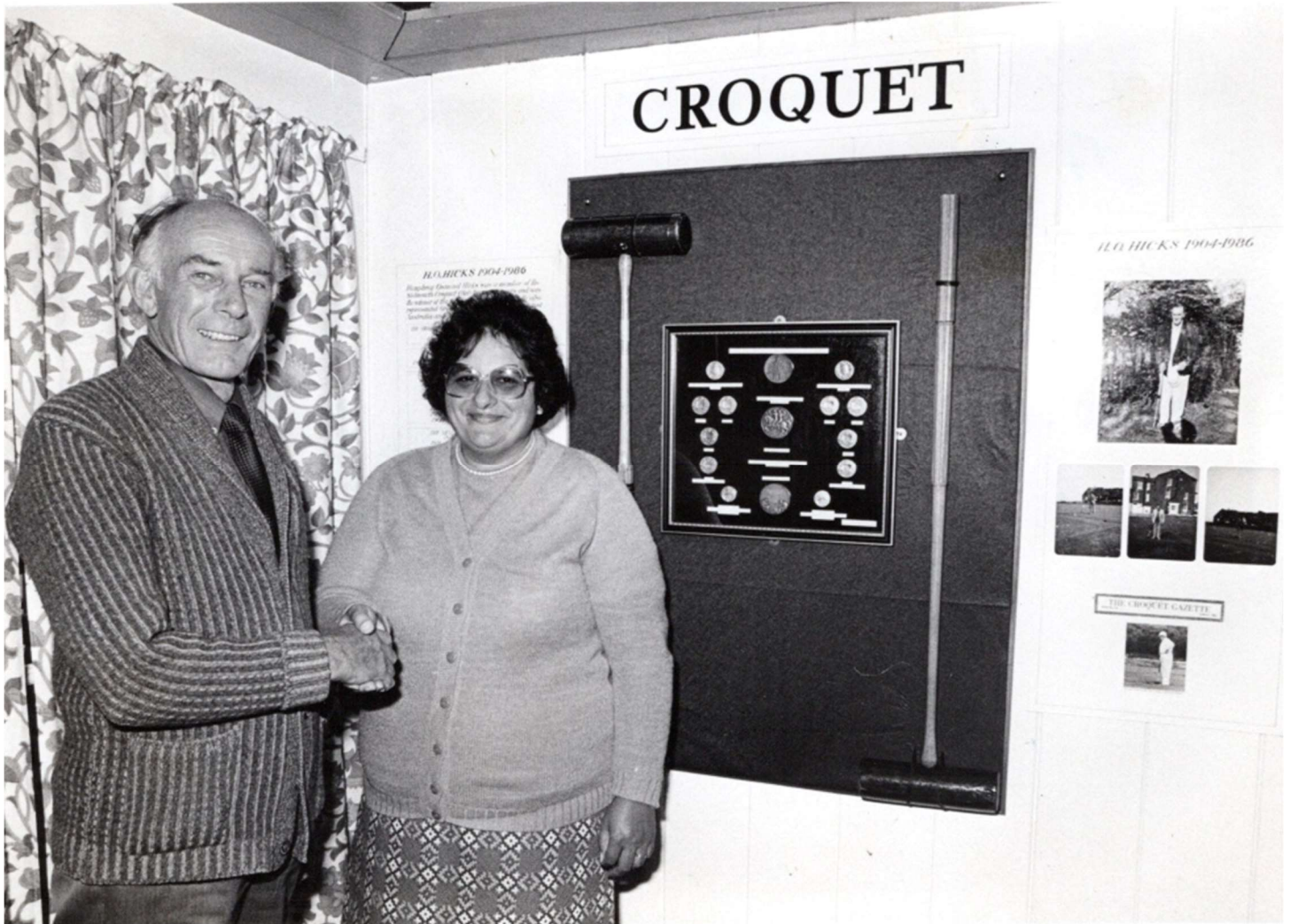
Humphrey Hicks was elected to the Croquet Association in 1919, quickly becoming a first class player. He began winning championship trophies in 1930, and on many occasions represented Great Britain in test match teams.

He was a man of great character, bordering on the eccentric. It was not unusual for him to be knitting while his opponent was in play.

His croquet mallets, photographs and some of his medals, and a list of some of his achievements are now on display in the pavilion, having been presented by his god-daughter, Mrs. Hilary Mabon.

Club members were able to see the display at their annual meeting on Tuesday, when they invited Mrs. Mabon along to see the finished exhibition.

She is pictured with the club's chairman, Mr. John Hatherley.



LtoR: Jack Reeves, Eric Kitchener, Sheila Scarr receiving the Sidmouth Challenge Cup [One of the AC Doubles Cups aka 'The Colclough Cups'] from Mrs Mabon, Jack Jeeves waiting to receive the other Colclough Cup



1986



• John Hatherley and Joan Goode were the handicap singles champions of Sidmouth Croquet Club this year, winning the Belmont Cup and Fermor Bowl, respectively.

The trophies were presented at the annual meeting on Tuesday. Other winners were: Devonia Cup, high bis-

que handicap singles, Cliff Taylor; Colclough and Sidmouth Cups, handicap doubles, Sheila Scarr and Jack Jeeves; Longman Cup, most improved player (high bisque), John Wasdell; Sidmouth Croquet Cup, most improved player (low bisque), Alan Harding; Cunn-

ingham salver, golf croquet singles, David Rawkins; Cunningham salver, golf croquet doubles, David and Sue Rawkins; Corbett spoon, two ball tournament (high bisque), Len Sage; Corbett spoon, two ball tournament (low bisque), Michael Davis.

1986

SIDMOUTH CRICKET TENNIS CROQUET & HOCKEY CLUB

SUBSCRIPTIONS 1987

	<u>BASIC</u>	<u>PLAYING</u>
Life Patrons	£130	
Non-Playing Members (Single)	£11	
Non-Playing Members (Couples)	17 x	
Cricket or Hockey Player	11	+ Match fee £1.20
Croquet or Tennis Player	11	+ £23 x
To play 2nd game		10
Juniors under 18	5	
Non-playing Country Members	8	
Non-playing Country Members (Couple)	14	
Cricket Country Playing Members	8	+ Match fee
Tennis & Croquet Country Playing Members	16	

Husband and wife, both playing, each pay full subscription £34.

Life Patrons will pay the playing subscriptions of £23.

Two visiting teams playing each other will be asked to pay £3 per man  
to include tea: Total £66.

Team lunch and Tea : £3.50

Team Tea : 80p

**International News**

**World first in  
croquet?**

*May 1987*

NAPIER (PA) - An octuple peel by top Auckland croquet player Bob Jackson at Marewa on Saturday is believed to be the first recorded in the world.

During the North Island open final, Jackson achieved the feat which is thought to be unprecedented in the game. Playing against Hawke's Bay's John Prince, Jackson put his opponent's ball through eight consecutive hoops in one break.

A triple peel, putting the ball through three consecutive hoops, is considered a difficult feat but no player at the championships could remember hearing of an octuple peel being done.

Incredibly, Prince recovered from the display from Jackson to beat his rival 26-16 to take the title.

*Budleigh May '87*

Alan Harding won all his games averaging +7 per game and Leslie Tove (old block of the young chip John (0)) averaged +8 in his block. In the final Leslie won the L.G. Walters Long Handicap Challenge Trophy +6 on time. Sidmouth had to win it.

## Short Croquet introduced at Sidmouth

Report by *Paul Dwerryhouse*

'Croquet' Sept '87

The Sidmouth Club mounted a Short Croquet Tournament on May 27th and 28th at the request of the Committee of the South Western Federation.

The event was the first open croquet tournament at Sidmouth for 32 years. Three full size lawns, each divided into two, were allocated to the twenty four players, representing clubs from Bristol, Nailsea, Bath, Tracy Park, Wellington, and Exeter, with six players from the host club.

Play was organised in four blocks of six; two blocks with handicaps 1½ to 6, and two with

handicaps 7 to 9. Each player was allowed 75 minutes per game, with a play-off between the winners of each block.

The two finals were played simultaneously between Ken Bright (Tracy Park) and Maurice Boardman (Bath); Leslie Toye (Sidmouth) and Dr Jim Davey (Bath). Leslie Toye emerged a comfortable winner by six points. The game between Ken and Maurice gripped the interest of all the spectators until the last strokes, Maurice finally winning by three points after facing almost certain defeat.

Brilliant sunshine on both days graced the occasion, enhancing the spectacular setting of the Sidmouth lawns before the dazzling backdrop of the English Channel, overlooked by the splendid Regency Terrace of town houses, one of which was once occupied by the Grand Duchess Helina of Russia and still displays the Russian Eagle on the south wall. This was croquet in all its dignity, skill and fascinating entertainment.

Play was under the capable management of Iris Dwerryhouse and Eric Kitchener, with Katherine Holroyde masterminding first-class catering arrangements. It was unanimously agreed that the event was a most successful and enjoyable experiment, one which could well be repeated in 1988.



*The Four Finalists at Sidmouth (Left to right): Maurice Boardman (Bath), Ken Bright (Tracy Park), Leslie Toye (Sidmouth) and Dr Jim Davey (Bath)*

*Short Croquet started in 1987 Open Tournaments.*

*From 1989 played for a trophy 'The Dorothy Toye Cup' presented by Leslie Toye*

*This tournament abandoned after 1995 tournament had been held. Lack of entries from other Clubs despite extensive publicity effort had made the tournament an internal competition only, which hardly justified the necessary work for the groundsman*





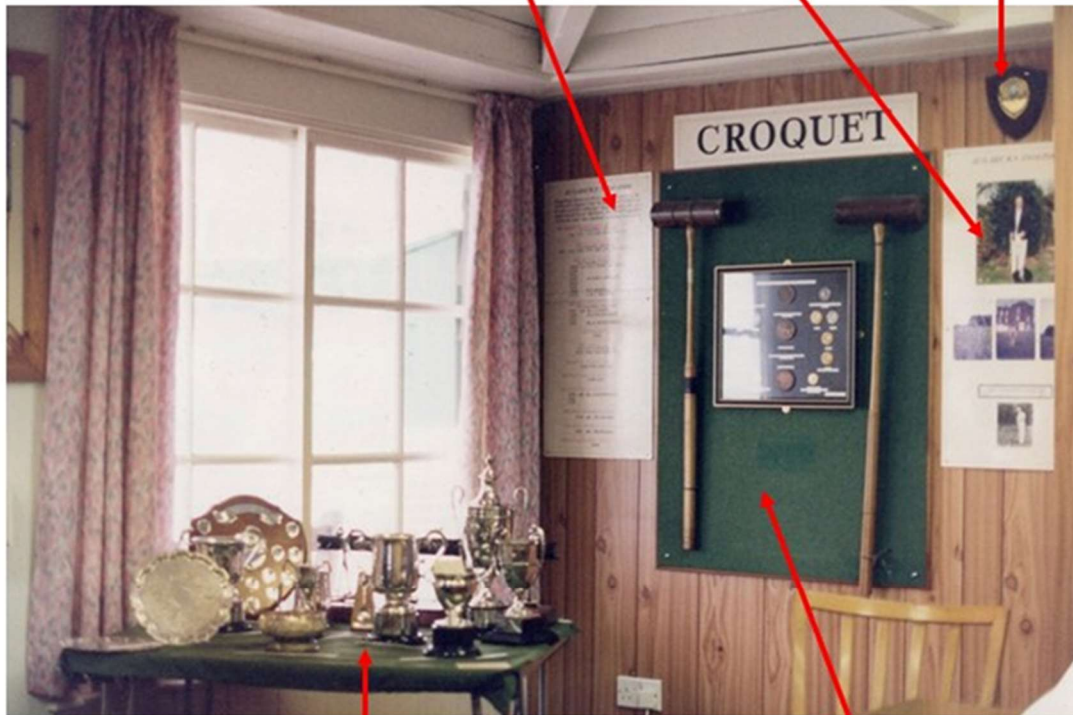
LtoR: Jack Reeves, David Rawkins, Alan Harding, Cliff Taylor, Len Sage  
Sheila Scarr, Sue Rawkins, John Hatherley, Joan Goode, Michael Davis

1987

Detailed H.H. wins

H.H. photos

Apps Heley shield



Club Trophies as at AGM 1987; L to R  
Cunningham Salvors, HH Cup, Robert Case Shield,  
Fermor Rose Bowl, Devonia Cup, R Case Tankard,  
Corbett Spoon, Belmont Cup, Longworth Cup, Colclough  
Cup, Colclough Challenge Cup

H.H. Medals  
& mallets

## Obituaries

### ROBERT CHARLES CASE

Robert Charles Case spent most of his working life surveying and building railways in India.

Since returning to live in England, he took up playing Croquet at the age of eighty three and from that time became a complete devotee of the game.

He was Secretary of the Sidmouth Club for three and a half years, during which time he made a valuable contribution to the general progress and playing standards of the members.

He applied his engineering precision to every aspect of the game, perfecting his own stroke play with his intricate knowledge of geometric angles. He designed and introduced a two hour competition of stroke play, which came to be known as 'Robert's Shot Game'. This was featured in the Gazette a few years ago and is now used by other Clubs in different parts of the country.

It was always his ambition to achieve a single figure handicap, but this was not to be. At the age of ninety five on a bright sunny morning on the 9th of May 1988, having run a hoop in the middle of a break, Robert collapsed and died on the lawn on which he had made his first roquet twelve years before.

He was a character who will be talked about in 1988

Sidmouth were well represented at Budleigh Salterton Croquet Club's May tournament but only John Hatherley and Michael Davis played to their true form.

About a third of the players were from the home club, but all the top honours went to visitors.

John Hatherleigh of Sidmouth won one of the blocks but was beaten at the last moment of an exciting game for the Godfrey Turner Challenge Cup by Paul Macdonald of Roehampton.

come; he was kind, courteous, with a great sense of humour, always ready to help aspiring players many years his junior.

To say that he will be missed would be a supreme understatement, but strangely the game of Croquet seems to produce these outstanding characters and long may the game be graced by such salient personalities.

P.A.D.

P. A. D. Philip  
Dwerryhouse

Croquet Gazette

*Member of the Croquet Club  
from 1976  
Secretary 1980 - 83*

SATURDAY, MAY 14th., 1988



## Veteran croquet player dies on court

Mr. Robert Case, the grand old man of Sidmouth's sporting scene, collapsed and died on Monday morning, still playing at the age of 95.

Mr. Case, was taken ill during a croquet match at the Fort Field, Sidmouth.

Onlookers and ambulancemen were unable to revive Mr. Case, who lived with his sister, Lady Frances Fermor, at Knowle Drive.

A member and past secretary of the Sidmouth Croquet Club, Mr. Case was still playing about three times a week.

One of the first on the scene on Monday was Mr. Reg Peirce, of Cottington Mead, Sidmouth. He had earlier waved to Mr. Case when he spotted him playing a match against a lady opponent and then rushed to help when he saw he had collapsed.

Five years ago Mr. Case's friends organised a special 90th birthday cake in the shape of a croquet court, complete with green icing to depict the lawn and miniature hoops.

In his working life Mr. Case was an engineer with the India State Railways. The funeral was held on Thursday.

## Handicapping

### Procedures for Appointing Handicappers

By Barry Keen

#### Arrangements up to the end of 1987

In the past a CA Handicapper was only appointed following recommendations from other handicappers and after the candidate had satisfied the Committee that he had sufficient relevant experience.

With the rapid expansion of new clubs this procedure became unworkable, as it became obvious that a handicapper should be appointed to all registered clubs. It therefore became normal for the Committee, through its Chairman, to appoint a nominee from a new club, regardless of his or her experience.

The Committee feels that the situation should be improved, especially as new clubs are being formed all the time and schools and universities have begun to take up the game.

#### New arrangements for 1988.

For 1988 a new grade of handicapper is to be introduced - to be called a Club Handicapper - in addition to the existing CA Handicapper.

A Club Handicapper will only be appointed to clubs without a CA Handicapper. A Club Handicapper will only be permitted to control the handicaps of his club members and the handicaps given will not be official CA handicaps. Players who enter CA events with only a club handicap will play off that handicap but it will be always treated as a 'starred' handicap.

The role of the Club Handicapper will be as follows:

1. To give players within his club a handicap and to continue to monitor those handicaps, changing them as required using the guidelines of the Committee. In particular, club handicaps should always be brought into line with any handicap changes made to club members by a CA Handicapper.
2. To keep an up to date record of club handicaps. This record should include dates of changes and reasons for the change if the Club Handicapper wishes to apply to become a CA Handicapper at a later date (see below).
3. To take all opportunities available to discuss the handicapping within his club with a CA Handicapper and where possible obtain formal

CA status for his club handicaps by this route.

4. To make recommendations to the Committee for changes of official CA handicaps which may have been given to his club members, clearly stating the reasons why such a change should be made. Any recommendations will have no effect on a players handicap until approved by the Committee.

A Club Handicapper will be able to apply to become a CA Handicapper after 2 years' experience. Any application will require the support of two CA Handicappers and would normally require evidence of active and successful handicapping within the club. It would also normally require evidence of playing regularly at other clubs to demonstrate that the candidate has the experience to co-ordinate handicaps between clubs. In practice this will not be as onerous as it sounds as existing CA Handicappers will be asked to encourage and support the promotion of the right candidates.

Any registered club without a CA Handicapper is being invited by the Committee to nominate one of its members to be appointed as a Club Handicapper. Should a Club Handicapper need to be changed for whatever reason then the designation will be transferred to the new person, and the original handicapper will lose his title. Similarly, once a club has a CA Handicapper then any existing Club Handicapper will lose his title. These measures will prevent a proliferation of Club Handicappers.

Clubs would normally control their member's handicaps via a small handicapping committee chaired by a CA Handicapper, or a Club Handicapper where there is no CA Handicapper. It should be noted that the members of this committee are not required to be CA Handicappers and membership of any such committee will not automatically earn the title of CA Handicapper.

It is not intended that this new procedure should reduce the number of CA Handicappers but that the overall quality of CA Handicappers should be improved.

*Barry Keen is the Chairman of the Handicap Coordination Committee.*

*Interesting to remember the Handicapping system before the Automatic one was adopted in 1992. A great many clubs did not have the luxury of a C.A. handicapper.*

*Iris Dwerryhouse's appointment as such in the 1980s was of inestimable value to Sidmouth players.*

## OBITUARY: W.A. Scarr

'Croquet' Jan. 1989

The death of Bill Scarr, aged 86, will have greatly saddened those who remember his pioneer work for Bath Croquet Club in the mid-70s.

The club had been soundly established by Joyce Brash-Smith, but the initial intake knew little of Association Croquet; indeed experienced players were then rather thin on the ground throughout Avon and Somerset.

In this context, Bath were lucky to have Bill Scarr, willing to commute regularly from Weston-super-Mare and galvanise the fledgling club with an infectious enthusiasm that would have been impressive in a man half his age.

Bill served the club well as Chairman, but probably made his greatest impact as an inspiring coach - so much so that he was able to lead Bath to the Longman Final at the first attempt. The writer recalls many palpitating doubles, in which only the steadier nerve of his septuagenarian partner secured yet another +1 O.T.

In his prime, Bill Scarr was a neat and effective player, adept at building breaks with well-timed splits - a touch player who cheerfully endured Bath's sluggish lawns. He was a master of the Ross Cut, a

stroke much admired but seldom emulated by his team mates. He took up croquet somewhat late in the course of a very full life, otherwise he would surely have achieved a lower handicap than 6.

Bill and his wife Sheila were popular figures (and a much-feared doubles team) at many tournaments, especially on the South Coast circuit. They began their croquet careers at Bristol where, in 1974-75, they laid the foundations for the spectacular transformation later achieved by John McCullough and others. When Sheila was ordained and became a minister of the United Reform Church at Seaton, they joined the Sidmouth Club, where they played regularly for three seasons. Bill, in spite of his advancing years, steadfastly resisted a handicap increase and was still able to provide strong opposition to younger players by his controlled stroke play and wily tactical manoeuvres. He will be sadly missed at many croquet clubs, but those who were privileged to play with him at Bath will remember Bill Scarr as a crucial figure in the revival of croquet in the West.

S.J.G.

*Sheila is still (in 1993) a member, and has in memory of bill donated 2 seats to the Club.*

# New Pavilion Opened at Wellington

Report from Miss E.M.A. Sutton

APRIL 1989

Mrs Iris Dwerryhouse, the South West Federation tournament secretary, cut the tape early in April to open the new pavilion at the Wellington Croquet Club, Somerset. The wind blew, the sun shone, it rained - the organisation fell apart, the official photographer failed to turn up in time, we forgot to present

on to your hat?

We have since made up for the rain and enjoyed the use of our new pavilion, placed as it is in the idyllic surroundings of Nynehead Court, where by kind permission of the management committee we have two courts, one full size and another three-quarter size. Our playing



*Iris Dwerryhouse cuts the tape to open the new pavilion at Wellington Croquet Club, Somerset.*

the flowers. But the tea was magnificent.

Yes, there were some spectators, they were ejected to stand in a pitiful huddle; have you ever tried to clap whilst clutching a broly and hanging

record doesn't yet match our surroundings, but we are working on it.



A Short Croquet tournament was held at Sidmouth in May, open to all clubs in the South West Federation. It was a popular event, and the photo gives an indication of the players and spectator interest, as well as Sidmouth's lovely surroundings.

1989



*May 1989 - Budleigh Week*

*↳ R Ted Owen - John Hatherley - Mary Hardman - Leslie Toye*

**BUDLEIGH SALTERTON**  
**RESULTS** MAY 1989

**American Handicap Singles**

**Block Winners**

**Division I**

J. Hatherley (4½), C.N. Williams (6), I.P.M. Macdonald (2½).

**Play-Off**

Godfrey Turner Challenge Cup: Hatherley bt Williams +1(T); Hatherley bt Macdonald +5.

**Division II**

A. Potter (8), Mrs C. Marshall (11), L.E. Toye (7½).

**Play-Off**

J.K. Brown Memorial Challenge Cup: Potter bt Mrs Marshall +7; Toye bt Potter +10.

**Division III**

**Play-Off**

L.G. Walters Long Handicap Trophy: E.C. Owen (13) bt J. Perry (16) +4(T).

**Handicap Doubles**

(Daldry Cups: 21 pairs entered)

**Semi-Finals**

Dr Laney & Mrs Croker bt Mr & Mrs Stevens +16; J. Hatherley & Miss Hardman bt F.A. Rowlands & Mrs Bagnall +13.

**Final:**

Hatherley & Hardman bt Laney & Croker +8.

## Sidmouth croquet on top of world

Four players from Sidmouth beat off strong opposition from Budleigh Salterton, Exeter, Bristol, Cheltenham, Roehampton, Dyffryn, Ellsmere, Woking and the Isle of Wight to win all four events at the six day Association Croquet Open Tournament held at Budleigh Salterton.

John Hatherley partnered by Mary Hardman showed consistent form all week, playing a total of four 3 ½ hour matches to win the Sir Leonard Daldry doubles Cup beating Don Laney and Audrey Croker in the final.

John Hatherley also played seven matches in the A class singles on his way to beating Roehampton's Paul MacDonald in the final of the Godfrey Turner Cup.

After one narrow defeat in the first round of the J. K. Brown Memorial Cup B class singles, Leslie Toye powered his way through six rounds, crushing all opposition before beating Andrew Potter (Cheltenham) in the final.

Ted Owen, playing in only his second open tournament since taking up the game, overcame all opposition in the C class singles, beating Budleigh Salterton's John Perry in the final of the L. G. Walters Cup.

Of the 49 players, 10 were from Sidmouth and although conditions at the start of the week were ideal, players had to contend with cold blustery weather for the rest of the week but at least the lawns remained dry throughout.

MAY 1989

## Profile Major Gerald F. Stone (Freddie)

*Congratulations to Freddie Stone, who has recently celebrated his 90th birthday. Gerald Cave writes about some of Freddie's remarkable achievements.*

Freddie Stone, born in 1899, started playing at the age of 6. He was 'coached' by his father who was a member of the 'best ten' in the years 1911 and 1914.

Freddie's first tournament was at Sidmouth at the age of 10 in 1905.

He played in the handicap doubles, but despite making a break from 4 to 4-back, lost. His handicap for the event was 5\*, the then beginners handicap, which was confirmed as his handicap.

At the age of 14, in a handicap doubles at Exeter, he made his one and only quadruple peel! He was recommended for a reduction in handicap from ½ (as he then was) to scratch. The Association Handicapper refused to confirm this reduction, saying that he refused to have a small boy as an Association Member with a scratch handicap. Inevitably he was already a Silver Medalist, which he won in 1912 (aged 13).

Freddie was twice invited to join GB touring sides, once to Australia when he was still serving, but couldn't get 'leave' and once to New



Zealand after retirement (1949), which he had to refuse for personal reasons. He did however play against New Zealand in 1956 in all 5 test matches in this country.

He has lived in Budleigh Salterton, where he was renowned for his very hard hitting of the croquet ball. The legend that he once hit his ball into the sea is exaggerated; the ball only reached the High Street.

He was a delightful partner and opponent and never questioned (on court) the decision of a referee, though once, when a 'decision' had cost him a championship, the referee did afterwards apologise for wrongly interpreting the Laws!

Freddie had his 90th birthday early in 1989. He still watches croquet - and plays bridge which is as deadly and as accurate as was his croquet.

*x With various partners, he won the Sidmouth Open Handicap Doubles in 1933 (as cat. Stone) and after the war break (as Major Stone) he won in 1950, 1953, 1954, 1955.*

*He also in 1953 won the Belmont Cup, which until 1956 was used as an Open Tournament trophy.*

*'Croquet' July 1989* C

### Your Letters *Sept '89*

Dear Sir,

Thank you for sending me 'Garden Croquet News'. At last, a magazine for Garden Croquet Players!

I am writing because I was hoping you can help me with a problem. The way we have always played croquet is you can choose which of your balls you want to play each turn. However we played against some friends recently and they play differently. They say you must play both balls in the order on the peg and you can't choose which one you want to play. Could you tell us which is right.

Frank Green,  
Clifton.

*You are right. At the start of each turn, you can choose which of your two balls you wish to play. Playing the balls in the order on the peg, sometimes referred to as the 'sequence game', was the way croquet was played up until 1913.*

*The laws of croquet are often passed on from father to son, so old laws sometimes persist long after they have been changed. One example of this is that some people still believe you can place your foot on the ball when you play the croquet stroke. This was banned as long ago as 1870! - Ed.*



Prize winners at Budleigh Salterton (L to R): Christine Bagnall (Budleigh's Chairman); Richard Brand (winner Oliver Bowl); John Haslam (winner of Longman Cup); David Croker (winner of Colman Cup); Mick Tompkinson (winner of Y event) Michael Davis (winner of Stone Cup); Dennis Moorcroft (Manager)

**1 win:** A.W. Harding (11)  
**0 wins:** Mrs C. Bagnall (6½)  
**Block D**  
**5 wins:** P.F. Leach (5½)  
**4 wins:** M. Granger-Brown (2)  
**3 wins:** H.G.T. Bolton (3½)  
**2 wins:** Wing Cdr T.N. Silk (13)  
**1 win:** Mrs P.A. Dwerryhouse (6½)

**0 wins:** Mrs C.W. Marshall (10)  
**Block E**  
**5 wins:** Dr P.A. Watson (5½)  
**4 wins:** W.C. Broad-Thomas (4)  
**3 wins:** A.J. Wasdell (10)  
**1 win:** J.W. Potter (2), P.A. Dwerryhouse (6½), Mrs P.K. Leach (14)

**Budleigh:  
 19-21 September '89**

*Report by Peter Danks*

**RESULTS**

(Handicap Play)

**Block A**

**4 wins:** B. Redford (2) +63, L.V. Latham (0) +48

**3 wins:** F.A. Rowlands (4)

**2 wins:** Mrs M.G. Tompkinson (6½)

**1 win:** N.M. Griffin (6), Mrs W.C. Broad-Thomas

**Block B**

**5 wins:** J.S. Toye (0)

**3 wins:** J. McBurnie-Wood (5½) +20, Mrs L.V. Latham (5½) +12, M.G. Tompkinson (2) -4

**1 win:** Miss K. Holroyde (12)

**0 wins:** R.W. Newnham (4)

**Block C**

**5 wins:** Dr D.R. Laney (1½)

**4 wins:** Mrs J.W. Potter (9)

**3 wins:** P.K.L. Danks (5)

**2 wins:** J.H.J. Soutter (2½)



*Block-winner:  
 John Toye.*



### APPS-HELEY AWARD WINNERS

1960 Llandudno	1974 Wolverhampton
1961 Cambridge	1975 Southport & Birkdale
1962 Burley	1976 Bath
1963 Bristol	1977 Ingatestone
1964 Folkestone/Hythe	1978 Bowdon
1965 Parkstone	1979 Nottingham
1966 No record	1980 Colchester
1967 Cheltenham	1981 Bowdon
1968 Edinburgh	1982 Edgbaston
1969 No record	1983 East Riding
1970 Ipswich	1984 Bristol
1971 Stourbridge	1985 Durham University
1972 Wrest Park	1986 Pendle
1973 Sidmouth	1988 Sidmouth

## The History of the Apps-Heley Award

By John McCullough

Mrs L.C. Apps, one of the greatest servants of the Croquet Association, died on 10th April 1959. She became an associate as early as 1915 and became a formidable player between the wars, winning the Women's Championship (1923), two mixed doubles Championships with her husband, Ben C. Apps (1926 & 1927) and one with Maurice Reckitt (1937), the Ladies' Field Cup on three occasions (1935, 1936 & 1937), and the President's Cup (1936). She was best known, however, as a tireless Secretary of the Association at one of the most difficult times in its history (1948-1959).

Following her death, a collection was organised among associates to provide a fitting memorial. Captain Reed-Walker donated a silver bowl, which Council decided should be known as the Apps Bowl and which, from 1960 to 1965, was awarded each year to the most improved player, the first winner being the late Colonel D.M.C. Prichard. Following the presentation of the Steele Bowl in 1966, the Apps Bowl has been awarded each year to the most improved man.

From the money collected, an inscribed electric clock was purchased and placed in the CA Office. It was then decided that the balance of the fund be invested and that 'the interest from the investment (augmented

if necessary by the CA) should provide an annual gift of £5 to be known as the Apps Gift - to assist a Club which the Tournament Committee decides deserves special help'. This gift became known as the Apps Memorial Award and over the years the description 'deserving', in the phrase 'to the most deserving club', became interpreted as 'most worthy' rather than 'most needy', possibly to enhance the status of the award or possibly to make it easier to decide which Club should receive it each year.

On 11th July 1971, Ruth Heley died. She had been introduced to Croquet just after the Second World War by her second

**The Apps-Heley Award, made each year to the Club that has done the most for croquet or made the most progress during the year, will henceforth be restricted to clubs more than 3 years old. All clubs formed prior to 1985 are therefore eligible, and nominations are invited for this Award also. Nominations should include information similar to that listed above, with comparative membership and CA membership figures for 1986. Copies of, or information about, local and regional publicity obtained should be included, plus information about activities to help associated organisations outside the club; eg. hosting of CA events, work done for the local Federation or to help new clubs or schools in the Region (such as coaching by club members). Details of awards to members as coaches or referees should also be included.**

husband and became a regular competitor in CA events, winning the Ladies' Peels in 1957 and appearing in the Ladies' Field Cup in 1959. She was best remembered, however, for the great part she played in promoting Croquet at Cambridge University and in 1964 new graduates instituted the Heley Club as a tribute to her. In 1972 a legacy from Mrs Ruth Heley was added to the Apps Memorial fund and the title of the award was changed to the Apps-Heley Award.

In 1986 the Publicity and Development Committee found some difficulty in comparing the rather different merits of a spate of nominations of brand new Clubs, 'children' of our remarkably successful development programme, and those of nominated established Clubs, whose achievements were quite different in nature. Charles Townsend then made his generous offer of a new Award for the new Clubs, so that henceforth the Apps-Heley Award will be restricted to the most deserving of the established Clubs (see separate box on Nominations for 1987).

Today the winning Club receives an inscribed plaque to keep, plus a cash award of £15.

*The '79 Shield and the '89 Plaque are in the Hamphrey Hicks corner*

## Sidmouth wins Apps Heley Award

Report by Gwynneth Dart

'Croquet' May 1990

standard of play.

Sidmouth plays its croquet within sight and sound of the sea and forms part of a Club (the Sidmouth Cricket, Tennis, Croquet and Hockey Club) which would be one of the earliest Croquet Clubs in the country.

One of our lawns is beside the thatched Pavilion whose facilities are shared by all sections of the Club; the other 2 lawns are beyond the cricket field, and there we have our own small pavilion for shelter when the sea breezes blow too hard. Through the generosity of an anonymous donor we shall this year have a shelter also at the seaward end of Lawn 3.

Adjacent to these lawns is the area presently used for practice, and plans are currently being made to level and upgrade it for use by next season as a 4th lawn. We are fortunate in our location and facilities, but it is the membership which makes a Club, and it is good to report that we are an active and friendly Club with a high proportion of coaches and referees who give throughout the season much time and effort, training and encouraging us towards a higher

There is a yearly waiting list and potential new members are invited to have a course of 6 lessons to introduce them to the game before committing themselves to membership, which has now passed the 100 mark. At the time of writing we have 22 C.A. members.

During last season we had a number of individual successes, not least of which was 'breaking the bank' at the Budleigh Open Tournament in May, with 4 club members winning all the cups: and 2 of our members reached the All-England area final at Bristol.

As a Club we took part in the Longman Cup and South West Federation matches, and hosted a Short Croquet Open Tournament and the Federation Golf Croquet Final. Within the Club there is each year a full programme of domestic tournaments, which all members are encouraged to enter.

Our present Chairman, Iris Dwerryhouse, (who has been a C.A. member since 1973) served the South West Federation in 1988 and 1989 as Tournament Secretary; she is also an official C.A. handicapper. Her untiring service to the Club within the framework of the C.A. is invaluable, and we are pleased and proud that it is in her current time of office as Chairman that the Apps Heley Award has come to Sidmouth.



A Short Croquet tournament with Lawns 2 & 3 turned into 4 small lawns. Iris Dwerryhouse in play in the foreground.



Sidmouth players who won prizes at the Budleigh May Open Tournament (L to R): John Hatherley, Iris Dwerryhouse, Ted Owen, Mary Hardman, and Leslie Toye, with Sidmouth's main clubhouse in the background.



*April 1990 The Club receives the Apps-Heley award for the second time.*



*Iris Dwerryhouse (Chairman) receives the plaque from J. W. Solomon President of the C.A. In the grounds of the Hurlingham Club, Mary Hardman, Iris and Philip Dwerryhouse*

# Croquet - vicious?

A MORE gentler sound than the clunk of mallet on ball across the manicured green of a croquet lawn is hard to imagine.

Yet people think it a vicious game, according to Mrs Iris Dwerryhouse, chairman of Sidmouth Croquet Club, and she told prospective new members precisely that when she welcomed them to the clubhouse last week.

"It's not a vicious game," she assured them. "But people seem to take the mickey out of croquet by saying it is. You do play the game to win. We are, however, all very friendly here."

The club is part of the Sidmouth Cricket, Tennis, Croquet and Hockey Club on the Fort Field where cricket has been played since 1823. Croquet began in 1907.

Mrs Dwerryhouse took up position, appropriately enough in front of a picture of W.G. Grace, across from the corner of the clubhouse dedicated to its most famous croquet player, the late Humphrey Hicks.

## Intricate

"It's a very interesting, very intricate game, most intelligent," said Mrs Dwerryhouse. "One needs accuracy and skill and practice is essential. It's very important, too, to learn and improve the various shots."

So there you have it. Competitive, yes. Vicious, no!

While the new members were introduced to the club coaches - an initial course of six lessons costs £5 - I enquired of one of the committee, Mr Michael Davis, a former Whitehall civil servant who played weekend garden croquet in Kent before retirement to Sidmouth 10 years ago, how this 'vicious' tag came about.

Idle, foolish banter, surely, by those who don't understand a game which is played at Test Match as well as tournament level all over the country.

"Hard to say, really," he said. "But it's true there's a bit of mickey taking. Perhaps it's the old joke about players looking for the ball in the bushes because that's where the girl is looking, too. That's the illustration, isn't it, of the Victorian curate playing croquet."

Perish the thought! Nevertheless, it's a game that's not to be trifled with. Like golf, you've got



● Anyone for croquet - (from left): Vera Henderson, Philip Dwerryhouse, Iris Dwerryhouse, Keith Dawes, John Hatherley.

to go for it.

"You have to want to play croquet," Mr Davis said. "Think of it in terms of snooker. It has the same similarities. You can't be successful at snooker unless you want to master the complexities of it."

"Same with croquet. Both are complex games. And whatever anyone may say, they are playing to win. Otherwise, they wouldn't be out there on the lawn."

Years ago, explained Mrs Dwerryhouse, who likes to play about three times a week, lady players favoured a side stance to accommodate long dresses. The majority today hold the mallet centre which she herself preferred since it facilitated a straighter line.

"It's all about the swing and the weight of the mallet," she said. "You have to get that pendulum effect. Don't bash hard. It's from the shoulder you play. Not from the wrists."

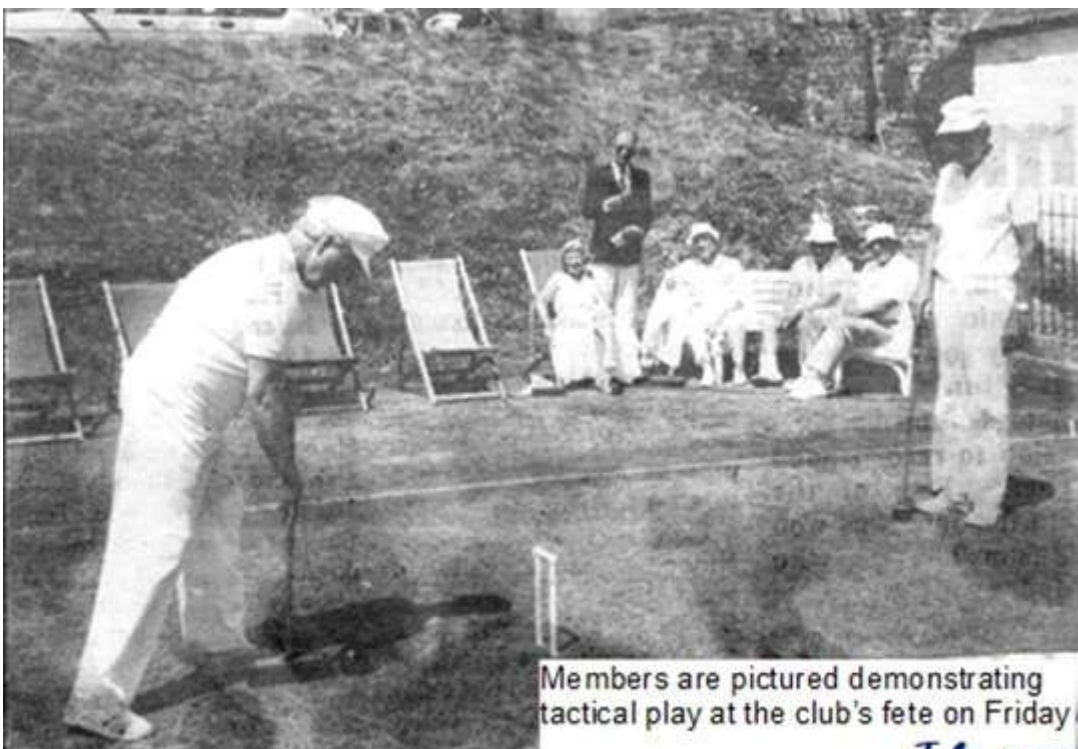
Croquet, I was assured, is a game for all ages. In fact, the older you are the less likely you are to

get down to a low handicap. It was clear from the new members, however, that it's part of a lifestyle that fits nicely into retirement in Sidmouth.

Mr Lauchlan Kennedy, the club vice-chairman, enjoying well-deserved retirement here after 45 years as a London commuter, summed it up.

"I find relaxation and agreeable company," he said. "That's it really. I don't think you need more. If you want to be competitive there's plenty of room to be competitive. Croquet is a cross between chess and snooker. But if you want to take it as a leisurely, relaxing pursuit you can do that equally as well."

And there's nothing vicious about that!



Members are pictured demonstrating tactical play at the club's fete on Friday

July 1990



●SIDMOUTH Croquet Club members enjoyed their end of season awards afternoon at the cricket pavilion during the week, Pat Turner presented the prizes.

Pictured with their awards are (back row, from left): G. Downs, J. Toye, Pat Turner, M. Dawson, J. Hatherley.

(Front Row): R. Peirce, A. Dart, G. Dart, A. Dustan-Smith, O. Ragg, S. Rawkins, I. Derryhouse, M. Hardman.

*'Croquet'* **PAT TUMNER**  
May 1991

Budleigh Salterton Club will be much poorer for the loss of Pat Turner who died on 22nd January aged 81.

He first became interested in croquet at Sidmouth where he helped to rejuvenate the club when it was almost on the point of collapse.

On retirement he moved to Budleigh Salterton and became one of that Club's main coaches. Many of the present members benefitted from his practical guidance and general encouragement. But visitors to Budleigh will remember him for the genial way he managed many open tournaments, including the Challenge and Gilbey in the early 1970's, the Association's Veterans tournament in 1975 and 1976, as well

as the club's May tournament for some 12 years. He had the facility of making everyone feel most welcome. He became a referee and long-standing member of the Handicap Committee and he helped the new club at Plymouth establish their initial handicaps.

He wasn't highly competitive, although he won the Reckett Cup in 1972 and 1974, but for the most part he was content to give up a lot of his time to helping others. Last year, when he found a 3 hour game a bit tiring, he turned successfully to golf croquet and rounded things off with a win in the club's Doubles Trophy.

R.Stevens,  
L.S.Mills.

*Pat was Section Secretary in 1968, and Chairman 1971 - 75 when he moved to Budleigh. In October 1990 at the section AGM he presented the trophies for the Club Tournaments.*

*From May '91 the High Bisquers trophy for the May Budleigh Open has been the Pat Turner Cup presented by his wife Elizabeth. Its runner-up in its first year was Gwynneth Dart & Elizabeth said she was sorry it had not gone to Sidmouth. In 1994 Brian Smith did bring it to Sidmouth, and in 1995 Ted Owen won it, with Rowland Henderson runner-up.*

1990



*Players and Spectators at Budleigh August 1991*

*Peter Dart, Iris Dwerryhouse, Gwynneth Dart, Mac Dawson, in foreground*

*In background Bill Ovens, Olga Ragg, Michael Davis*

[Picture taken looking into the old Mid-Pavilion replaced by the Gill Needham Pavilion in 2019]

## *AUGUST 1991*

The winners of the 4 Swiss blocks in the Big Handicap (for the Oliver Bowl) were Peter Howell (1), Peter Dorke (0), Susan Wiggins (1), and Tony Dusten-Smith (14), a newcomer from Sidmouth. No hope for the low-bisquers here, as in the play-off Tony beat Susan Wiggins in the semi and Peter Dorke in the final, both by 26 with 6 bisques standing. Tony also partnered Bobbie Wiggins to win the Y Handicap Doubles by 1 on time from Kevin Wells (14) and Cliff Jones (3), of whom more later.

A cluttered Saturday programme forced Dustan-Smith to scratch from the semi-final of the C Class, which he had also reached in fine style. Tony was rewarded with a handicap reduction to 8,

*Tony also won a Bronze Award (First time break of 10 hoops or more using bisques) \*Only one other member of the Club has won an award - Eric Kitchener, who holds a Silver Award (Sept. '88) (1<sup>st</sup> break of 12 hoops (all round) without bisques)*  
*\* Stop Press: at the May Budleigh Open (1993) Mac Dawson won a Silver Award*

# A Four Lawn Future For the Sidmouth Club

'Croquet'  
Jan. 1992.

From Philip Derryhouse

Records show that the last Open Association Croquet Tournament in Sidmouth was held in 1956.

Since that date local interest in the game appeared to dwindle to the extent that in the early 1960's the Sidmouth Cricket, Tennis, Croquet and Hockey Club boasted one full size lawn where Association Croquet had been played since the latter part of the 19th century.

By 1970 interest in the game started to grow rapidly, so three unused tennis courts were converted into two full size croquet lawns.

This enabled the local club management to embark on ambitious recruiting campaigns which resulted in the club being awarded the Apps/Heley Award in 1973.

With the facility of three lawns, all professionally maintained to a high playing standard, the club continued to grow and by the early 1980's there was a healthy waiting list for membership.

To cater for a growing interest in Association Croquet, two rather poor quality tennis courts were pressed into use for training purposes, as two half size lawns.

It soon became obvious that if this uneven area of turf was professionally levelled and relaid the club would be able to promote full scale four lawn play, offering extended tournaments from time to time.

The overall project was fully costed by a local firm, experienced in this specialised class of work, who

undertook to carry out all the work for the sum of £4,700. Before work commenced, a detailed report was submitted to the C.A. enquiring if they were in a position to contribute any financial assistance.<sup>1</sup>

The Management Committee of the Club were delighted to learn that they could expect a grant of £500 plus an interest free loan of £500, re-payable in three years, from the newly established Four Lawn Fund.<sup>2</sup>

In the light of this practical support, and an undertaking by the Croquet Sub Committee to increase membership by 20%, authorisation was given in the Autumn of 1990 for the work to commence.

A detailed account of progress of the work through the winter and early spring of 1991 would make a whole story in itself; let me suffice to say therefore, that ultimate success was achieved to the extent of the fourth lawn coming into play during the month of July.

When the season opens in 1992 members will enjoy unlimited play on four first class lawns.

A five day handicap tournament is advertised for June 1st-5th 1992, coupled with a varied programme of interesting club events throughout the season.

More new members will be trained and by the end of the 1992 season, membership will have reached its full complement, with the back up of a waiting list for 1993.

## SIDMOUTH

Handicap 1-5 June (K/O) 1992.

This was the first tournament organised by the Sidmouth Club since the mid 50's and restarted a tournament tradition which originated in 1908. The provision of a fourth lawn during the last year has made the running of a tournament more feasible and on the success of this year's event, it must become a permanent fixture in the future. The entry was well supported by visiting players from Bristol, Buddleigh Salterton, Southwick, Surbiton, Wellington, Worthing, and the Hornsby's from Australia.

Regrettably day one turned out to be very grey and with a strong lasting drizzle but with the usual hardness of tournament croquet players, the first round of the knockout was successfully completed by lunch. Unfortunately the weather had other ideas and manager Iris Dwerryhouse finally had to call a halt to the proceedings when lawn one started to look more like the local boating lake than a croquet lawn.

Early form predicted Michael Hornby as a good possibility in the A block as he never appeared to miss a roquet under 30ft and never stuck in hoops. Michael looked set to carry on with his winning ways in the X knockout but some 20yard hooping by Ross Dawson of Sidmouth relegated Michael to the Y competition. Things were slightly tighter in B block and it needed a points count to give Sidmouth's Gwyneth Dart victory over Don Mears from Southwick. In the C and D blocks seasoned campaigners Ted Owen from Sidmouth and Heather Perron from Bristol triumphed.

Overall despite the two days of bad weather and some of the slopes on the lawns which took some getting used to, all competitors agreed if had been a superb tournament and if possible would return next year. Well done Sidmouth and in particular Iris Dwerryhouse for her excellent management.

**Mrs D Mears** bt Dr E C Owen  
Block events 1-5 June (Play-offs)  
**M Hornby** bt Mrs G Dart  
**Miss H Perron** bt Dr E C Owen

<sup>1</sup> Derek Caporn, a long-standing member of the C.A., with vast experience in tournament management, was both player and C.A. 'observer' in the first (1992) tournament. He recommended strongly that Lawn 1 needed drastic remedial treatment were better class players to be attracted to the Open Tournaments; and his written statement was influential in persuading the Club to fund a complete relaying of Lawn 1 in the Spring of 1993.

<sup>2</sup> When the Croquet Association launched its 'Four. Lawn' Fund, it was agreed that any donation of more than £100 should be acknowledged in a special way.

Mr. S.S. Townsend was one such donor; and the C. A. asked that his name should be recorded as having helped towards the grant and interest-free loan allocated to Sidmouth in 1991.

Now living in retirement at Westward Ho in North Devon, he was for 40 years an active Association member. He edited Croquet from 1957 to 1964 and the Fixtures Book for 12 years after that. He was Chairman of Council 1970-72, and Since 1982 has been a Vice President of the C. A.

He was for many years an 'A' class player and his match memories include the name of Humphrey Hicks.

*A plaque recording Jim Townsend's name was put in the Humphrey Hicks corner in the Pavilion. His daughter visited the Club in 1995 at his request and was very pleased to see 'his' lawn and to view the plaque. (He died only 2 months later)*

### **BUDELIGH SALTERTON** Aug. 1992

Advanced 3-8 August (K/O after Blocks)

A: **D Harrison-Wood** bt C S Jones +6

B: **C J Davey** bt L Toye +3

H'cap C Class 3-8 August (K/O after Blocks)

**Mrs G Dart** (9) bt **STONE CUP**

\* **P A Dwerryhouse** (10) +14

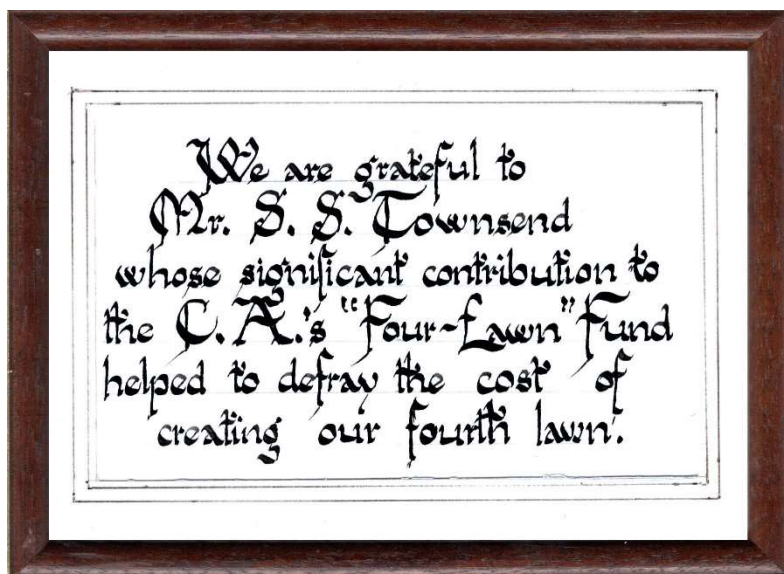
Handicap 3-8 August (K/O after Swisses)

**D Prescott** (7) bt T Howard (4) +2

Handicap Doubles 3-8 August (K/O)

**D Cornelius & M Hornby** (9) bt

J McWood & A Wickham (13) +10



*\* Philip had won the Stone Cup in 1982*



Members of Sidmouth Croquet Club receiving their trophies for the 1992 Season. (l-r) Rowland Henderson, Michael Davis, Gwen Sims, Gwen Hewitt, Esme Owen, Gwynneth Dart, John Hatherley, Mihael Smekal.





*Spring 1993  
Re-laying Lawn 1*





*Spring 1993  
Re-laying Lawn 1*



May 1993



*Philip Dwerryhouse cuts the tape to open the re-laid lawn 1. An inaugural doubles match was then played by committee members plus the President; 'Chairman's Cherubs v President's Peelers'*

*LtoR: Bob Callingham, Betty Hills, Rowland Henderson, Iris Dwerryhouse, Michael Davis, Tony Dustan-Smith, Esme Owen, Gwen Sims, Peter Montgomery, Philip Dwerryhouse, Vera Henderson, John Webber, Mary Hardman*

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## Sidmouth June Tournament by Hamish Hall (*Bristol C.C.*)

### *Anticlimax at Sidmouth 1993*

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If there was any logic in determining the winner of the Apps Heley award, surely Sidmouth should be in the frame. Last year, tennis courts gave way to their fourth lawn: this year, lawn 1 has been levelled and turfed at a cost of over £4000, barely in time for the June tournament. Once bedded down, it should be a joy to play on, without the aggravation of balls trickling off the eastern boundary. But this year, it is not possible to cut the lawn to the recognized height, and the longish lush grass presented problems in long rushes and hoop approaches.

All three events had been played in American blocks, and were all in contention on the last day. If Michael Davis could score 12 points in his last game against Tony Dunston Smith, Southwick's Bill Arliss would win. If not, Tony would polish the silverware. But as poor Michael had hobbled off injured the

previous evening, it was doubtful whether Elaine's cherishing would have restored his back.

Pam Arliss had been playing remarkably well, despite what looked like crippling and painful arthritis but she could take the Rawkins cup if she could maintain form in the game against Roland Henderson. Octogenarian Ted Owen, (and newly qualified referee determined to sort out the laws committee on the ambiguities in the little red book) playing as fast and erratically as is his wont, had clocked up 5 wins. But not sufficient to lift the trophy. Plymouth bandit, Stuart Orr and Gene Mears had better figures.

On the final day, adrenalin was flowing in the protagonists as play started under a threatening sky. Wet weather gear was donned, but then the heavens opened up. Firstly, play was stopped on the new lawn,

and twenty minutes later the others succumbed. Coffee sales rocketed. The seagulls had a field day on the cricket pitch, slowly being transformed into a lake... An outsize headache developed for Manager Iris Dwerryhouse. She went into a huddle with the ROT and the club chairman. Something stronger than coffee was required as the clock advanced to noon. Had Ted got his slide rule handy? Oh well. Perhaps a calculator will do. Eventually Iris announced that play was abandoned on lawn 1, and that play could not start on the other lawns until an hour after the rain stopped... and there was no sign of that! There was no option but to abandon play and award the trophies on the basis of the better averages of the completed game. So, bad luck for the possibles, as Bill, Roland and Stuart received the silverware.

### HISTORICAL NOTES ABOUT CUP DONORS

[Drafted c1992 / 3]

#### THE DOROTHY TOYE CUP

LESLIE TOYE, with his family, joined the Club in 1980. He presented this cup in memory of his wife Dorothy He is a Grade 1 coach.

#### THE DAVID RAWKINS CUP

*(died 1997)*

DAVID RAWKINS and his wife Sue were Club members from the early 70s until 1992, his 90th year. He was Secretary in 1975 and from 1976 to November 1980 was Chairman of the Croquet Section..

#### THE FORTFIELD CUP

JOHN HATHERLEY joined the Club in 1983. He was a Grade 2 coach and a referee, and is currently in his second period of office as Chairman. During his first Chairmanship the present Lawn 3 was re-laid, the entire expense being met by voluntary contributions from within the Croquet Section.

#### THE DWERRYHOUSE CHALLENGE CUP & THE DEVONIA CUP

PHILIP & IRIS DWERRYHOUSE both joined the Cricket Club in 1961 and have been dedicated workers for the wellbeing of the Club ever since. Iris started playing croquet in 1968, and soon after was more often on than off the Croquet Committee. From the end of 1980 to the end of 1983 she was Chairman, and again 1989 to 1991. She also in 1988 held the post of S. W. Federation Tournament Secretary. During her second time as Chairman the Apps Heley Award was given to Sidmouth for the second time; and the 2 half-lawns were re-laid, becoming the present Lawn 2, and making Sidmouth an official 4 Lawn Club. This status provided the facilities for hosting in 1992 the first Open Tournament to be held since 1956 with Iris as Manager and Secretary.

Philip had for 7 years been Tennis Chairman, and started playing croquet in 1974. He was the Main Club Secretary for 6 years, and is now in his 5th year as Club President.

Both Iris and Philip are referees and Grade 1 coaches.

#### BELMONT CUP

MRS. A. CARROLL who presented this cup, wintered in the 1930s in the South of France, but spent her summers at the Belmont Hotel. There is no record of her having won any croquet trophy, but she must have been interested in the game. Brian Fitzgerald, whose family used to own the Belmont, remembered her well.

*Her name appears in the Club minutes of the AGM held on April 20, 1931 as one of the 82 members present.*

#### THE FERMOR ROSE BOWL & THE ROBERT CASE SHIELD and TANKARD

FRANCES FERMOR was widow of Sir Lewis Leigh-Fermor FRS, a well-known geologist, and lived in Sidmouth with her brother ROBERT CASE, himself a widower. Robert was a keen croquet player and from 1980 to 1983 a dynamic Secretary of the Section. He invented the Shot game. In 1988 he died while playing the game he loved. He was 95.

After Robert's death Frances played croquet less often, but she was a generous benefactor to the Club. In addition to the Rose Bowl and other minor gifts, she gave the small pavilion on Lawn 4 as well as the corner shelter on that same lawn; and asked that monies collected in memory of her brother be used to purchase a Shield and a Tankard for the Shot game competition. She died in 1990 aged well over 90.

SIDMOUTH CROQUET CHALLENGE CUP *from 1981 second* *(see section minutes*  
[used as one of Doubles trophies) *Sep '80*  
Hall-marked 1914

The only winner's name on this cup is that of Col. Beamish, 1953, who, as Lt. Col. Won the Belmont Cup in the 1930s. Note interesting letter from Katherine Holroyde.

\*SIDMOUTH CROQUET CHALLENGE CUP (presently not in use)  
Hall-marked 1922: presented April 30 1923

Both these cups were presented by DR. W. COLCLOUGH.

Dr. Colclough was on the Club subscription list in 1908, and Club minutes show that he was on the Croquet sub-committee in 1909 and the Grounds sub-committee in 1924.

In May 1922 Club minutes read "Proposed by Mr. Stokes and seconded by Mr Sampson that a letter of thanks be sent to Dr Colclough for his handsome offer to either give back the Cup he won at Croquet or present a new one for competition but, that in the event of no Tournament or the Club ceasing to exist the cup be returned to the Donor or his heirs".

It looks as though Dr C. gave back a Cup and also presented a new one - generosity indeed. He was certainly a keen and active member of the Section as for the Open Tournaments held in 1924 & 1925 he acted as Manager.

*\*The only name of winner on this cup is that of Col. Beamish, 1954, who as a Lt. Col. Won the Belmont Cup in the 1930s. Note interesting letter from Katherine Holroyde [below]*

#### THE CUNNINGHAM SALVERS

MRS 'G' CUNNINGHAM joined the Club in the mid-70s and was a member till 1985. During this time, she did a spell of service on the Committee, and took special interest in and concern for the game of Golf Croquet.

#### THE CORBETT SPOONS

MRS ELSIE CORBETT and her husband came to Sidmouth in 1968/69 to retire. They had lived in Australia for nearly 30 years and there she learnt to play croquet.

The Sidmouth club had just started to re-form and only 2 people could play, so Elsie was a great asset as a teacher with Mrs Michelmores. Elsie served, on the Committee and was a loyal supporter of the club. She was also an anonymous benefactor of £2000. When she resigned in 1987 through age and health, she moved to Cedar Shade and died in 1991 aged 90.

#### THE CANTON TROPHY

Colin Beaumont-Edmonds and his wife are social members of the club and when this trophy came into their possession, decided that its most appropriate home was with the Croquet Section.

Its known history is as follows: - purchased at a country house auction sale in Kent by Colin's parents, (date of purchase unknown,) it was presented by them to the Folkestone Croquet Club. When this Club was disbanded the trophy was returned to the Beaumont-Edmonds family. One can only assume that the country house had been the family home of a diplomat, maybe, who had served in Canton in the 1880s.

What a pity we shall never know.

THE HUMPHREY HICKS CUP

Presented by his god-daughter, Mrs Hilary Mabon, in 1986

[These notes have been updated and are to be found in the Club's 'Catalogue of Trophies' 2023]

Colonel Leonard Beemish R.A.M.C.

Not only was he a brother  
officer of my father but he and  
his wife, Kitty, were very good  
friends of my parents. They  
served together in India +  
in Egypt in the 1920s + 1930s

It is interesting to know  
that he won a Cup for Croquet  
in Sidmouth in the 1930s  
and also that his name is  
on the "winners" board in  
the Rudleigh Launceston Croquet  
Club.

Katherine Hobbs.

Sept 1993



A much improved  
Lawn 1 at the end  
of its first season  
and towards the  
end of Sidmouth's  
first Weekend  
Open Tournament.  
Manager Mac  
Dawson in play,  
while Stuart Orr  
(Plymouth)  
enjoys the beer.



*LtoR: Mac Dawson, Eric Kitchener, John Webber, Ted Owen, Clifford Walker, Tony Dustan-Smith, Les Toye, Rowland Henderson and Peter Dart  
Esme Owen, Katherine Holroyde, Gwen Sims, Peggy Webber,  
Jon Hatherley*



● Michael Davis competing in the Sidmouth Open Short Croquet tournament

*May 1994*

*Concentration  
And  
Tactics!  
Sidmouth  
Short Croquet  
Tournament*



● A picture of concentration - Brian Smith, winner of the Short Croquet Tournament at Sidmouth.



May 1994



● BOB Callingham eyes up a difficult shot.

SIDMOUTH'S annual Short Croquet Tournament attracted 198 entries from mostly local club members.

The A block was won by Brian Smith with the runner up Michael Davis. The B block was won by Mary Cook from Bristol with the runner-up Tony Dustan-Smith.

The final was won by Brian Smith who was presented with the Dorothy Toye Challenge Cup by Betty Thorne, a visiting player from Wellington.

During the week there were fluctuating for-

tunes in the South West Federation league matches.

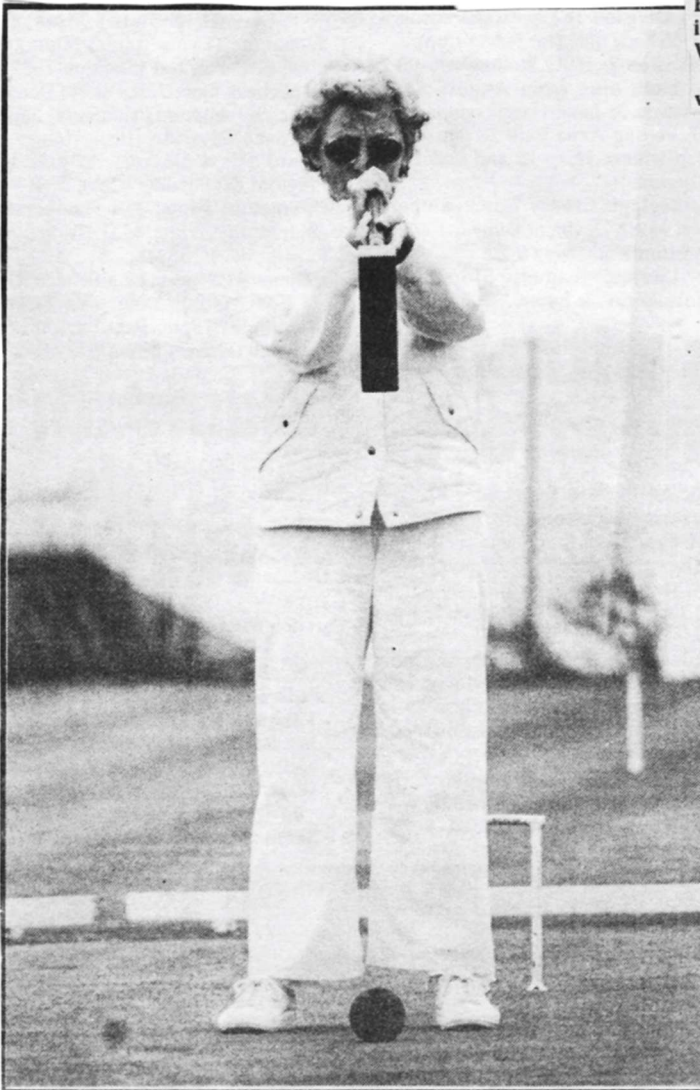
Plymouth fielded a very strong team for their visit to Sidmouth and matches were played in atrocious conditions with steady rain all day, resulting in partly flooded lawns.

Plymouth won all the morning matches but Sidmouth fought back in the afternoon making the final score 3-4 to Plymouth. The successful Sidmouth players were John Hatherley, Gwynneth Dart and Iris Dwerryhouse.

The Sidmouth B team had a terrific game at Budleigh Salterton where it also teemed with rain all day. Sidmouth won 5-0, the winning team being Brian Smith, Peggy Webber and Phil Palmer.

A mixed team from Sidmouth travelled to Bristol to compete in the Longman Cup national handicap event.

They met strong opposition and, although the result was 5-0 to Bristol, all the matches were strongly contested and were only lost by a small margin.



● VERA Henderson gets her line right.

# Perfect conditions for perfect play

June

1994

**SIDMOUTH Croquet Club's third annual Open Tournament started in the most perfect weather conditions the players have enjoyed this year.**

The event attracted players from Lancashire, Yorkshire, Warwickshire and South Wales as well as Bristol, Plymouth and Budleigh Salterton - together with 11 local club members making up 27 players in all.

## Close

A total of 108 three and a quarter hour matches were played over the five days - the deciding games being played on Friday. All the matches were keenly contested with the margins between winners and losers often very small.

The David Rawkins Cup and The John Hatherley Cup were won by John Beech and Rowland Henderson respectively. Both men played through the five days without losing a match.

Brian Smith won the Dwerryhouse Cup.

Leslie Toye was one of the outstanding players and he won a Croquet

Association silver medal for scoring an all round break in one turn.

The visitors were impressed by the playing qualities of the four lawns which had been prepared by groundsman Peter Montgomery.

Lunches and teas were

provided each of the five days masterminded by Margaret Clarke and helped by croquet club members.

All playing activity was expertly managed by Iris Dwerryhouse who was also assisted by other members.

September 1994



*Beth  
&  
Eric Horne*

*Eric Horne renovated the antique seat which originated from 'The Duchess of Devonshire' when she went aground on Sidmouth beach. The work took many months but it is now in its usual place on Lawn 1*

South West Federation Golf Croquet July 1995



*A Singles Semi-final Eric Kitchener v Tony Dustan-Smith*



*A Singles Final*

*Winner*

*Eric Kitchener*

*Runner-up*

*Peggy Webber*

## Sidmouth Open Tournament June 1995



### **Sidmouth June 12th-16th 1995**

A five day tournament that was over-subscribed three months before the closing date. The final line up of competitors proved to be fifteen visitors plus nine local club members.

The three American blocks, graduated in handicaps, were keenly contested throughout. One of the most exciting matches of the week was that between Pat Asa Thomas (7) and John Hatherley (3); Pat kept John sitting in his chair while she reached peg and rover, but could just not make rover after three attempts. Meanwhile, John was making steady progress towards the peg, finally winning the match by one point. The most consistent performance of the tournament was that of Dr Robert Callingham (10), son of a local member, from a small club in Cumbria, who convincingly won every game in his block.

The manager, Iris Dwerryhouse, must have had divine guidance from the Met Office since every day was dry and sometimes sunny. On the sixth day when all the competitors had returned home, it rained all day.

As a result of the climatic perfection, it was possible to complete all the block games by Thursday evening; leaving Friday free for an additional event of "Wheeler" doubles for those who were not travelling home early.

Visitors to Sidmouth found the usual tranquility of the town somewhat disturbed by the construction of new sea defences, resulting in a constant procession past the lawns of a hundred heavy lorries per day delivering tons of gravel and rocks for a new breakwater.

All competitors were able to enjoy the catering and comfort facilities of the club's attractive thatched pavillion in its spectacular setting on the south facing coastline of Lyme Bay.

*Philip Dwerryhouse*

*Prize Winners: Mary Goodhart,  
Robert Callingham, Alison Thursfield  
(Manager Iris Dwerryhouse)*

August 1995



*This page & opposite - Hugh & Ingrid Read invited members to view their award winning (Britain in Bloom) garden*



June 1996

## Devon and Dorset take croquet title

Last weekend, the annual Inter-Counties Croquet Championships took place at Southwick, Sussex. Taking part was the Devon and Dorset team, which comprised six players from the two counties.

The tournament involved a total of eleven matches, each match being made up of three games of paired doubles. Captaining one of the three pairs was John Toye who has been playing croquet for 15 years at both Budleigh and Sidmouth and is currently Open Singles Champion for the South West of England.

There was a host of international players from around the world competing, ensuring a very high standard of play throughout the four day tournament.

In a very exciting final match, John and his partner faced tough opposition, from a Gloucester team who eventually finished third, and with the match tied at one game each the result of the championship rested on this game. Keeping the excitement going right to the end, John eventually completed a skilful final turn to claim the championship for Devon and Dorset for the first time in the history of the competition.

## Smith takes cup

### Sidmouth Croquet Club

**THE 5th Annual Five day Sidmouth Open Croquet Tournament took place recently. Two days of unpleasant mist and drizzle were, fortunately, followed by three days of perfect weather.**

All the visitors were complimenting the groundsman on the beautiful lawns, voting them the best they had played on this year.

Some of the visitors had never been to Sidmouth before and thought it a lovely place, with the setting of the

club superb. The visitors also enjoyed their accommodation and evening meals in the town - only one being awakened at 4.00a.m. by the seagulls!

A Sidmouth member, Brian Smith, won the lowest handicap event for the David Rawkins Cup. The other Cups were won by Dr John Taylor and Mrs Ursula Taylor from Jersey.

The last day finished with several doubles games, won by Joyce Goodhart and Bryan Judson.

## Sidmouth 5 Day Handicap

10th ~ 14th June 1996

report by Roy Edwards

As a southerner domiciled in Cheshire summer tournaments always appeal so this year, having noticed that Jaques balls were to be used, a visit to Sidmouth was added to my schedule in spite of it being an all handicap event. Sidmouth Croquet Club has four good lawns by the cricket ground overlooking the sea, a beautiful setting on a fine summer's day, and lawn one, recently relaid is very flat. The club has a fine history and was the club of Humphrey Hicks, whose trophies, medals and mallets are on display. It went into decline after the 39-45 war but is now thriving and this tournament was well over-subscribed. It's an easy routine with just two matches a day with the 24 players divided into three groups of eight according to handicap. There is plenty of time to take in the small seaside town, watch the cricket or avoid seagulls. Monday dawned damp and drizzly but quickly improved. Tuesday was simply horrible with gales blowing drizzle and rain all day but all the scheduled matches were completed. The handicaps were working out pretty well with everyone winning and losing matches but Brian Smith was edging out in front of the low handicap section with some very steady play. A nasty rumour spread that he had been practising on the lawns every day for weeks. High summer arrived on Wednesday and not another cloud was seen all week. Croquet became an absolute delight in such a setting.

Brian Smith continued in good form and won the David Rawkins cup with 5 wins out of 7, beating Don Waterhouse on superior points difference. Visitors from the Jersey club, John and Ursula Taylor, made a successful raid on the homeland, winning the Fortfield and Dwerryhouse cups, again with 5 wins out of 7.

A very pleasant relaxed schedule was enjoyed by all, although perhaps not quite so relaxed for the manager Iris Dwerryhouse, who had to spend some midnight oil to ensure the smooth well-run event. Owing to an indiscretion of the tongue made to the editor I am forced to admit to trying to run rover twice with the wrong ball during one game, an occurrence only too frequent in my game, which she threatened to report if I failed to do so.

*Visitors'  
reports on  
Sidmouth  
Tournaments*

## Sidmouth Handicap Wknd

21 - 22 September

1996

report by Tony Backhouse

It was raining when I set out on the 90 mile trip east to England for the tournament as it had been all day. The forecast for the weekend was poor so I took the oilskins, sea boots and a full flask. What was the result? Not a drop of rain on either day, even bright and warming sunshine for the first afternoon.

There was an equally warm welcome from the natives at the splendid pavilion which must be one of the most lovely positions of any club with a breathtaking view over the sports fields to the sea. All mod cons were provided within the spacious, thatched building (listed grade 2) and at very reasonable prices. For an interesting experience, sample the Devon version of Cornish pasty! But visitors beware - parking is a problem.

The tournament was run with genial efficiency by Iris Dwerryhouse. Games, even lunch breaks, were firmly timed, four blocks of four, two games a day. The only scope given was to allow one-ball games after formal play was finished on the first day. A snag of this form of play and its organisation was that the four members of each block all played, double banked, together for the first three games. So the opportunities to meet those in other blocks were restricted as was the knowledge that your reporter has of what went on on the lawns.

There were two finals between the winners of each pair of blocks on the Sunday afternoon, when Elizabeth White beat Ruth Youd and Eric Bevan beat Geoff Youd, surprising results as both Youds had been unbeaten in their blocks. The winners were congratulated and their prizes presented by Len Sage, OBE, President of the Sidmouth cricket, tennis croquet and hockey Club.

Shaun Carter tried to add class to the occasion with a triple peel during his final game with an over-awed and under practised competitor. When he failed the third peel the game eventually became a two ball effort with a not too serious conclusion.

It was an enjoyable, relaxed and well organised meeting in a most beautiful setting. I shall certainly hope to play there again next year and just hope that others are not encouraged by this report to apply and thereby squeeze me out.

*Reg Peirce, an active member and referee till his resignation in 1996, had much success in the late 70's. He was winner of the Belmont Cup in 4 successive years: 1977 - 80; won the Challenge & Gilbey Gilbey Goblet. A C.A. trophy, in 1980, and was runner-up in 1981 and his Budleigh cuttings [overleaf] show a number of familiar names.*



#### Croquet Gazette Summer 1980

"The Gilbey Goblet was won by Reg Peirce of Sidmouth, who beat the holder, Frances Joly, in the final. Reg Peirce had had a somewhat adventurous journey to the final. In the second round, he was about 10 points behind Col. Vulliamy, with all his bisques gone, when the latter had only to peg out, but something went very wrong. Peirce managed to hit in and took one ball round to the peg and pegged out one of his opponent's balls. Vulliamy had several shots at the peg, while Peirce got his other ball round, but they all just missed and Peirce won by +1. The final was played in extremely wet weather and Miss Joly did not maintain her very good form of earlier in the week.





# 'Dwerry' house provides shelter for croquet players

October  
1996

**THE ANNUAL** general meeting of Sidmouth Croquet Club closed with the official opening of a handsome hut, presented to the club by Mr and Mrs Phil Dwerryhouse.

The hut now stands in the corner of Lawn 1, which is the finest of the four lawns but has hitherto lacked any form of shelter from sun or rain. Iris and Phil cut the ribbon to declare it open and to name it - The Dwerry House!

The meeting took place in the Pavilion, Fortfield with 58 members present.

The Chairman and Secretary's reports encompassed details of a highly successful and happy year's events. The Chairman particularly thanked his committee and all those members of the club who had given help, so willingly, when required throughout the season.

The club hosted two successful open tournaments and 80% of the members took part in the Internal Tournaments.

The silver trophies were presented to the winning players by Group Capt A P Dart. They included two Improvers' Cups. The Longman Cup for Low Bisquers went to Mr Brian Smith and the Sidmouth Croquet Club Cup for High Bisquers to Mrs Sheila Blenkinsop.

Pictured above: Iris and Phil Dwerryhouse cutting the ribbon of the 'Dwerry House'.



*Sheila Blenkinsop and Sue Rogers  
Winners of the Golf Croquet Doubles 1996*



*Back row: Jonathan Coombs, David Clarke, Les Toye, Brian Smith, David Baldock*

*Front: Sheila Blenkinshop, Vera Henderson, Tony Dustan-Smith, Barbara Toye, Sue Rogers*

*Les & Dorothy Toye won the Corbett Spoons, Tony Dustan-Smith won the Humphrey Hicks, Belmont and the Doubles*

**SIDMOUTH Croquet Club** has enjoyed great success this year and now boasts over 100 members.

Nearly half of those attended the annual general meeting at the Fortfield pavilion.

A number of players take part in tournaments all over the South West and even as far as Jersey. During the Budleigh Open Tournament week in May, Ted Owen, Les Toye and Brian Smith each won a cup in their respective sections. At Parkstone there was a High Handicap Tournament which was won by Sue Rogers. **X**

At the Veteran's Week in Budleigh in July, Gwynneth Dart was the winner in her section and at Parkstone in August Vera Henderson was the winner of the Handicap Singles.

During our own Open Tournaments, Brian Smith successfully defended his title in June, to regain the David Rawkins Cup and in September Vera

Henderson and Jonathan Coombs were victorious.



Participants and coaches at the Bronze coaching held at Parkstone in April.

**X** *Sue was also the winner of the club's C.A. Centenary Knockout Competition*



## *Croquet club's mark of respect for the Princess*

*SIDMOUTH Croquet Club's open handicap weekend on September 6/7 had a late start due to the funeral of Diana, Princess of Wales.*

*Play started at 1pm and 16 players, eight locals and eight visitors, enjoyed a weekend of intensive croquet. The weather was kind and the setting had never looked more beautiful.*

*The blocks were won by Vera Henderson, who triumphed over some adventurous play by David Clark - both Sidmouth club members - and by Jonathan Coombs of Sidmouth, who made a break of nine hoops to defeat Roger Wheeler of Cheltenham.*



Back row from left: Brian Smith, David Baldock, Hugh Read,

Front: Elaine Woodward, Jonathan Coombs, Esme Owen, Ingrid Read, and Richard Clark

[Note: Richard Clark holds a bottle of wine which was for the short lived\* 14pt Handicap 18 & Over competition. This removes the lingering doubt, during the recent 2022/23 Club Trophy Catalogue update, that there was a trophy similar to that, now redundant, SCC 14pt High Handicap Tournament Goblet.

\*1997 & 1998 and 2010 & 2011]

# Huge silverware haul for croquet players at Budleigh Salterton

HUGE success for Sidmouth croquet players was enjoyed at Budleigh Salterton's August tournament.

For all the Sidmouth members who took part, this competition will remain engraved in memory as possibly one of the best ever.

The weather was wonderful, the organisation superb and, best of all, there was some outstanding play from two new players, Paul Whittall and Graham Dodd.

Paul took first place in the Handicap Block and the runner up was Graham Dodd. Whittall was also first in the Class Event with Dodd, who took the game up only this year, again second.

## Achievement

Dodd, with his partner Mike Hammalev, won the Doubles event, Tony Dustan Smith was the winner in the B Block and Rowland Henderson was runner-up in the C Block.

The One Ball winner was Les Toye, and the One Ball Advanced, was won by Brian Smith, who also came first in the Golf Croquet event.

Whittall, whose handicap was 18 at the beginning of the season, also won The Most Improved Male Player award. His handicap has now fallen to seven, a truly remarkable achievement.

## The Selectors - Sidmouth, 11th-13th September 1998

Report by Kevin Carter

The manager thought he was being smart in nominating as the tournament reporter the first loser on Friday morning. When he was demolished in under an hour by Dai Morgan he was hoisted by his own petard and here we are ....

Dai was one of several up and coming stars in this year's event, which one veteran described as the strongest ever. Three days of intensive top quality competition against other rising stars and a group of established players, all at about scratch, sort out who has what it takes to step up to championship standard. Indeed, one name on the cup is a certain Robert Fulford.

Sidmouth hosted this year's renewal. What a gem of club, which few of us had visited before. It has three good courts and one which is truly excellent - Parkstone or even Hurlingham quality. There is a large clubhouse with good food and drink, the hospitality was magnificent and the crowd watching the final was large and appreciative.

Even after the ROT, Bill Arliss, reduced the hoops to 1/16th", conditions were still easy on the rain-softened ground. We saw nine TPs - including four by Sam Tudor (if you include his OTP).

After two days of a Swiss, nobody was unbeaten and nobody had failed to win at least one game. The consistent Andrew Cowing led the field, with Nelson Morrow, Peter Taylor, and Roger Jenkins just behind. However, the top two went through to Sunday's best of three final, while the rest battled out a Swiss consolation. This eventually went to Roger Jenkins, who tenaciously outfought Peter Taylor, with Sam Tudor, Gary Bennett and last minute stand-in David Coates all close up.

Dai Morgan faded, but this promising second-season player's time will come, as will Sam Tudor's. Local Devon players, Brian Smith, Shaun Carter and Australian Ladies Champion, Shona Vaissiere, all surprisingly disappointed.

Saturday night saw an enjoyable tournament dinner, attended by most of the players, along with some spouses and friends.

## Sidmouth handicap 5 - 6 September '98

Report by Ron Selmes

Despite a rather negative weather forecast, sixteen players with handicaps ranging from -1 to 16 met at the delightful Sidmouth club under the relaxed management of John Toye, to play two games each day. The Bray system of shortened games was used when higher handicap players met. The format (four blocks of four with crossovers between blocks for the fourth game) meant that there would be two equal winners, the prizes being attractive engraved goblets.

Saturday, although becoming windy at times, remained for the most part fine, with the sun shining for much of the time. Sunday was however, another story.

After Sunday morning's games, played under very grey skies with ever rising wind speeds, all four blocks were clearly won, with three wins each for Jane Babbage (12), Brian Smith (0), Jonathan Coombs (10) and Vera Henderson (10). Brian beat Jane +12, and Vera beat Jonathan by the same score. The final matches for everyone were played in torrential rain and gusting winds. All credit to the Sidmouth lawns - despite the very heavy rain, all four remained playable and did not become slow, sodden surfaces.

In spite of the downpour, everyone appeared to have had a good time, and their enjoyment was increased by the excellent catering of Tony and Elaine Hope.



Andrew Cowing and Nelson Morrow, winner and runner-up of the 1998 Selectors' weekend held at Sidmouth. (photo by Sue Rogers)

Saturday night saw an enjoyable tournament dinner, attended by most of the players, along with some spouses and friends.

The final between Andrew and Nelson was a tense affair from the outset. It looked as if Nelson's nerve was holding until he blobbed penult after a four-back peel on his forward ball. A prolonged tactical battle followed, with both players making twitchy errors, but Andrew eventually scrambled home +4. The second game was more straightforward. Nelson's two errors were two too many against his highly promising adversary from Cheltenham, who romped away +23.

So, the handsome Ranelagh Weightman Cup was presented to Andrew Cowing by the CA Chairman. Thanks were made to our hosts and I have never before seen players spontaneously applaud the appreciative spectators who watched throughout.

There is talk in the CA corridors of power that the Selectors should be reformed. Creating a Fourth Eight is one option. However, I am one of many who believe the Selectors in its present format, with 16+ players, provides a unique blend of bonhomie, high quality play and a stepping stone to greater things that ought not to be too readily discarded.

## Results:

Winner: Andrew Cowing Runner-up: Nelson Morrow  
Swiss Consolation: Roger Jenkins



● WINNERS of Sidmouth Croquet Club Internal Tournaments; Jonathan Coombs, David Baldock, David Clarke, Tony Dustan-Smith, Graham Dodd, Paul Whittall, Brian Smith. Front: Doreen O'Hara, Sheila Adams, Margaret Stant and Mavis Baldock.

AN awful evening of drenching rain and storm force winds faced anyone keen enough to attend this year's Sidmouth Croquet Club AGM - yet 60 members actually turned out, writes Mary Smith.

A comprehensive report of the season was delivered by retiring croquet secretary Sue Rogers, citing in particular some of the many achievements during the year. The 1998 season had started precisely as it had ended - awash with torrential rain, and yet 14 new members joined in April; were coached most days in horrible weather, and remained to bring our total to 107.

Awards for excellent play cascaded on

Sidmouth this year as never before, with Bronze Awards going to Sheila Blenkinsop, Paul Whittall and Ted Owen, and Silver to Tony Dustan-Smith, Paul Whittall and Richard Clark.

Brian Smith became a referee, and three members - Tony Dustan-Smith, Vera Henderson and Brian Smith became croquet coaches.

Successes in tournaments at home and away were enjoyed by both high and low handicap players, the most successful 'away' tournament being at Budleigh Salterton where no less than seven event wins came Sidmouth's way, plus numerous runner-up places.

AGM 1998

# THE SOLOMON LECTURE CROQUET - HOW WAS IT FOR YOU?

By J.W. Solomon, President of the Croquet Association

Presented at the Redwood Lodge Hotel, Bristol, November 2nd 1997

*at the AGM of the South-West Federation.\**

I am very gratified that there are so many croquet lovers here today. It is, of course, a great honour for me to have been asked to give this lecture, and to have it named after me. I am not so innocent as to pretend that I am unaware of the reason why I should have been chosen, nor so modest as to deny that I did have a considerable period of success in competitive tournaments over a period of 25 years - what is I believe a unique record and one which may never be equalled, consisting of 48 National and International titles between 1951 and 1974. There is also the fact that I have the honour to be the President of the Croquet Association.

As we all know, this year marks the Centenary of the Association and a number of events have taken place to mark this special year. Whilst there are a considerable number of Associates who are older than I am I believe there is no-one in this country today who can claim to have been playing, competitively as long as I have. Freddie Stone played from, I think 1912 until 1956, a total of 44 years. However, I played in my first tournament in September 1947 and this year therefore marks my 50th anniversary of tournament play. I am not going to talk very much about myself, except in so far as I was, in one way or another, involved with other people; but to put something on the record which is not I think generally known I will say a word or two about how I began. The usual question I am asked is "When did you start to play croquet?" to which I reply "When I was 15".

Whilst this is true in one sense the real answer comes if, as I sometimes am, I am asked "How did the Solomon grip come about?" We

had a grass tennis court at home which I can only remember being laid out as a croquet lawn, on which we played golf croquet, the only kind we knew. From the age of 5, possibly earlier, I used to amuse myself hitting a ball around. When you are no more than 3 feet tall and you are confronted with a mallet that is as tall as you are, there is really only one way to hold it. Starting at that age it soon became totally natural for me to swing without even thinking about it.

Jumping now to what happened when I was 15, my mother was introduced to Association croquet at Roehampton and she taught me a little at home. In the school holidays of 1947 I went along to Roehampton a few times to watch my mother playing in a small tournament. If one of the lawns became free I would lay out the balls and try to play a break. In September, the week before returning to school there was a small tournament, the Turketine Tray, which I entered, was given a handicap of 15, and in I think 4 rounds had won it and was brought down to 10.

The following year, 1948, in the Easter holidays. I used to cycle to Roehampton from our home near Putney Heath two or three mornings each week and practise, laying out 4 ball breaks and seeing how many bisques I took to get round. There were 3 or 4 regulars there, I remember R.H.Park, Capt. Backhaus, Edward Carlisle, (no relation of Hugh and Veronica) and one day Mr. Carlisle said to me "Come on the court Solomon" (it was all very formal in those days even to young 16 year olds) "and I'll teach you how to play a four ball break". Well I bridled at this - I knew how to play a four ball break, I'd already won a tournament hadn't I? - but I was a well brought up lad and so I duly followed him as he laid out a perfect 4 ball break. I made the first hoop and was about to roquet the pilot ball when he asked me what I was going to do. I said I was going to roquet it and send it to the third, going to the pivot near the stick. "Fine" he said, and as I was about to roquet it he said "where are you going to roquet it to?" "I'm just going to roquet it" I said. "Well, consider that if you send it to here, you'll be wired by the peg, and here you'll be wired by the pivot ball, so make sure you avoid those two spots". Yes, good thinking, I mused. Having roqueted the pivot he again asked my intentions and I said I was going to take off to the pioneer at the second. "Where precisely?" he said. I said "well, just go to the hoop", to which he replied, "the pioneer is a yard to the left of the hoop, so if you go to

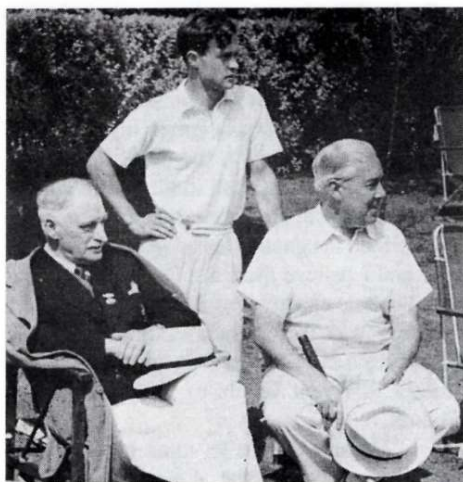


John Solomon, President of the Croquet Association, prepares to offer the inaugural Solomon Lecture.

the hoop you'll be hitting it further away. Make sure you go to the left of the pioneer and then you'll be able to hit it up in front of the hoop". And so it went on, my resentment vanished and I lapped up every word of wisdom that he expounded. I think at the sixth hoop he said "That will do - you've got the idea" and I was eternally grateful for the only lesson I ever had in my life.

Perhaps what is of most interest in all this is that, having played in tournaments since 1947 I am probably one of the few people to have played against or with people who played before the war, in the 30s or even 20s. Indeed a person I knew very well for many years and whom I played on several occasions actually won the Ladies Championship in 1899, almost 100 years ago. She was then Miss Lilius Gower and I think she was about 18 at that time and she won it 3 years in a row. I knew her as Mrs. Beaton and my partner Pat Cotter christened her (privately to me) the brown bomber or the blue bomber, for she appeared to have only two dresses, both identical in design and one was brown, the other blue. She was very easy to get on with and was still a useful player - her handicap was -0.5, in 1950.

It was during my first tournament at Roehampton, the Turketine Tray, that I first met Humphrey Hicks. The President's Cup was being played at the same time, they on lawns 1 to 4, we on 5 to 7. They were all in one long line in those days and they had two more up on the bank where the putting green now is for their big tournament. I was playing on lawn 7 when Humphrey, who had finished his game, came striding down the bank at the north end and sat on the bench at the end of the court. After a while I finished a turn at that end of the court, I



McReckitt with John Solomon and Patrick Cotter at Roehampton in 1956.

probably stuck in the second hoop, and went to sit down on the same bench. I plucked up courage and said, "you're making me very nervous", to which he replied, "Oh, don't worry, I'm making your opponent much more nervous".

In those days and for the next 2 or 3 years, I met many players who had played before the war. Handel Elvey whom some will have known but most will know of. His full name was George Frederick Handel Elvey and he had been the Vicar of Upper Dicker, just north of Eastbourne. He was a fine player, though perhaps past his best when I knew him, and a good craftsman, making mallets of many kinds. Many of you will have known Norah Elvey who was also a fine player of around scratch, -2 I think at her best. Kay Longman, a fine minus player and I think in those days the only lady to play centre stance. Her husband Willie Longman, of the publishing family, a President's Cup player was also still playing well.

Mrs Neville Oddie, a minus player who

Duffer, but actually played against him at Carrickmines when the CA sent a team over to play Ireland in about 1956. I remember that he had me beaten, except that on his second turn to the peg he laid up in the third corner. As I thankfully took the lift he said "Oh, that dratted lift. We don't bother about them in Ireland!"

Hope Rotherham, tallish and very straight, had probably the most unpure swing anyone has ever seen. It described an arc behind her. She said that one winter she spent a lot of time in front of the mirror developing a straight swing. When she went on the court in the spring she missed everything by a yard!

I am skipping ahead a little chronologically, for it was in 1950 that I had the opportunity to go to New Zealand with the team for the MacRobertson Trophy. It is perhaps a little interesting as to how I came to be part of that team in 1950/51. In my last quarter at Charterhouse I went for a medical for my National Service and was rather delighted when I was turned down and as I had been accepted at Magdalen College, Cambridge for two years later. They agreed to take me a year earlier, but that meant that I had a year free. My father had heard that the Longmans, who had originally been part of the team, could not now go and he volunteered my name. You can imagine my extreme pleasure when I received a letter from my father a week before the end of my last quarter which contained nothing but a first class return ticket to New Zealand, which incidentally cost £300, which I remember working out later cost just over 1 penny a mile, including about 5 meals a day and dinner was 7 courses each evening!

I mentioned Humphrey Hicks a little earlier. I got to know him pretty well because we were both members of the England team which went to New Zealand in 1950. Four of us went by sea from Tilbury, Winifred Kingsford, later Winifred Ashton, and Mrs. Ozanne, Hicks and myself. On the first evening we met for a cocktail before dinner and Winifred said to me, "John, we have been talking. We think it will be silly if you call us Mr. Hicks and Mrs. Kingsford and so on, so I'm Winifred". "And I'm Humphrey" said he. Mrs. Ozanne remained silent, possibly because her deaf aid was switched off. She was profoundly deaf and carried an ancient apparatus, about the size of a handbag which she kept switched off unless you signalled to her to turn it on.

During that trip to New Zealand, where we spent three months and played croquet on at least 85 of the 90 days there, I improved rapidly. I had left England with a handicap of -1, and although Hosannah was scratch I thought her greater experience would count. In the event I played 4th in the first two matches and 3rd in the last.

There were two other members of the team, Eddie Ward Petley, who was coming direct from South Africa, and Dudley Hamilton-Miller, our captain, who ran a prep school and was flying out and would join us shortly before the first Test.

Although we would be six, the matches would consist of 5 singles and 2 doubles. Well I have no need to go over the results of that Test Series. We lost it by the narrowest of margins, winning the third and last Test having forfeited one match because of a car accident which meant that Eddie Ward Petley could not play. After the MacRobertson Trophy was finished we played in the New Zealand National Championships where I won my first titles.

Humphrey Hicks was in my opinion the greatest croquet player I have ever seen. He was the one I feared more than any other, good as Pat Cotter was. You somehow knew that Humphrey would hit the last lift. I remember particularly two games I lost to him, (there were of course many others), one in an exhibition in Australia in 1951, when I had given contact and pegged him out, (showing off a bit I suppose) and got 2 balls in the corners but the third was two feet out of the 2nd corner spot. With the contact Humphrey took off from the ball in the



Miss D.D. Steele (illustration from the Best Ten drawn by H F Crowther Smith)

wasted no time, she just walked up and hit the ball, very effectively too. Often it looked as though her break was going to disappear altogether and that she would be bound to break down, but more often than not she managed to keep it going. The only occasion I won the Open Mixed Doubles Championship was with her.

D.D.Steele had of course been the supreme player before the war, winning the Beddow Cup 4 times when it was presented to her and was replaced by the President's Cup. She had a fascinating style, standing very upright, her heels together but her feet at right angles, rather like a ballet dancer, and swinging her mallet actually over her right foot.

Duff Mathews, just a name to me, along with C.L.O'Callaghan, and Cyril Corbally. They were the great Irish trio of the early part of this century. Corbally first won the Opens in 1902, winning it 5 times in all; O'Callaghan won it in 1910 and again twice more; Duff Mathews in 1914 and again 3 more times. I not only met the



Major General Sir Miles Graham (right) watching play at the 1960 Open Championship with H. O. Hicks.

fourth corner and got a rush behind the ball. Early on the second corner spot to the first hoop and finished the game. In the Open Championships in England in about 1960 I remember playing him on court 5 at Hurlingham and in a similar situation, having one of my balls in the second corner, and Humphrey's in the middle I put my striker's ball in the fourth corner instead of the obvious, with hindsight, the third. Humphrey took contact from my ball in the fourth corner, split to the first hoop, got perfect position, ran it and finished the game. He had the most unusual style and I believe there are few photos which will illustrate exactly how unusual that was. In a strange way there was a similarity between Humphrey's and William Ormerod's, (though at greatly different levels of height from the ground).

He held the mallet in an Irish grip but considering the shaft was at least 3ft. 3 inches, and he held it right at the top, playing side stance, it was a strange grip, his left hand holding the



top of the shaft only with the thumb and forefinger. His real forte was the long rush. Most of us would only 'guarantee' a rush of about 1 perhaps 2. Humphrey Hicks would almost invariably accurately pull off rushes of 2, 3 and 4 yards, something that few players today would be very confident about. In terms of technique I have not noticed that any players today are able to play any shots better than the best players of some years ago. Accuracy in rushing, split shots, long rolls was just as good then as it is now. I must however admit that long shooting is more accurate today and I will say a little more about that shortly. In passing I might mention that the present almost universal practice of playing full rolls by holding the lower hand near the bottom of the shaft was almost certainly my doing. Until 1951, and a year or two afterwards, everyone played long rolls holding the mallet more or less as one normally did, but stood much more over the balls and played well down so that the back ball jumped. They are much more difficult to play that way and it is amazing how accurate some players could be.

When I was staying with the Tingeyes in Sydney in 1951 Robert Tingey showed me that if you hold the mallet within an inch of the head and try to play a stop-shot, it is impossible; so that if you play a bit of a roll it becomes a full roll and a full roll becomes a pass roll, and so on. I had always been nervous of pushing or double tapping and this was a wonderful development for me and soon began to be adopted by more and more of the players here.

Another development today is the greater use of cannons. They were of course played, even long before my time, but people were less adventurous, tended rather rarely deliberately to play for a cannon, and more often than not would then only play 'the worm'. In fact I believe it was the New Zealanders who introduced us, in I think 1963, to the mini-cannon, which can be so accurate.

One thing that seems completely to have disappeared, I am personally thankful to say, is the *half* stance. It was never widely used but I can remember Canon Pym from Bedford and Victor Evans, noted for having designed some of the CA ties and the flag, always played with



Duff Matthews, reputed to be responsible for the 'Duffer tice'. (illustration from the Best Ten)

a golf stance and I have to say they were not ineffectual players, the Canon playing off a half and Victor Evans off +1. But the most remarkable player I ever saw, and knew well, was Monty Spencer Ell, who had no arms. He had a couple of inches of his left arm, with which he could scratch his ear, and his right arm ended just above the elbow. He normally had a gadget with which he could do a number of things but when he arrived at Roehampton, normally his man would cope with things but on a number of occasions I would unclip his normal gadget and clip on his mallet, which was a steel shafted one about four feet long. He got his handicap down to scratch and how he played long rolls I really do not know but very well he played them. He could take the clips off the hoops and put them on again if they were on the side, but not the top. He would gladly accept help but could manage remarkably on his own if he had to. In addition he was one of the most charming men you could wish to meet.

Finally, I must say something about Pat Cotter, my partner for almost 25 years. He was a natural games player, having had a golf handicap of scratch and he hit the ball very gently

and delicately. He was not a particularly good shot, probably because he didn't usually hit the ball hard enough to stay on line. Even the splendid courts at Hurlingham are not absolutely true. He was a good tactician and we both favoured peeling partner through the first hoop to make the triple peel easier - or so we thought. It only needs one good split at the beginning of the second break to get it going. I always got on very well with him and we were good friends, but some people found him a bit difficult, for he did have rather a short temper and he could be a bit curt on occasions. The problem was, I think, that he was highly intelligent, he was senior classics master at St. Pauls for as long as I knew him, he had been the world bridge champion in 1938, and he assumed that other people had a similar intelligence. If it transpired that they did not he could be rather brusque. I cannot imagine how I managed to avoid this part of his character. One thing that he did early on when he took up croquet again in 1947 (he had hurt his foot and couldn't play in a golf tournament) was to break down the barriers of formality. In those days everyone was Mr. Reckitt, Miss Lintern, and so on even though they had known each other for 20 years or more. Within a year or so he was calling them Maurice, Daisy, and in no time nearly everyone else was doing the same.

We all play croquet for fun, for enjoyment, for relaxation, for exercise - yes, it can be energetic! At least I suppose we do and yet how often do we hear people complain about some recent game, how badly they played, how well their opponent, how wet it was, or hot it was or why couldn't they have stopped for tea? Whatever these problems, there are fortunately many moments of humour which all of us must have enjoyed at some stage, possibly on numerous occasions. One of the best examples of this was related to me only quite recently and concerns Paul Hands who was playing handicap doubles with a lady of about 24 - handicap that is. He laid up with her ball a yard in front of hoop 1, his own a foot in front of hers. She approached and went straight into the wire. At the next opportunity he laid up with her ball a foot in front, his own just beside. The same thing happened. At the next opportunity he contrived

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to get her ball in the jaws of the first hoop and his own waiting on the non-playing side. At this point he was called away to referee a shot on another court. When he returned he found all the clips in the same positions and the balls scattered around the court. Upon enquiring what had happened he was told that she had run the hoop the wrong way. "At that moment" said Paul, "I felt that the game was beginning to slip away from us!"

Having considered something of the last 50 years, what of the next 50? It is a brave man who will stick his neck out with predictions for the future but I suppose it is something I am expected to do. Of course we must all hope, and have every confidence, that croquet will continue, at the very worst, at its present level of popularity; but there is no reason why we should not expect there to be an increase in the number of clubs and a corresponding increase in the number of tournaments available for us all to play in. In 1960 there were only 4 registered clubs north of Manchester, today there are 18.

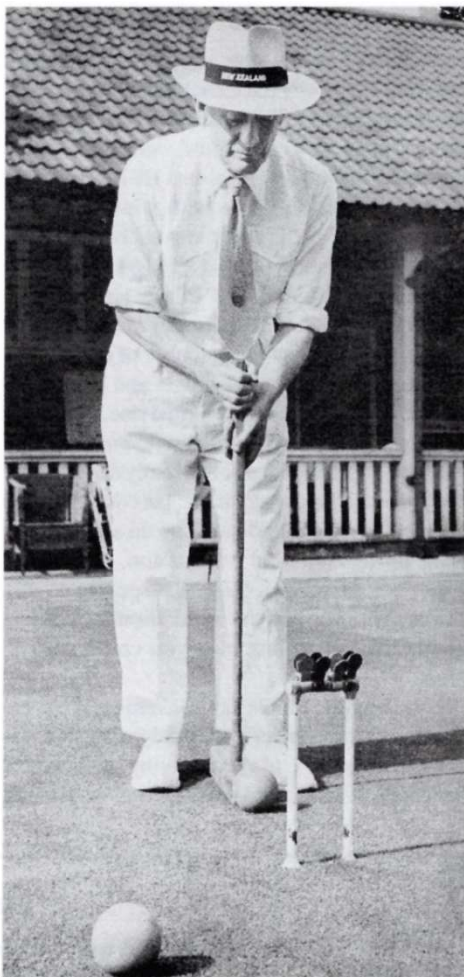
There have always been some, like Brian Lloyd Pratt, who deplored our efforts for so many years to broaden the scope and interest of croquet and to make it available to a wider audience. We may look with envy at bowls, which is regularly shown on TV. Here again is a sport that had the image, as croquet has had, of being an older person's game. Yet the international professional bowls tournaments today feature many younger players. Perhaps not many non-croquet players now realise that the cream of our croquet players are mostly under 30, and this applies also to Australia and New Zealand. If we can continue to attract young boys and girls, and particularly girls, of which we have a great shortage, in their teens, we will build up a strong nucleus from which the game will continue to develop.

Before I look in a little more depth at the game we all play, I must be careful not to ignore golf croquet. I know, and sympathise with those who argue that the game is not golf and it is not croquet. The name is, I think, unfortunate. Perhaps a new name might be 'Hoops' or 'Mallets' or some such. But I have little sympathy with those who brush it aside as being of no merit. It has been found by a number of clubs as being an ideal way of attracting new members many of whom soon take up association croquet.

But what of association croquet itself? Will that remain as it is now, or will there be new developments in its format? I believe there should be, and I hope very much there will be. Here, there will be groans from many players who will be saying, or at any rate thinking, "Why do we have to keep changing the laws? They're always making some changes." In fact, this is not so. True there is a minor change to the laws almost every year, but these are to put right things which had been overlooked or to overcome the undesirable cleverness exhibited by ingenious people who have spotted a lacuna. I will give you two examples. A few years ago someone,

for a reason which now escapes me, decided it would be of help to him to take croquet by balancing the striker's ball, in hand, on top of the roqueted ball. This being undesirable, not least in terms of timewasting while trying to achieve the balance, the law now says "the striker must place the striker's ball on the ground in contact..."

Another instance took place as a result of a game I played in the 1963 NZ Championships following the MacRobertson Trophy, against Arthur Ross, the leading NZ player during the 30's, 40's and early 50's. Arthur had shot at my ball and gone off the side boundary, leaving me a nervy 7 yard roquet if I was to pick him up and build a break. I decided to be brave and took my aim. Looking up for a final time to verify my line of aim I saw Arthur, who had picked up his ball and was just replacing it. "Sorry, John", he said, "there was some mud on it". Pure gamesmanship as ever I saw.



Arthur Ross, captain of the New Zealand touring team, in play at Roehampton in August 1956.

I must say a little about Arthur Ross, whom I first met in 1950 in NZ. He was a very stylish player - in a natural way, not in any artificial way. He was still good, though past his very best, having first won the NZ Open Championship in 1922 and then 7 more times before the war. He often played with a pipe in his mouth which he would sometimes throw to

the boundary as his break became more involved. He visited England a couple of times after the war and won our Open Singles in 1954. At an international meeting at the end of a tournament to consider the laws there was no problem in changing the law to say that "a ball may be wiped by the striker at any time".

These changes are all cosmetic and have no real effect on the game that we all, at any level, play. The last time a change was made in the laws that had any significant effect on the way the game is played was in 1946 with the introduction of the second lift after 4 back and of contact if 1 back and 4 back were made in the same turn by the first ball. This of course made an enormous difference to A class play, (though not to lesser mortals where B class games were usually played under Variation B, that was, only one lift after 1-back - even the Inter County championship was played under Variation B for many years) and the advent of contact was responsible for the renaissance of the triple peel, since almost invariably the first player stopped at 4 back in order not to give away the innings by giving contact, and, if the lift were needed, the opportunity was there to finish the game in only one more turn by completing the triple peel.

One aspect of the game I have always considered to be illogical is the half-bisque, if only because it is purely a matter of chance whether one has one or not. I would prefer to see them either abolished or to allow a player the option of splitting a bisque into two halves if he so wants. I suspect that most would regard that as too expensive an operation, unless of course they already had a dozen or so bisques. I nearly succeeded in getting Council to abolish the half-bisque when I was Chairman of Council in 1963 or 64. I proposed a motion to do so and there seemed to be some sympathy from the majority of members. But I went too far in my motion and proposed that those with a half in their handicap should go down a half if they were minus, and up a half if they were plus. But I had reckoned without Mrs. Nickisson, a stalwart at Roehampton. She said, "Oh that won't do. I am a 2 and Daisy Jennings is a 4.5. I find it very difficult to beat her now; it will be impossible if I have to give her 3 bisques." I still think it worth considering.

The developments in the game since then have not been as a result of any law change but as a result of players during the last 15 years or so developing new leaves against lift shots and these have had a significant effect on certain aspects of the game. A contribution to the changes in leaves in recent years has been the much increased accuracy in shooting, particularly in shots of up to 15 yards or so, and I accept that this has forced some change in the thinking which governs the leave. I suppose this increased accuracy stems from the swinging which seems now to be universal when taking aim. I have to say that I find this the most distasteful and boring development to have emerged in the last dozen or so years. Three or four swings I can accept but 8 or more...ne

# Whittall takes bronze and silver in first open tournament

May 1998

Budleigh Salterton

Sidmouth Croquet Club **DURING** the recent tournament at Budleigh Salterton, Paul Whittall, one of the club's newer members, attained his bronze medal (10 hoops with bisques) and stormed on to win a silver medal (12 hoops without bisques), which was a remarkable

achievement, since it was Paul's first appearance in an Open Tournament.

Last weekend was the Budleigh Salterton Egyptian Open tournament and Sidmouth members swept the board. Les Toye came first, with Paul Whittall second, Sheila Blenkinsop third and Richard Clark fourth, Sheila

Blenkinsop also won a bronze medal.

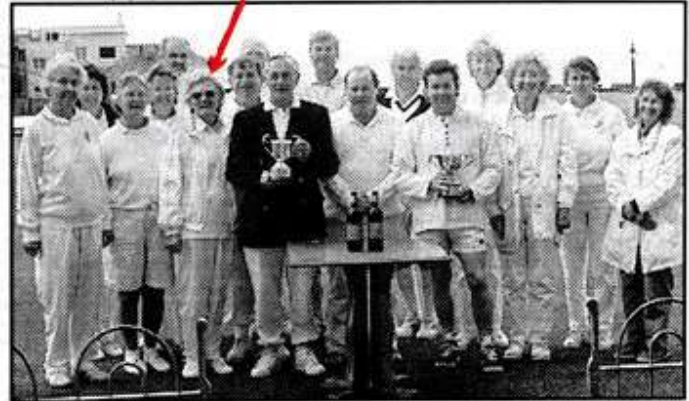
This Monday, June 8, sees the start of our open tournament, when 24 players from Sidmouth and other clubs around the country play. The club members are praying for fine weather!



# Chemical warfare?

June Open 1998

Manager Vera Henderson



Sidmouth Croquet Club Open Tournament

**THE PHOTOGRAPH** in last week's Sidmouth Herald of white shrouded figures in waterproofs was typical of the weather endured by visitors and members of the Croquet Club. No one can doubt their enthusiasm!

Twenty four visitors and members played through high, gusting wind and constant rain showers. It was the worst weather we have had during the seven years since the tournament was reinstated into our programme.

At one point the ball, if hit from north to south had a wonderful roll, wind assisted! Play was exciting, with the players fighting to hold the mallets steady and there were some nailbiting finals.

In the high handicap block Russell

Bretherton from Harrow Oak Croquet Club defeated Richard Clark from Sidmouth by one hoop to take the Dwerryhouse Cup.

Paul Whittall took the Fortfield Cup for Sidmouth in the "B" block and Brian Judson from High Wycombe won the David Rawkins Cup in the "A" block.

A fun doubles event on Friday was played in fairly sunny conditions, which was a welcome change for the competitors, and the Sidmouth team of Ingrid Read and Tony Dustan Smith were the winners.

The Croquet Club held a dinner for all the participants and their families on Wednesday evening. This was a very happy and well attended occasion, which the club hopes to repeat annually.

**NO**, Sidmouth hasn't been visited by the Teletubbies, or become a nuclear reactive site - those are croquet mallets not Geiger counters.

The Fort Field was the venue for Sidmouth Croquet Club's annual open tournament. Prayers for sunshine weren't answered.

Pic: Paul Taylor. ref. 6448/2 *JUNE 1998*

biggest turn off imaginable. One change in the law I would welcome would prohibit the practice but I realise that that is not practicable. But this after accuracy in shooting has led to lift shots being taken which I would describe as suicidal and would almost never have been contemplated twenty years ago. Having been a percentage player all my life I prefer to have the reasonable possibility of having another shot, rather than the virtual certainty of losing the game.

A change in practice which I would welcome, and there are quite a number who hope that it may soon happen, is one which will shorten the game considerably. It is interesting that during the 50's attempts were made to encourage long bisquers to play one of the shortened variations. This was logical on the basis that those with handicaps in double figures took 5 hours to finish a game and even then frequently didn't do so. Such attempts to simplify the game for them were laudable but, paradoxically, were resisted by those very people



Mr A.A. Reed and Mrs E Rotherham during the 1963 President's Cup at Hurlingham.

on the grounds that if the experts played 26 points why shouldn't they? They paid the same subscription to the CA and the same entry fee to the tournament. I was responsible for the introduction of the full bisque game, although it had been mentioned many years before but never had any serious experiment. It has never achieved its objective because it is even now used only rarely and I believe that the base is now set at far too high a level. It is also unpopular with longer bisquers only because they still do not know how to use their bisques and hoard them instead of using them constructively. If a base must be used I would hope that this would never be higher than 6, though I would prefer 4 or even 3. But, in addition, if the two players both have handicaps above the base, that that be ignored so that if a 10 plays a 16 then they should each have their 10 or 16 bisques. It only needs a relatively few long bisquers to start using their bisques attackingly and beating their more cautious opponents for others to realise what bisques are for. It really must be unjustifiable for two 16 bisquers to play each other on level terms, on exactly the same terms as opponents in the Open Championships, (without lifts, of course) and for us to feel surprised that they take so long over it.

An initiative taken by many of today's

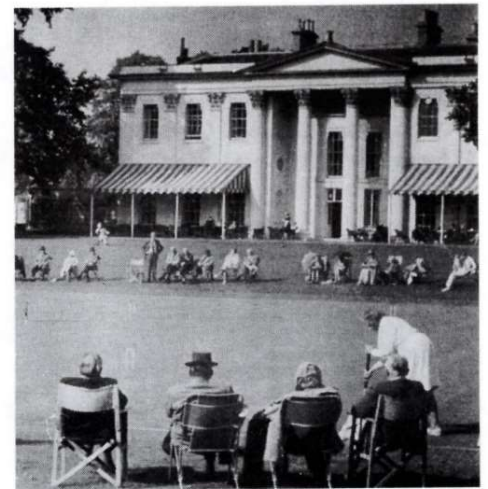
leading players, particularly those involved with the Croquet Players Association, (a body for which I have the greatest respect and do not regard them as being in any way competitive to the various national associations) have recently advocated the 14 point game, that is to say that game comprising of the first 6 hoops and the peg. The point about it is that lifts (and contact) occur after the 3rd and 4th hoops. This gives little time to organise a triple peel, which now assumes much greater difficulty. This version of the game has a number of advantages. First, it can be played in an hour or so. Secondly, it is easier to explain to spectators and novices alike. Thirdly, it has the logic of comprising of only one circuit of the hoops, - what is the point of making them twice? But I believe the fact that games can be played by experts in about an hour is a great advantage, and those with handicaps of up to about 15 should, with bisques, play it in no more than two hours. I hope very much that this version will be played more and more in our tournaments and I would be more than happy if it were to become the only version of the game. However I foresee the possibility of an ironical problem emerging. As I said earlier, long bisquers have consistently disliked playing shortened games while the rest of us play 26 points. If the 14 point game becomes standard I would not be surprised if the longer bisquers complained that they weren't getting their moneys worth if they cannot play 26 points! Well, we shall see.

I have now to mention something that I find unpalatable, but which I believe needs to be said. I am sure most of you will know that the next World Championship takes place in a weeks time in Bunbury, just south of Perth, Western Australia, and Barbara and I are off there tomorrow morning to fly the flag for the CA, and I am one of our delegates at the WCF meetings that will take place there. Not all of you may know that Chris Clarke, the holder of the title and therefore an automatic selection, has declined to go.

His reasons seem to be his concern that the organisation of the event may not conform to the conditions laid down, based on the unfortunate experience everyone had two years ago in France. To be fair to the French, no-one could have foreseen that the hotel everyone was booked into would go bust a few weeks beforehand. It is unfortunate that he should assume that the Australians may not be able to stick to the advertised conditions; accommodation for competitors will be provided free by the Australians, including continental breakfast, transport to the ground each day and lunch. He also sought to impose his own conditions, one at least of which could not be accepted by the organisers. I find it distressing that anyone can be so callous to the hosts who would be so happy to welcome him. What is also distasteful to me is that correspondence on this subject by more than one of our younger players is on the internet, and therefore available to almost everyone. It disparages the CA and is

scathingly rude about other countries in the WCF. We are the senior Association in the world, we have the best players in the world and that gives us a responsibility to behave with decorum and courtesy to others. This childish behaviour does our cause no good and I now take the opportunity to apologise to our friends overseas and to assure them that this behaviour is not typical of English croquet players. I hope such behaviour will now cease.

There is one aspect of our approach to the game, or rather the approach of those in authority in the CA, which I would hope can radically change, and that concerns the hospitality we are able to provide for visiting teams to this country. Or rather the lack of it! Particularly during the last 25 years I have made many trips overseas, not as a member of a team, but in a private capacity, or rather as President of the CA, - I think I have played in a dozen countries - and invariably have received wonderful hospitality. Sometimes my



Miss Joan Warwick in play during the President's Cup at Hurlingham in 1963.

accommodation has been provided free, almost invariably meals at clubs have been at no charge and I often find it embarrassing that we are unable to return such hospitality here. When setting budgets, I hope those responsible will double the figure they first thought of to cover this aspect.

Croquet has given me immense pleasure over the last 50 years and I know there are thousands of players, in this country alone, who hold the same view. The fact that anyone wishes to join the Association is proof that they hold the game in high regard and I knew three or four ex-internationals in other sports, rugger, hockey and tennis, who took up croquet when age prevented them playing their more athletic sport, and who all said, "If only I had discovered croquet earlier!" Well I can only hope that there will be a constant addition of players in the years to come, hopefully many of them reasonably young, who discover the delights, of which there are many, and the tribulations, of which there are a few, of the game which we all love.

*The Centenary AGM of the C.A. held on 18 Oct. 1998*  
*John Solomon's comments on 100 years of Croquet*

10. THE PRESIDENT'S CLOSING ADDRESS

"It's rather a daunting task to have to wind up this centenary meeting. We have been concerned with the events of the past year but it would be appropriate to consider the events of the last 100 years, if only in an abbreviated form.

On 15 October 1897 a group of people got together to form the United All England Croquet Association. There had been attempts for almost 30 years to form an Association, but there were rivalries and disagreements and none lasted the course. It was WH Peel, a name no one can be unaware of who plays croquet, who made a proper Association a reality. Three years later, in 1900, it changed its name to The Croquet Association.

I do not propose to take you through the history of the last 100 years. Those of you interested in that detail should obtain a copy of the Centenary Year Book which contains, apart from all the important records of the Association's history, its Officers since its inception and the prize winners of all important events since their inauguration, also a very full account (though described as "concise") of the history of the Association

by Colin Prichard, which continued the work done by his father Col. David Prichard.

I should like consider, albeit briefly, what has been achieved during the last century. I think it was about three years ago that I surmised what would have happened had there never been a CA. There would hardly have been as many clubs as there are now, without any doubt every club would have had different rules. Handicaps would have been awarded on dozens of different bases, and so on.

I believe the CA can take pride in a number of achievements. The Gazette was started in 1904 and has continued continuously since then. The improvements in equipment, from boxwood balls to composition, as early as 1898, would you believe it, and cast iron hoops down to 3 5/8". The Willis setting, that we use today, introduced in 1902 as an experiment was standardised in 1922. The redress of having a lift if your ball was wired from all others, though interestingly it started in 1907 by being able to lift to A baulk, in 1910 to either baulk at the dictate of the adversary and finally 1913 the choice as we have it today.

Of course, probably the most fundamental change to the accepted pattern of the game was the abandonment of the sequence game in 1920, by which the 'dead' ball could be positioned next to one's partner, or put to the next hoop knowing that it could not be removed, to the 'either ball' game we play today.

This association is the senior of all the national associations and it is to our credit that we have always been on remarkably good terms with those in other countries. Australia, New Zealand and South Africa have associations almost as old as ours but they have always looked up to us as a leader in croquet fashion. Equally, I believe we have been circumspect in consulting our overseas colleagues about any new ideas and not imposing them without consultation.

It was in 1920 that Australia took the initiative to challenge this country to an International Match and this eventually materialised when they arrived in 1925 and the MacRobertson Trophy was 'born'. New Zealand joined in 1930 and the US had to wait over 60 years until 1993 to be invited to join.

The first official World Championship was held in 1989 under the auspices of the World Croquet Federation. Starting with some 10 countries it now consists of 18. With the exception of the first, which was won by a New Zealander, every World Champion has been an Englishman and the runner-up also except on one occasion. And in the MacRobertson Trophy we have certainly been shown to be the leading country, having won it on eight out of the last ten contests. I have no doubt that this success has come from the fact that we are able to demonstrate more strength in depth than our opponents.

The standard of play has clearly developed over the last 100 years, even the last fifty, and certainly the last ten. Sextuples were unheard of fifty years ago, today a handful of players seem able to complete them almost at will. I do not think that the greater prevalence of automatic watering has made lawns much easier than they used to be.

We are fortunate in having Council to run the affairs of the Association which is dedicated to improving the game and this has been the case for as long as I can remember, (which is fifty years) but it must be said that for the last fifteen years or so the approach of those on the Council has become much more professional. And rightly so, considering the demands made upon us by the virtue of the grants we have received from the Sports Council.

And so I believe we are in very good shape to look forward to the next 100 years. We have a strong Association, we have a dedicated Council, we have players of the highest calibre, we have some 150 clubs, many of which are becoming more and more successful in attracting, and keeping, new players. We must thank our ancestors who put this Association on a firm base during the early years of this century and we must have faith that those currently in charge of our affairs will continue the good work that has already been done.

*Looking to the Future (Herald)*

**By John Goodwin**

**A BID to secure wider use of the Fort Field facilities of Sidmouth, Cricket, Tennis and Hockey Club is being embarked on this week.**

The plan involves installation of a floodlit multi-use area where there are currently hard tennis courts, levelling of sloping croquet lawns and alterations to the main and croquet pavilions.

Sports sections have produced development plans to demonstrate how the enhanced facilities would be utilised in order to make a case for lottery grants towards the estimated £200,000 cost.

Applications for planning permission to alter the two pavilions were submitted this week.

Club chairman Roger Packe said: "The aim of the club is to provide interest and sporting activities for as wide a cross section of the community as possible. The club provides subsidised membership and coaching in various sports for around 150 juniors each year as well as activities for adults.

"Our membership covers the age range eight to 80's and there is a full social calendar for sporting and social members so we are living up to our aims.

**Support**

"Lottery grants are difficult to obtain, but if the club is successful with this application, and can gain support from East Devon District Council this would mean that we could extend and improve on all these activities and become even more relevant to the local communi-

The resurfacing of the hard tennis court with a synthetic turf carpet and floodlighting will enable year-round tennis. It would also provide a training facility for the town's hockey players, who currently have to travel to Ottery St Mary, and the means for croquet to be played when natural turf lawns are out of bounds in the winter.

Accommodation in the main pavilion would be rearranged and extended to provide more adequate changing facilities for visiting cricket teams and umpires, all on the first floor. This would allow the ground floor to be rearranged to allow more space for social activities and bridge playing.

The external appearance of the building would be improved by having a continuous thatched roof to the eastern elevation. The present untidy arrangement of sheds accommodating ground machinery and materials would be replaced.

Extension of the pavilion serving the croquet lawns alongside Station Road would provide for changing space, a toilet and sheltered instruction area. This building's appearance would be improved by using a cedar shingle roof.

A bleak financial outlook at the club a year ago has been turned around thanks to economies being made and a 175th anniversary year appeal. The proposals envisage extended use of the facilities and further income to secure the club's future.

5/12/98. Herald

*Sidmouth June Open Tournament 1999*

*Sheila Adams Asst. Manager*

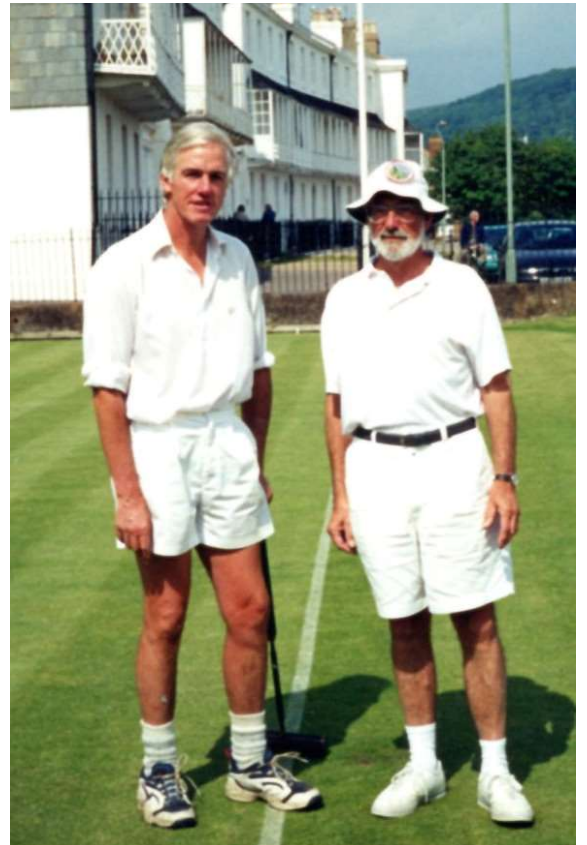


*Ron Selmes  
Manager*

*Mike Hammelev (Cheltenham) receiving the Sidmouth Croquet Challenge  
Cup from the Chairman Gwen Sims*



*Brian Judson (High Wycombe)  
Winner of the David Rawkins Cup*



*Graham Dodd (Sidmouth) & Jeremy Marshall  
(Kingston Maurward) Finalists in the Handicap section  
Graham Dodd - winner*

## Sidmouth Week 7 - 12 June 1999

Report by Ron Selmes

The Sidmouth Croquet Club week opened with 24 players with handicaps ranging from 1.5 to 16 divided into 4 blocks of 6 for the handicap event and rearranged into 4 different blocks for the class event, in which the top two blocks played advanced, the third played level and the fourth played full bisque to a base of 8.

The first two and a half days were devoted to handicap play at the end of which the four block winners who would play off for the final on Saturday included three Sidmouth players - Richard Clark (12), Vera Henderson (10) and Graham Dodd (10) - together with Jeremy Marshall (7) from Kingston Maurward.

On Saturday morning Graham beat Richard and Jeremy beat Vera, with Graham going on to beat Jeremy in the final.

The class events resulted in Mike Hammelev (2) winning the Sidmouth Challenge Cup, Brian Judson (7) winning the David Rawkins Cup, Jolyon Kay (12) winning the Fortfield Cup and Brian Shorney (11) winning the Dwerryhouse cup with 4 wins.

All games played during the tournament were incorporated in the Egyptian event with extra games available on Saturday for those not involved in the handicap play-offs. Tony Doughty (5) played the most games (13) and Mike Hammelev completed the only triple peel of the tournament on Saturday afternoon but could not get enough points from his last two wins to affect the final result. The winner was Graham Dodd.

Two CA awards were won during the week. Margaret Pena (7) won her silver and Peter Miller (16) playing in only his second tournament, won his bronze.

No tournament can ever succeed without a large amount of 'back room' work and the Sidmouth Club are extremely lucky to have lots of willing volunteers to carry out all of those unsung but necessary jobs to back up Tony & Elaine Hope in the food and drinks department. The four lawns were in first class condition thanks to Sidmouth's new groundsman, Terry Riding, who was overseeing his first croquet tournament.

Finally, having managed quite a few tournaments on my own, for the first time I had the experience of an assistant manager, and in Sheila Adams I found the perfect assistant. Sheila carried out all those early morning and late evening jobs that are the bane of the manager's life and also prepared my crib sheet for the presentation time. Many thanks, Sheila.

## TIMES PAST

Robert Fulford's feat this year, of winning the President's Cup, Open Championships and Men's Championship, repeats that of Humphrey Hicks fifty years ago. As the Gazette of October 1948 records, "Congratulations to Mr H O Hicks for having won the Men's Championship and Gold Casket, the Open Championship [and - with Dudley Hamilton-Miller - the Open Doubles], and the President's Cup, all in the same year.

Accustomed to triple peels, his triple success in the three premier events in the croquet world required even more exceptional skill; it needed a consistently high standard of play throughout the 1948 season; and this Mr Hicks has shown in the quality of his games, both in these three London tournaments, and at Budleigh Salterton (where he won all three events) and at Cheltenham (where he won the Opens and Handicap Singles).



● CUP winners at the croquet club annual general meeting.

**WELL** over 60 members attended this year's Sidmouth Croquet Club's annual general meeting. Welcomed by retiring chairman Gwen Sims, both new and existing members sat together to witness the event that marked the end of a very successful croquet season for Sidmouth, *writes Mary Smith*

A popular 1999 coaching programme attracted 20 new members who now actively participate in the game, some of whom have taken part in both internal and external competitions and done very well. It was a year to enjoy Association or Golf Croquet and compete for whatever trophies were on offer.

This year has been marred by the loss of members Mary Kirk, Clifford Taylor, Les Toye and Gordon Wilcox who had died since the last annual meeting.

Ex members Phil and Iris Dwerryhouse were remembered by chairman Gwen Sims, in particular for their considerable contribution toward the revival of Sidmouth croquet many years ago, adding they are greatly missed.

The future however does seem bright with over 120 members now taking part and Sidmouth attracting some of the UK's best players by hosting, among other open events, the Selectors Weekend in the year 2000, plus an additional 'advanced' tournament for handicaps 1-5 and an additional 'internal' tournament for Sidmouth players later in the year.

The photograph shows some of Sidmouth's successes following the presentation of trophies by club president Rex Sims.

AGM 1999.



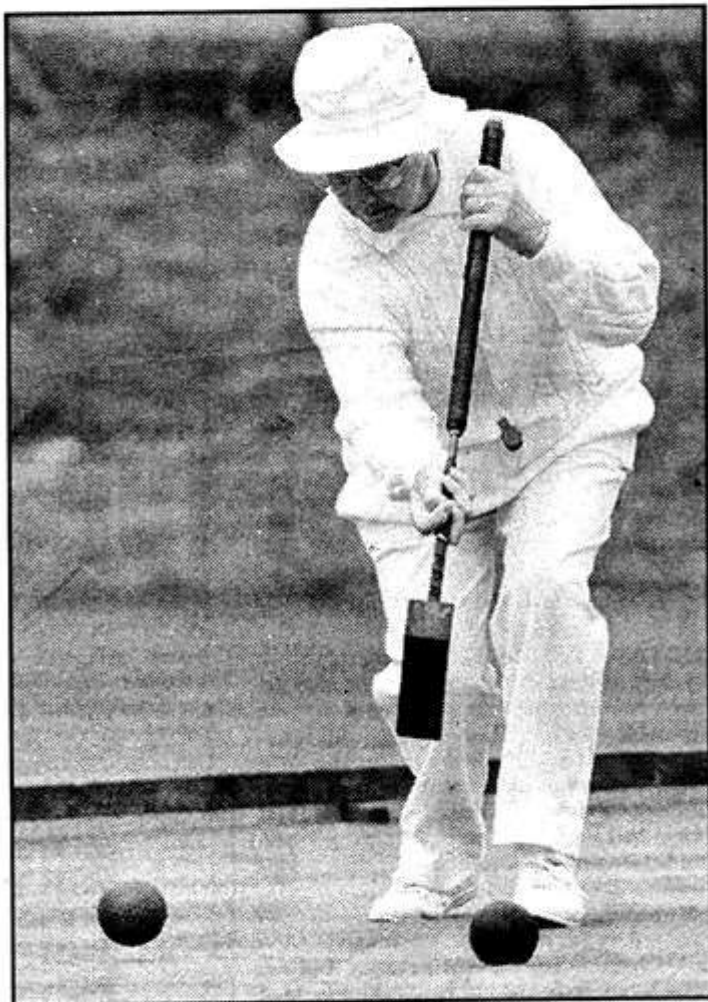
*Self advertisement - Why not!*

**CROQUET** players from home and away were on the lawns at Sidmouth this week for an Association Croquet Tournament, writes *John Goodwin*.

Twenty-four players, with handicaps ranging from one-and-a-half to 16, each played two games per day on the lawns at the Fort Field.

They were divided into four blocks of six for the big handicap event and in four different blocks for the class games.

The finals of the handicap event featuring the winners of each of the four blocks were being held today (Saturday). Players from the host club won three of the four blocks.



● AIR strike - a powerful shot from one of the players Sidmouth Croquet club open tournament.

Picture: Paul Taylor ref 8185/26

*June Open 7  
1998*



the start of the 2000 season.  
● Gwynneth Dart and Brian Smith are pictured (above right) opening the season on the croquet lawns at Fortfield Terrace.....

*Lowest handicap lady (6)  
1994s  
Lowest handicap man (0)*