

Croquet Communique – 17th September 2026



August seems surprisingly quiet after the excitement of the MacRobertson Shield and with people being away on holiday. In fact, once again, there has been a lot going on.

Inter club competitions

The inter club competitions are coming to a head.

In the Mary Rose AC tier 2 semi final Roehampton Club played Hurlingham on 23rd August and I am pleased to report that Roehampton Club won 5-2. The score does not really do the match justice as Hurlingham put up a good fight and all matches were very closely fought. The teams were:

Roehampton Club: Nick Yates, David Mooney, Diana Wilson and Peter Siddall

Hurlingham Club: Ludolph van Hasselt, Guy Hewitt, Martin Read and David Owen

The final of the Mary Rose is to be played against Nottingham at Nottingham shortly.

Roehampton Club has also reached the final of the tier 3 GC inter club bowl by beating Guildford. The final is being played at Cheltenham against Bury at the end of September.

The AC tier 1 inter club semi final will be between Roehampton Club and Surbiton to be played by 13th September. Whoever wins will go on to meet Bowdon in the final.

Good luck to all our teams.

GC competition

In other competitions, Roehampton Club was invited to compete in a four way GC competition between The All England Lawn Tennis and Croquet Club (AELTC), Surbiton and Hurlingham. Janine Railton, Mark Green, Andrew Wilson and I competed on the AELTC croquet lawns against an array of player from the other clubs, a lot of whom we knew. Interestingly one of these was Elaine Phillimore who was competing on behalf of Surbiton. The rather old fashioned painted hoops proved surprisingly difficult to run and even harder to get balls to sit in the jaws and not bounce out.



Eventually Hurlingham won and, while there appeared to be a reluctance to actually work out the other scores, I think Roehampton Club came second. Playing at Wimbledon was very special with some great photo opportunities.

Hussars' Cup

The main competition to be hosted at Roehampton Club was the Hussars' Cup, a handicap AC competition managed by Lynn Pearcy. The cup was presented by the Middlesex Hussars to the Club when they were billeted there in 1914 and 1915. A good number of our AC players entered including Elaine Phillimore, Jenny Gaskin, Nigel Wachman, Joel Taylor and me. Jenny did incredibly well to come second and the event was won by Greg Solomon from Hurlingham.



Staff and Members Croquet

Another popular internal competition is the match between the Croquet Section and the Staff. We were delighted to welcome Rhys Beecher, our new CEO, Gary Evans, our new Golf Operations Manager and Ethan Sale, Golf and Games Assistant. The evening was managed by Charlotte Oades and went very well with Gary going on to win and Ethan coming second.



I think all the staff members were delighted with croquet as a game and there is a plan to do some out of hours coaching for staff who are interested in playing more seriously.

GC friendly

There was a GC friendly against Hurlingham, captained by Robert Scallon and played at Hurlingham on 28th August. As always it was nice to play at Hurlingham with the result being a draw.

MPD Sports and Recreation Managers Presentation

Other events during the period included a presentation by me and Mike Tumath at the invitation of Marc Newey to the MPD Sports and Recreation Managers course partly run at the Roehampton Club. The idea was to encourage managers at other sports clubs to look at how to include croquet as one of their sports. The data that has been generated as part of the strategic plan proved very useful in explaining the large and growing appeal of croquet at Roehampton Club across a wide age range of Members.

Croquet Section Strategic Plan

On 9th September, Charlotte and I presented the Croquet Section strategic plan. Charlotte gave a brief overview of the plan and I gave a summary of the progress that has been made with the various actions and showed some of the data that has been generated from the booking system. The evening was well received with some interesting and helpful questions and positive feedback. It was not as well attended as we had hoped which was a pity since the idea was to explain why some of the strategic decisions on play and competitions that will be made over the winter are made the way they are. It is very important that everyone has their opportunity for input and this was a key one. The email invitations to the event have a link embedded in the email which will take you to the plan if you wish to read it.

Other news

On the administration side, could I ask people to make sure that their handicaps are up to date. It is much more helpful to update it on the croquet booking system yourself by going into 'users' at the top, searching for yourself and then double clicking your username on the left hand. This will bring up your details where you can edit any of your information including handicaps. Remember to save what you have done. You can also mark-up the membership lists on the notice board in the Croquet Pavilion and I will update them in the system.

Please watch out for the roll out of the coaching programme for the autumn and spring which will be ready soon. When it is issued, please book at Reception and pay the £15 charge for the session you want to attend at the time you book.

Finally, I am incredibly grateful to the members who give up their time to manage the roll ups on Sunday and Monday mornings. Without their hard work, playing would be much harder for everyone. Could I ask that people make the managers' lives easier by ensuring that they cancel if they are not coming in the system, turn up at least ten minutes early, stick to the times of the games i.e. 1000 to 1100 and 1100 to 1200 and stay for the whole roll up. If the numbers mean there are singles games or a pair are playing with a single person and you are asked to be one of those players, please do as the Manager asks. It makes it much harder if people do not do that.

We look forward to the Fairacres match shortly and to celebrating the outcome of the various interclub finals.

Howard Railton, Croquet Captain