

# Cygnnet

## South West Area Newsletter

### Celebrating Croquet Across the Region

#### Issue 49: September 2024

Well, it's nearly the end of another croquet year but there's lots to look forward to – read on to find out more about

- ✓ League Finals weekends
- ✓ Short Croquet Tournament
- ✓ The start of the Zoom season
- ✓ Our AGM
- ✓ The next issue of Cygnnet which will contain all the reports on the finals, promotions and relegations and lots, lots, more

### SWF AGM

The call for nominations to the committee and proposal for League Rules etc has been sent to all club committees. The deadline for receiving these is October 13<sup>th</sup> – plenty of time but do get on with it if you have something in mind.

We'd love to hear from you if you are interested in joining the committee or helping your region in some other (non-committee) way. Just contact [lindawithani@hotmail.com](mailto:lindawithani@hotmail.com) and she'll get you pointing in the right direction.

To give you some ideas we need:

- ✓ Secretary – the usual skill set applies
- ✓ Safeguarding Officer – especially if you have experience with adults and or children in this respect
- ✓ Someone to help take care of our website
- ✓ Cygnnet compiler / editor
- ✓ Anyone with ideas for how we might develop our support – and the ability to help us achieve this



### Zoom meetings

If it's October it must be SWF Zoom time – our programme recommences at 7.00pm on Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> October and thereafter on the second Tuesday of the month until March / April.

Keep an eye open for the invitations which will be sent to your club contact a week or so before the event.

Cygnnet is emailed to our club contacts who are requested to pass it on to individual club members. It is also available shortly after publication on our website: [www.swfcroquet.org.uk](http://www.swfcroquet.org.uk)

We welcome queries, suggestions and feedback about Cygnnet or any aspect of the SW croquet scene. Contact: [lindawithani@hotmail.com](mailto:lindawithani@hotmail.com)

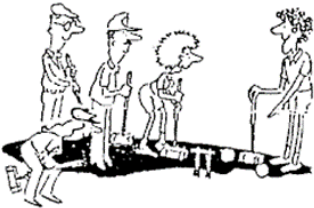
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## Croquet England AGM

Members of CqE will be receiving their invitations to this event which will take place on Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> October. You may have noticed they have published their strategy document so check it out to see which way the wind is blowing:

<https://www.croquetengland.org.uk/app/uploads/2024/08/Croquet-England-Strategy-2024.pdf>

## Croquet England is seeking nominations for two prestigious awards:



### Coach of the Year 2024

We are looking for an established coach who has made a significant contribution to coaching our sport. Someone who is dedicated, enthusiastic and has helped players improve. A coach who always seems to go that 'extra mile'.

### The Lifetime Coaching Award

This award is for that someone really special who has made a significant contribution to coaching our sport over a long period of time.

The Coaching Committee will be considering all nominations at their next meeting. If you know of a coach you consider worthy of either of these awards, please email Paul Francis at: [paulwfrancis@icloud.com](mailto:paulwfrancis@icloud.com) for further information.

**Nominations close on 31<sup>st</sup> October 2024**

The Coach of the Year and the Lifetime Coaching Award are prestigious awards that are made to CqE Graded Coaches who have shown a significant and above-normal contribution to coaching.

Guidance Criteria include:

- Has shown dedication, innovation and enthusiasm in expanding knowledge and skills of the game
- Carries an endorsement from Federation Officials, National / International players, or club committees
- Has a significant length of service as a coach
- Has made a particular contribution within the relevant playing season
- Is recognised as helping individual players, a group of players, or a team to achieve significant success
- Has led a successful re-organisation or development of coaching that has reached a number of players
- Has dedicated significant time and expertise to producing a widely-used CqE coaching asset, such as a manual or technique

The Lifetime Coaching Award is awarded only once to anyone, whereas Coach of the Year may be awarded again after at least 5 years have passed. Additionally, it encompasses

- A sustained contribution over a number of years
- The candidate is widely recognised as having made a significant contribution to coaching in the domain throughout that time.

These criteria are for guidance and the candidate would not necessarily have to fulfil all of them

## Finals weekends

So, you may not have made it through to the Finals, but let's hope you had fun trying, catching up with old friends and making new ones. If you'd like to pop along to see how your erstwhile rivals fare, then here are the dates, venues and contenders: (highlighted: results not known yet)

Final	Venue	Home team	Away Team
Federation	Bristol	Garway	Bath
Intermediate	Taunton	East Dorset	Garway
SC Open	Nailsea	Nailsea	Bath
SC Restricted	Bath	Camerton	Bath
GC Level Play 5+	Budleigh	Swindon	Budleigh
GC Handicap	Swindon	Cheltenham or Nailsea	Swanage
GC High Handicap	Camerton	Llandaff or Cheltenham	Swanage or Dowlish Wake

Match Secretaries and Team Captains have also been sent [guidance on refereeing at Finals](#) – if you would like to read this for yourself, here it is:

The SWF Committee tries to ensure that there is a qualified referee at each of the SWF League finals and this is usually achieved. Either a committee member or a member of the host club volunteers for the role. However, there have been some issues related to refereeing and I thought it appropriate to set out some guidelines. Many of the less experienced players are unfamiliar with the laws and rules and would benefit from greater involvement of the referee.

1 The appointed referee should gather the players together at the start of the match and make it clear that players should call the referee before any questionable stroke, either by themselves or by an opponent.

2 In GC finals, all players and referees, whether involved in the game or simply observers, should forestall play if a wrong ball is about to be played or has just been played. This does not apply in AC or SC finals.

3 A copy of the appropriate book of laws (AC/SC) or rules (GC) should be available for reference.

4 The appointed referee should be considered to be the Tournament Referee, but any qualified referee who is present should be invited to become a referee on call if the appointed referee is busy.

5 For the higher handicap finals (AC B League, AC Intermediate League, GC High Handicap and SC Restricted), the appointed referee should appoint themselves to be a Referee in Charge. This means that they have the right to go onto a court to oversee a stroke, even if they have not been specifically called by a player.

6 Such intervention should also cover cases where there appears to be a significant likelihood of damage to the surface of the court, or where such damage has occurred and needs expert repair.

7 Other referees, if present, should only go onto the court if requested, but may draw the attention of the referee in charge if they see that a law or rule has been infringed.

*It is also considered that a useful step to improve matters is to recommend to clubs that all games, whether matches, roll-ups or friendlies, should be played according to the proper rules.*

*A lot of casual play, including infringement of the rules, occurs during roll-ups and leads to a rather cavalier attitude; such phrases as 'taking it too seriously' can be heard.*

*It is this approach that leads to many match players not knowing what the rules are.*

And while we're on the subject of Referees, Dave Kibble, Examining Referee and Bristol CC, sends out this call:



### **Referee! Referee!!**

A call we hear often, but there just aren't enough.

A referee's job is watching for potential faults and adjudicating positions.

In AC, with its more complex Laws, Assistant Referees provide a valuable service by doing all the highly in-demand stuff at matches and tournaments but don't need a full knowledge of the Laws - they can call on a full Referee for anything not clear to them.

Becoming an (Assistant) Referee is straightforward: you should attend a (2-day) training course and pass the relevant examination. The training course expects that you've read the Rules/Laws and draws out the nuances that might not be obvious to you.

Often, there is insufficient time to administer the examinations immediately after a course and this is where the system falls down.

Lots of people have done the course but have never taken the exam. If you have attended a course and want to pass the exam, please please get in touch and I'll be delighted to work with you towards your qualification - the game needs you!

The exam is really not onerous and is conducted with feedback and encouragement - it does not try to put you on the spot. I do urge you to step up and qualify:



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### **Your Game Needs YOU!**

For information about refereeing, see the Croquet England website  
<https://www.croquet.org.uk/?p=games/association/refereeing#BecomingAReferee>

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

If you'd just like to get better at knowing the Rules or Laws, try your hand at the online quiz <https://www.croquet.org.uk/?Service=Quiz>

[DaveKibble@gmail.com](mailto:DaveKibble@gmail.com)

## Hosting a Final?

Perhaps you'll find this helpful:

Question
Which final is it?
When is it?
Finalists' contact details
Are the lawns booked?
Who will be setting up the courts on the day? <b>AC</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• White lining</li><li>• Hoop setting</li><li>• Check for damage</li><li>• Swishing</li><li>• Corner flags and markers (AC)</li><li>• Half-way markers (GC)</li><li>• Tournament balls?</li></ul>
Who will be the referee?
Who will be representing the SWF?
Are there any Safeguarding issues?
What time will the teams be arriving/playing
What are the catering arrangements? **
Do the teams know? <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Where you are</li><li>• Where to park</li><li>• Any special arrangements / facilities</li><li>• What the catering arrangements are</li><li>• Who to contact in an emergency</li></ul>
Anything else?



### \*\* Catering arrangements

These are not covered by SWF League Rules but the current trend is definitely for visitors to bring their own lunches but for the host club to offer tea/coffee/biscuits/cake – for which they may charge.

The fee from the SWF is to cover lawns and equipment.



## Something Old

*Ian Wills, Kington Langley CC, tells us of a record-breaking (?) member of this lovely village club.*

One of our members - Bryan Edbrooke – celebrated his 100th birthday in April! I can't imagine there are too many centenarians playing croquet in the district, or even the country.

The pictures attached show him playing last week, with his daughter Hilary Cadwgan. They have both been members of Kington Langley CC for a number of years.



On his birthday he received a Birthday Card from the King & Queen, not a formal photo, just one of them in everyday clothes. He was really pleased with that.



## Something new

*From the very old to the very new – Jan Kot introduces Tisbury Bowls and Croquet Club – he's in charge of the croquet side of things.*

This is our 3rd season as a Croquet Club, we are a small club of 24 members (not all regular players of either AC or GC).

We have just one full size lawn, which we divide into 2 half size lawns from time to time.

We had our first Short Croquet interclub match on 26th Jun) with Kington Langley here at Tisbury and you can see the results below.

Jan would love to hear from other clubs so do get in touch: 07887 687906 or [kotjan415@yahoo.com](mailto:kotjan415@yahoo.com)



The Home team and their SC handicaps		Ditto the Away team	
Jan Kot (Captain)	3.5	John Grimshaw – non-playing captain	
Clive Camp	6	Margaret Murray	3
Lawrie Webster	8	Ted Crossley	4
Geoff Cluett	9	Graeme Pattison	9
Mary Webster	9	Caroline Tarran	9
David Morley	10		

**And the winners were ... Kington Langley 8:7 – a very narrow margin!**

## Who's done well then! Reports from around the region



Somerset shone, coming 1<sup>st</sup> at a national level in the **First Division of the GC Inter-Counties** – Stephen reports:

Somerset was represented in the 1st Division of the GC Inter-counties tournament by six players. The top two seeds, David Goacher and Dominic Aarvold, are from Bristol. Two are from Camerton & Peasedown: Andy Loakes and Colin Britt, and two from Taunton Deane: Neil Fillery and Stephen Custance-Baker, who managed the team.

They had a successful Saturday with 6 wins in 7 matches, losing only to Essex. On Sunday they did even better with 5 wins out of 5, including, in the final match, a win against the favourites, Nottinghamshire, who have won it for the last 3 years.

With 10 wins from 11 matches, Somerset are now the national GC inter-county champions.

The other SWF teams in the tournament were:

- Devon with 6 wins came 5th
- Dorset with 4 wins came 8th
- Gloucestershire with 4 wins came 9th

All four teams remain in the 1st Division.

The **Budleigh Summer week**: a great AC event, excellently managed by David Warhurst and with plenty of delicious cakes to keep you going in the afternoon, there was something for pretty well everyone



The photo shows the winners with their trophies and hairy knees. From L – R:

- Charlie Martin - peeling trophy;
- Adam Swinton - Egyptian handicap and B Block trophies;
- Duncan Reeve - Handicap Doubles (with Paul) and A Block singles trophies;
  - Noel Harris - C Block trophy;
  - Paul Saunders - Handicap Doubles (with Duncan)

Next we have the **GC third Eights**. Stephen Custance-Baker writes:

The South West was very well represented in the GC Third Eight at Nailsea with 6 of the 8 players. Tim King presented the trophy to the overall winner, Tim Jolliff (L) of Budleigh Salterton and Taunton.

The Bowl trophy was presented to Colin Britt (R) of Camerton & Peasedown by Graham McCausland.



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## Nailsea – Advanced Tournament – 10/11 August 2024

*Marcus Evans reports, with photos and extra comments thanks to Klim Seabright.*

This year's event saw 9 players gather to do battle at Nailsea, where the lawns were in fine condition thanks to John Hancock, John Wallace, and their team of helpers. When combined with the customarily firm hoops this led to perhaps a lower than average number of games played over the weekend, but probably a higher number of turns per person, so nobody felt short-changed.

Eschewing previous innovations of asking players to start 2 games at the same time, the manager opted for a more conventional flexible Swiss format. In a bid to encourage enterprising and expeditious play, he declared at the outset that the most wins over the weekend would win the trophy - so 5 wins out of 8 would beat 4 out of 4. While it was rightly pointed out that this could disadvantage the player with the late start each day, this was mitigated by it being the manager on both days!

*Dave Kibble (Bristol) gets to grip with the electric ring.*

Despite no time limits being imposed (unless both players agreed to have one), very little pegging down was needed and things seemed to run smoothly with



little managerial intervention. On the catering side, Dave and Linda very kindly made it a competition within a competition, but one in which the clear winners were the players, enjoying a delicious two course lunch each day. As usual, the wine and entertaining conversation flowed, such that any disappointments on the lawn were soon forgotten.

As things drew to a close, Neil Kingston from Bristol was the clear winner of the prize for best performance by a positive handicap, largely thanks to a big upset win over clubmate Robert Wilkinson.

*The manager, surrounded by mallets and beer, keeps track of everything.*



In the main competition, Dave Kibble took his time to win most of his games, including a crucial comeback against defending champion David Goacher. Sadly, his sterling efforts in the kitchen left no time for him to finish an earlier pegged down game that could have brought his fifth win, and although a play-off was offered (despite being against the announced conditions, strictly speaking) this was declined, leaving me with the trophy as well as the peeling prize. I didn't feel too bad about it given that 2 years ago, I missed out on the trophy to Dave despite winning 5 out of 5 games. Some managers never learn, but do come next year to watch me continue to try.

*Klim Seabright reflects on his experience at this event:*

As I was unavailable for the usual B Level this year I entered the A Level. To be truthful this was a bit "above my pay grade". There were several elements however, which contributed to my enjoyment.

- There is always a warm welcome at Nailsea
- Marcus Evans manages this tournament (with pencil and paper) in such a way that the core is a serious tournament but there are also lots of opportunities to gain other prizes which encourages adventurous play
- Good food also helps - this is the first time I have known a game to be "pegged down" so that a player could cook.



So ... I am going away to have a go at "casting", be more accurate with the positioning of my forward ball and remember my "follow through". Judging by the follow through picture I could risk a dislocated shoulder! I hope to put these skills into practice at the Nailsea B Level event next year.

*Now that's what I call 'follow through'. Rob Wilkinson (Bristol) watched by oppo and fellow club member, David Goacher.*

### **Neil Morrison Trophy** – *Tony Mayer reports*

The first tournament for the Neil Morrison Memorial Trophy was held over the August Bank Holiday weekend.

Neil was a keen AC player and excellent coach and it is fitting that the Trophy in his name is for AC players of handicaps 7 and above – a group for whom Neil 's coaching helped most. In fact, there are very few tournaments specifically designed for this group of AC players to engage in Level Play using the Advanced rules.



Involving 6 players with five rounds so that all played all, the tournament opened on Saturday in a torrential downpour. Standing water made Court 1 unplayable and court 2 was just about usable and so, double banking on Court 3 took place as this was relatively unscathed. The heavy rain made arduous work as it took a lot of energy to move a ball any distance. Consequently, all the first-round games went to time.

However, by the afternoon with drying conditions we were able to use all three courts and avoid double banking. Some differential drying left the lawns a little bumpy which created a different

challenge to the players. Fortunately, the second day was dry albeit with a very strong wind – again another challenge!

It soon became evident that Andy Evason from Blewbury was the favourite as he played some excellent croquet creating lengthy breaks usually including peels. The early prediction of his success was borne out as he remained undefeated throughout the tournament often winning by significant margins. So not only did Andy win all his games but he ended up with a hoop difference of plus 50 – a really impressive achievement. There was a close fight for second place with Mervyn Harvey and Phil de Glanville tied on 3 wins each with Mervyn having a good positive hoop difference to become runner-up.

Lynette, Neil's daughter came on the afternoon of the second day to present the cup to the winner. One should note that with Andy's impressive and rapid progress it is unlikely that he will be able to defend the Trophy in 2025 as his handicap will be much too low by then!



*The field dries out – (L to R) Alan Braunton (Swindon), Philip de Glanville (Bath), Andy Evason (Blewbury) – winner, Kathy Wallace (Nailsea), Mervyn Harvey (Kenilworth) and Richard Coward (High Wycombe)*

Despite the conditions on the first day, we saw some excellent play and close finishes over the two days which is a reflection of the standard achieved by all participants. We are all, now, looking forward to 2025 for this to become a well-established feature of the Croquet England calendar.

### **It's the taking part ...**

*Klim Seabright (Cheltenham) has been a busy bee:*

A busy week on the competitive circuit - oh look, the three "B"s: Bath, Broadwas and Bradford on Avon.

### **Monday 29th July**

Westward bound to Aqua Sulis. Arrive early and is there anything quite as relaxing as sitting quietly at a deserted croquet club, in the morning sun, with a great view of the abbey, really inSPIREing.

### **Wednesday 31st July**

Every time someone mentions Broadwas the slope increases from a gentle lean towards "ye Malverne Hilles" to something akin to the Lauberhorn Ski run at Wengen.

I am working on a prototype shoe which should solve the problem (see photo). The picture is of my East to West pair so more pairs will be needed to cover other points of the compass. I plan to launch on April 1st.



There was a warm welcome with best tea and biscuits on the shadow side of the Malvern Hills. This was a well organised GC one day tournament which managed to keep to time. As the number of games played increased so did the temperature, increasing the possibility of hoop melt. Some players won and some didn't. I was awarded the diplomatic equivalent of the wooden spoon trophy: "The Saucer".

One player managed to peel through the golden hoop but the problem was that it wasn't his ball – OK, it was me!

### Friday 2nd August

A nudge to the south west and I find myself playing Short Croquet at Bradford on Avon. Bit of an odd name for down here among the worzells... surely it belongs more "up north". If I get time I'll try to find the Broad Ford.

The croquet players at Bradford must be congratulated for arriving at an agreed use of the Bowls Lawn. I doubt if the more substantial competition hoops would go down well with the "bias boys" but a lighter hoop with a carrot has been sourced and the holes are easily closed over. It would be interesting to know how the hoops would survive the long hard hitting favoured by the younger GC players.

Fortunately the Cheltenham team contained the more gentle (older!) souls. Incidentally if you are taking a non-playing partner to Bradford this is a fascinating place to visit with tithe barn, art gallery, river, canal and the 10.36 to Dilton Marsh!?

### Re-wilding - It's an ill rain ... that doesn't help something somewhere

We may have become a tad fed-up with all the rain earlier this summer, but let's look on the bright side: an amazing display of colour at Bristol CC.



Jill Hathaway tends the beautiful display below and can't recall a better year.

But credit too to Mike Salisbury's sunflower down by the new pavilion – Jill (5'4") gives us an indication just how tall it got.



## Notices

<b>Useful Links</b>	
Croquet England	<a href="https://www.croquetengland.org.uk/">https://www.croquetengland.org.uk/</a>
Croquet England Youtube channel	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/@CroquetEngland/streams">https://www.youtube.com/@CroquetEngland/streams</a>
Croquet England slo-mo videos	<a href="https://www.croquet.org.uk/?p=games/golf/refereeing/slomo">https://www.croquet.org.uk/?p=games/golf/refereeing/slomo</a>
Oxford Croquet - coaching	<a href="http://www.oxfordcroquet.com/">http://www.oxfordcroquet.com/</a>
Chris Clarke - coaching	<a href="https://clarkecroquet.com/">https://clarkecroquet.com/</a>
Reg Bamford – the psychology of the game	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qw_jiBpnCug">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qw_jiBpnCug</a>
Hit Inn – Alison Maugham chats with some successful players	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bf5gM-cswiQ">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bf5gM-cswiQ</a>
Canva – a free poster / flyer / logo design tool	<a href="https://www.canva.com/en_gb/">https://www.canva.com/en_gb/</a>

### **Advertising in Cygnet**

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

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

#### **Charges**

Full Page: £12      Half Page: £6      Quarter Page: £3

### **Do get in touch**

We'd love your account of matches and tournaments you play in – a personal experience is always worth sharing and a photo can paint a thousand words – so don't forget us when you're playing this year or doing anything croquet-related.

Send them to: [lindawithani@hotmail.com](mailto:lindawithani@hotmail.com)