Croquet Communique – 19th November 2026

Winter weather and roll ups

In the last month, players have moved from being a sea of white, tee shirts and shorts, to thick coats, scarves and woolly hats. We have lost our first complete day's play due to the weather and, with the arrival of the tennis air halls, the frost has begun to encroach on the start times for playing croquet. Despite all that, there has been great use of the lawns and some excellent games.

The AC roll ups have been set up for the winter and the One Ball and Eight and Under roll ups have moved to their earlier winter times. The Sunday and Monday Roll Ups are well subscribed.

Competition results

The last of the internal and external competitions have been completed. Mark Green and I competed in the Bingham Bowl, the handicap One Ball competition run at Hurlingham on 10th October. Always well attended, it was a wonderful show case of the appeal of croquet as a game for everyone, with the event being won by Hanna Laganowska Black, aged 12 from Bath Croquet Club. She was very skilled and beat some serious players (see the Croquet Gazette).





The very last internal competition to be completed was the new Summer GC rainbow which was eventually won by Patricia Townley who beat Emile Fernandes and Wendy Gilbert in a play-off.



Congratulations to Patricia, here receiving her rainbow mug …

A new AC competition, organised by David Openshaw, was played for the first time on the evening of Monday 2nd November using the lawn floodlights.



A competition of three rounds of fourteen point games with a 75 minute time limit was played by six competitors which was eventually won by Nicholas Halton after a play off against Nigel Wachman. A great event was finished with a team supper in the Members' Bar. Thanks to David for organisning what proved to be a very enjoyable evening which we hope to repeat.

Croquet Prizegiving Dinner

After a long series of AC, One Ball and GC competitions, everyone had the opportunity to celebrate the success of the winners at the Annual Croquet Prize Giving dinner on 30th October. Thanks to Jacqui Pattison and Libby Dand for organising a really successful and enjoyable dinner. It was a delight for Charlotte and me to host such a lovely event attended by 86 guests including Rhys Beecher, CEO and some of the staff that support our section. Prizes went to a wide range of very happy people and included the winner of the spot the baby competition. Click here to view and download photos from the prizegiving dinner





The section's fine collection of silver





Alex Rose provided an impromptu standup comedy turn while being interviewed by Jacqui Patison about his rapid rise in the croquet world



Some of the cups deserved being shown off properly



Jacqui and Libby receiving flowers for their hard work

Coaching

Our coaching programme has got underway with a fully subscribed Improvers course which everyone enjoyed. Sadly the beginners' course was delayed by weather and will be rescheduled. The first GC coached game was fully subscribed with the next one being on Saturday 6th February. The rules training produced the usual level of complex discussion about the rules of GC, some examples being based on real examples of pitfalls at the Club.

One ball

The winter One Ball campaign will begin with an introduction session to the game on Tuesday 24th November. These have proved very popular and produced some excellent new One Ball players. Please sign up on the booking system if you want to attend. If it is overscubscribed, we will run some additional sessions. The One Ball Rainbow is also about to be launched for the winter.

Junior camps

Once again we have supported the junior holiday camp programme. Numbers vary but both the children and the coaches enjoy the sessions very much.





Staff coaching

One of the very successful activities over the summer, was the Staff Match. This produced a great turnout and much talk of following up with some coaching for the staff. On 3rd November, Mike Tumath, Jenny Gaskin and I ran a proper induction session for interested Club staff. This was held out of hour using the floodlights and was a lot of fun. The whole thing was helped by Rahma's generour provision of a very tasty selection of snacks and soft drinks to keep out the cold.





AGM and Croquet Committee appointment

We are about to hold the AGM on Wednesday 18th November and I am delighted to advise that Nigel Wachman has agreed to join the Croquet Committee. Nigel's background in finance, governance and management will be extreemly valuable and I am grateful that he has agreed to be on the committee.

Housekeeping

Finally on an admin note, can I ask people to make sure that they add the names of everyone who is playing on a booking. The utilisation of the lawns and the numbers of Members playing is very important information for us, so please help by making this as accurate as possible. Can I also ask that people make sure their handicaps are correct on the noticeboards, in the croquuet booking system and also in their details on the Croquet England website.

Howard Railton, Croquet Captain