

Croquet Communique – 19th February 2026



On Friday 13th February, there was a strong attendance by members of the croquet section at Mike Pattison's funeral. Jacqui did a wonderful job of organising a beautiful service at Mortlake Crematorium and reception at the Wetlands Centre in Barnes. Mike would have been very proud of all that she did and we said a sad farewell to Mike who will be missed.

Sadly the weather has continued to be very wet but the grounds staff and the wonderful drainage of the Roehampton Club lawns has meant that play has been possible in unlikely circumstances. This included two floodlit GC friendlies. The first against a strong team from Surbiton comprising Steven Mulliner, Bridget Goodman, Richard Barkey and Cliff Hunter who won six games to Roehampton Club's three. Steven Mulliner is of course a previous British and European GC champion and won the AC world cup in 2016, so strong would be a good description.



The second against Hurlingham began as a wet affair. Roehampton Club won both doubles and two of the singles before the heavens opened again. Since the match was already decided, it was agreed to retire to the bar without playing the remaining singles, leaving Roehampton Club winning by four games to none.



A wet Aston Wade (England) playing for Hurlingham

GC and One Ball roll ups have been well attended. We understand that people's availability changes but if you have signed up for a roll up and can no longer make it, please cancel your attendance in the booking system in good time. This makes managing the roll up much easier and potentially allows people to play who could not get a place. Can I also encourage AC players to find a roll up that suits them and to come and play more often.

The One Ball Rainbow has proved to be very successful with the number of entries exceeding the number of magnets (apologies to Adam Black who is represented by a blue magnetic

blob). Emile Fernandez has reached the red level and awaits some more players to ensure an exciting play off at the end of the winter. After a slower start, the GC Rainbow has begun to progress. Remember the Rainbows do not affect your handicap so please play as many games as possible.

We have now launched the summer internal competition schedule. While you may be full of enthusiasm to play in the depths of winter, please do not over commit yourselves by entering more competitions than you can manage. Remember that to enter the GC competitions you need to have played in three GC competitions during the previous twelve months. These can be internal or external and do not necessarily have to appear on your handicap cards. Playing three GC Rainbow matches is a good way of complying,

Remember that to enter the Rainbow, you will need a handicap. While we cannot provide formal handicaps while the lawns are three quarter size, you can get a provisional handicap which will be confirmed in the spring. These can be arranged by contacting Lynn Percy. The provisional handicap will allow you to enter the summer competitions.

Charlotte and I, as the new Chair and Captain, together with the Committee, are having a review of a number of areas including optimising the use of the booking system and website and updating the longer-term strategy for croquet at the Club. With the poor weather in mind, we are trying to make it as easy as possible to determine whether the lawns are open or not. Here are the ways to find out in preferred order:

- The booking system top banner which will be updated regularly and now has the relevant date
- Matt Fidler will send out an email to the section for urgent or sudden changes
- The Roehampton Club website
- The lawn status telephone line. This is not updated after it is posted at 8am
- Ringing Reception

We have also launched the spring GC coaching programme of formal teaching, rules training and coached games. These are filling up very quickly but if you cannot get on the course you want, there is a waiting list and with sufficient people, we will look at running additional courses. These should be booked and paid for at Reception. The Club coaches will continue to offer one to one coaching. Please contact one of the coaches to arrange a session.

Finally, a number of people have noted that it is quite hard to see the hoops in poor light. We are purchasing a set of coloured tops for one set of hoops as an experiment to see if that helps. While coloured makes it sound exciting, the tops come as four white, one red and one blue, so maybe not so colourful.

Howard Railton, Croquet Captain