

THROUGH THE HOOP

Newsletter of the SU3A Croquet Group

Edition No: 1. March 2019



A message from the editor

The plan is to produce this newsletter two or three times a year. All contributions welcomed – whether celebrating a successful jump shot, scoring a hoop against our top player or just a moan about the poor choice of biscuits, and we'll try to share it with all our readers. Get in touch at the ground, telephone 2309754 or email ann.granville1@btinternet.com

From the Coordinator

As you emerge from the duvet of winter, it's time to brush the cobwebs from your mallet, brush up your stop shot and jump shot skills and prepare to renew old friendships on the lawns.....Yes, it's nearly time for the start of the Croquet Season.

The season starts on Tuesday 2nd April.

At the last AGM, you voted in a new Management Committee. They are:

Myself as Coordinator

David Bills as Deputy Coordinator and Match Manager

Chris Cave as Treasurer

Mo Cave as Secretary

Pete Reed as Grounds and Equipment Manager and

Jenny Emby as Development and Training Manager.

Of course, we cannot manage the Croquet Group without your help. We already have a number of volunteers including Ann Granville who will produce our newsletter 3 or 4 times during the season, John Evans who arranges the friendly matches and our keyholders who are the first to arrive and the last to leave, making sure at least one lawn is ready at the start time. From time to time they also may ask for help and I hope you will come forward.

We would like a social secretary to arrange some activities; e.g. a monthly outing to a hostelry for dinner, the tea on the first day of play and the BBQ at the end of the season.

We are all looking forward to days of balmy weather, good lawns and friendly play.

Aim, relax and hit it with confidence.

Brian

“Croquet? It's like golf, only more fun” John Prescott



Remember when afternoons were like this? They will be again

Talking of volunteers – a volunteer is needed to ensure that milk, tea, coffee and biscuits are available. It needs someone who will make sure there is a steady supply, so that no one has to make a mercy dash up to the shop. If you can help, please contact any member of the committee. This role is important, for a convivial cuppa can often assuage those feelings following one of those games we prefer to forget and is important too for members who just want to drop in for a chat with friends.



How we all groan when we see that phrase!!! It seems to bring out the grumpy old man (or woman) in all of us. Having said that, as ladies and gents of “a certain age”, playing a game with hard balls and heavy “bats”, we do need to treat health & safety seriously.

For this reason, **ANY** incident or accident which happens in the car park, the hut, the pavilion or on the field needs to be reported, even if no injury is sustained and even if you feel that it was your own fault that it happened!

Usually there will be a committee member present and the incident/accident should be reported to them straightaway. They will ensure a form is completed and will let me, as secretary, have that form. I will then undertake a risk assessment and decide whether any action is required. If there is no committee member present, then you must make Brian or myself aware of it as quickly as possible.

If you spot anything which you consider could prove hazardous, then again, please bring it to the attention of a committee member. That way we can all enjoy our game safely!

Mo Cave
Health & Safety Supremo

Defibrillator training

Not everyone had a chance to train last season so Mo Cave will be organizing training sessions. Keep an eye out for notices in the pavilion or contact her direct on mocave@btinternet.com



Members between games!

New Season's Challenge

As you awaken from your winter slumbers and search for your mallet, ready to take up the challenge of the Parkhead lawns once more, preparations have been made by the committee. From a competitive viewpoint, everyone was given two opportunities to express an interest in being considered for league squads and many have done so. The team captains met and decided we would have the same entries as last year: SU3A Handicap in the Yorkshire Handicap League; SU3A Parkhead & Ecclesall in the Yorkshire Level Play League and SU3A E.M. in the E. Midlands Level Play League.

Squads have been selected and now Brian, as the Yorkshire League Manager, has devised the Yorkshire fixture list. The onerous task of contacting opponents to arrange, and then often re-arrange, matches is under way. Hopefully, we will do as well as last year, if not better, when SU3A Parkhead won the Yorkshire Level Play League.

There will be some new rules for Golf Croquet this season, to try to speed things up a little and to remove the emphasis on faults. Information about this will be circulated, so don't panic.

Good luck to everyone for a successful season.

David

“Croquet! A very good game for people who are annoyed with one another, giving many opportunities for venting rancor” Rose Macauley

Improving your croquet game

We plan to offer coaching sessions this season aimed at both novices and improvers. These will be run before the normal club sessions, probably on a Tuesday, and cover such topics as tactics, accuracy, stop-shots, jump-shots etc. While Jenny will run the beginners' sessions, we plan to also get the expert players to share their skills. There will also be an opportunity to get your handicap assessed.

If you have any ideas, requests or questions ask Jenny or Brian and we'll see what we can do. Meanwhile, why not look at how the champions do it? There are plenty of YouTube videos to help you. Try googling *Reg Bamford croquet* to find the current world champion showing his skills.

This is a good one to start with:

[Reg playing in the 2017 world championship](#)

It's relatively short but shows how Reg 'stalks' the ball before taking his shot. This is the secret to accuracy – and one explanation of why he is world champion and his opponent, who doesn't stalk, isn't

Also: [The Mental Game](#)

For serious addicts, this is a fascinating glimpse into the mind of a champion:

Whatever you do, avoid any videos from the US. Their game of croquet has about as much in common with ours as their football does

Jenny Emby

IMPORTANT NOTICE

Grounds and Equipment

The lawns are looking a little the worse for wear in places at the moment, a legacy of the long hot summer last year, and our cricketing colleagues are concerned about the general condition of the outfield. They have therefore asked us to be mindful of this in our use, particularly of Lawns 1 and 2. Lawn 1 needs some maintenance work on the hoop runs, which I can deal with, and Lawn 2 needs some weed and feed and hopefully the cricket club will have this in hand. Lawn 4 was affected by the recent drainage works and will require a good roll in the spring before it can be considered playable. We are therefore going to restrict winter croquet to lawn 3 only from now on, I know this may be a little inconvenient but it's only for a few more weeks.

Towards the end of March I'll be re-siting the hoop positions on the lawns ready for the summer season and I'll be looking for volunteers to assist with this in due course.

On the equipment front we now have some new hoop lifters, one for each lawn, (see photos below), which will be available for the new season and I would urge everybody to make use of these when removing hoops to avoid injury and damage to the hoop holes. As can be seen they can be stored neatly on the back of the equipment trolleys.



They should be able to remove most tight hoops but if you find a particularly stubborn one you can always use the old steel lifter which is kept in the shed.

You will no doubt have noticed that we have various different types of pins for the corner flags, two types of steel and a wooden set. The thicker steel ones can be difficult to stick in the ground so we're going to standardise with thinner steel pins on all four lawns and these pins are currently being manufactured and should be ready for the summer. Let's hope we get a good one!

Pete Reed