



Cammeray Croquet Club



October 2021

<http://www.cammeray-croquet.org.au>

Club News

The lawns will probably be closed for maintenance from the 8th to the 27th November.

The Christmas Party will be on 5th December in the late afternoon, with finger food.

The toilet in the clubhouse is now replaced and operational.

The olive trees next to the clubhouse have all been removed and will be replaced by crepe myrtles and an ornamental gum, which should grow quickly.

Vale Werner Kos



We learned that Werner Kos died in September. He was a lovely, friendly person and a very keen player.

Speaking to Graham Maynard, he described how he came to Australia from Austria: *Oh, mate, well I happened to be on the road and I left Austria and I kept going West and every time I went West there was more sun and more blue skies so I kept going West until I ended up in Australia. I was here for two years the first time I came in '65, got married in '67 and left, we went overland to Austria, so, you know, India, Nepal etc.... The hippy-trail, backwards! Well, we came back in '72 and have been here since.*

He won the Stephen Howes Award for the most improved player in 2018. In November 2020 he won two tournaments in a week – the CNSW Handicap Singles 9 and Over (winning all his games!) and the Jamberoo Escape Tournament, winning four games out of five.

Steve Miles comments: Werner was a keen club member, willing worker and loved playing croquet at Cammeray and Coogee. He was also a frequent player at club tournaments and CNSW tournaments. He was always a pleasure to meet and a great opponent. Please spare a minute to remember him. He will be missed by us all.

Maragret O'Brien said: Werner was always quick to respond to the silver invitation day and will be sadly missed by other invitees. The last one he attended was Dec 2020 & in February 2021 he said he was in hospital.

ADJUSTING HOOPS

In games of croquet, different hoop widths are used for different levels of game. The wider the hoop, the easier it is to run, so for bronze and silver players the hoops are set at $3 \frac{3}{4}$ inches, while for gold and platinum the hoops are set to $3 \frac{11}{16}$ inches (compared to a ball diameter of $3 \frac{5}{8}$ inches). For the world championships, the hoops are set to the width of the largest ball plus $\frac{1}{64}$ inch.

In the old days you had to adjust hoops by packing soil or grass or mass down into the holes made for the hoops to move the legs sideways; but with the modern Quadway Hoops the adjustments can be done quite easily by simply turning the legs round.

Step1: Check what the current setting of the hoop is: our hoops have been colour-coded by blue and red paint on the bottom of the hoops. If the red and the blue are on the outside of the hoops, then the setting is $3 \frac{3}{4}$ ins. If the red is on the inside and the blue on the outside, then the setting is $3 \frac{11}{16}$ ins. If the blue is on the inside, it reduces the hoop width by $\frac{1}{32}$ in, so having both red and blue on the inside means a tight hoop set to less than $3 \frac{11}{16}$.

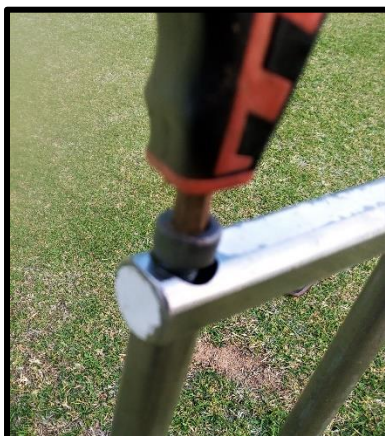


Red and blue on the outside
– setting of $3 \frac{3}{4}$ ins

Step 2: Unscrew the leg: If you need to change the setting of the hoop, then you have to unscrew the hoop leg from the top bar. This is done using an Allen key – these are stored in the box with the hoops and balls. The large Allen key is useful if the hoop legs have been screwed in very tightly, as it gives more leverage. The Allen key is used to unscrew the hoop leg from the top bar – it is best to leave the hoop in the ground while you are doing this, as it supports the hoop. Don't unscrew the bolt completely, just undo it until the hoop leg can be turned.



Large and small Allen keys



Unscrewing the hoop leg

Step 3: Turn the leg

Now take the hoop out of the ground, turn the hoop leg through a half-turn, then slot it back into the top bar. Then tighten the screw again until it is firm. Now the hoop can be replaced in the ground. If the other leg also needs adjusting, it can be done next. Otherwise, the hoop is now reset.



Hoop leg ready to be turned

Golf Croquet Laws by Stephen Howes

As you know, a ball is offside if it is more than halfway to the next hoop in order when a hoop is scored, subject to some exceptions.

Let's call your balls R and Y and the opponent balls B and Bk.

Rule 8.3 says that your ball is not offside if it is beyond the halfway line as a result of:

1. The stroke just played, e.g., R is knocked over the halfway line by B running the hoop.
2. A stroke played or interference committed by the opposing side, e.g., if the player of B has tripped over R, pushing it beyond the halfway line, or if B has hit Y which then hits R over halfway.
3. Contact with an opponent ball, which can arise in a number of ways:
Firstly, Bk might hit R over halfway and R cannot return before B has run the hoop.

Secondly, if R is already in an offside position and is hit by Bk into another offside position when B runs the hoop

Thirdly, R hits B deliberately and then runs over halfway. (*I saw Peter Landrebe play his R ball from south of Hoop 12 directly at B, located north of Hoop 9 at an angle which deflected R to behind Hoop 13. He then ran Hoop 12 with Y after Bk's shot missed so was in a great position to win the game at Hoop 13.*)

4. Being directed to a Penalty Area.

There can be some confusion about when the offside ball can be directed to the Penalty Area. Rule 8.4.2 says:

'Before an offside opponent plays their next stroke, they are entitled to give a direction that an offside ball is next to be played from either penalty area as the offside opponent chooses.'

Thus, if B runs a hoop and Y is offside, B can direct Y to the penalty area before he has played his next stroke (i.e., Bk).

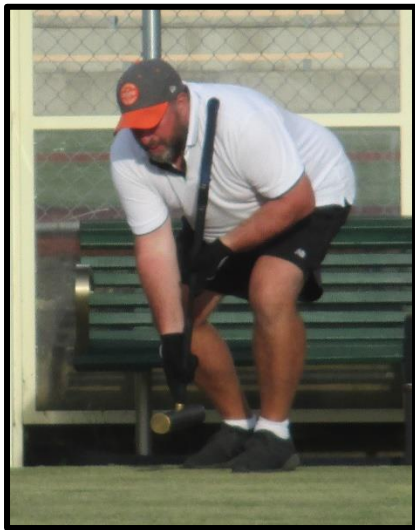
Once Bk has been played no direction can be given to Y. However, R, but not Y, can play before the direction is given.

Rule 8.4.3 allows Y to ask B whether they wish to give a direction to a penalty area. B is to reply promptly.

Next month: Recognising potential faults

Peter Landrebe

We are very privileged at Cammeray to have Peter Landrebe as one of our members. He is not only one of Australia's finest players, he has an almost unrivalled understanding of the game, and is the best coach in the country (he is the high performance manager (HPM) of the Australian team). Several of the better players at Cammeray have had coaching sessions from Peter, and we are always amazed at the new insights and techniques that he shows us. He is also one of the most pleasant, modest and approachable people around. He agreed to answer some questions for the newsletter, and he has provided a rich array of information and advice that every player would do well to read carefully.



Where did you grow up? I grew up in Timaru NZ

You played rugby at first; how did you change to croquet? I was getting too many knocks and injuries, so I looked for something more body-damage friendly – and found croquet, as there are four clubs in Timaru, all with 4 lawns, so I was aware of the sport growing up, however I went back to Rugby the following year and continued playing rugby and croquet together for quite a few years.

You have won so many tournaments – what are the achievements that have given you most pleasure? Tricky - team croquet is easily the most rewarding, the work that happens in planning and trying to get 4 to 8 people all combined needs a bit of luck and management.

The 2007 Eire cup win was the first of those rewards from putting in place aspects in a team that were not being done that successfully beforehand -it was the first win for NSW since 1979.

The TransTasman win in 2011, as coach, manager and non-playing captain, was also a special feeling, after seeing and being part of losing teams in 2006 and 2009 ; lots of hard work went into that event in a short space of time only 6 months after the 2010 MacRobertson Shield campaign .

The Mac win in 2017 as manager and HPM was also very good, but a less overwhelming feeling - I had belief that we were going to win and it was not as surprising, as the plans in place had shown success leading up to the event - however for the six players that did win this Mac, there is no higher accolade or point to reach as a (MacRobertson Shield) World team champion. And my joy was more seeing what it meant for the players, and for myself it was more relief that all plans came to fruition.

Singles wins are different, sometimes winning the event for the first time feels good, but I have never really felt great excitement or pleasure that I think I should feel when I have won something - which I always felt strange about, it has always been more a pleasure of not failing rather than winning - but I needed to change this to move forward, so I have done a lot of work in combining long term motivation with seeking reward in short term motivation: as an example the GC NSW open singles events, I have won each time I have entered (8 times) so I prepare with the mindset that this will need to be my best performance in GC for the NSW season - little difference in lawn practice preparation , but a lot of off-court mental preparation, and I got a good feeling from it when I won this event recently - not for the title, but more that the motivational thought process has been working.

What are your best results? My best results include: Australian Open AC twice, Aus Men's AC twice (have also lost the final of these events twice each - and they are more firmly in my memory than the wins, two of the losses were not closing out and then not recovering)

Australian Open GC, Aus Men's GC once each; Australian Gold Medal in GC twice and AC once.

ACA President's 8s first 8, GC once and AC twice

(in 2007 when I won the AC event, I won 13 from 14 games, in 2019 when I won, I won 14 from 14 games - again I used motivational skills from the previous time when I lost that one game in 2007 as a short-term motivation not to drop guard when closing).

5 Eire cup wins as a team member between 2007 and 2015

Numerous NSW State titles in GC and AC, Open Singles, Men's Singles, Bronze Medals, Open Doubles and one Victorian Open Doubles with Rosie (that did give me good feelings :-)

My highest AC world ranking was 8 in 2007/ 2008, my highest GC world ranking was 12 about a decade ago.

AC world championship results have been a bit disappointing, especially the knockout performances
2006 WC, played the qualifier, made the last 32 and then lost easily.

2008 WC, my peak of form, coasted in the block, and lost the knockout 32 match - easily the most remembered loss for many reasons, and still draw on it.

2012 WC, played well from start to finish, but still had a round of 32 loss, but performed well still to make the final of the bowl.

2016 WC, easily my worst WC performance start to finish, did not qualify for final 32, and then played a poor plate final.

2020 WC, 2016 still on my mind to correct, played well in my block to win 9 from 9, then lost in round of 32 again! sigh still time to correct it :-)

The GC world championships have been good though:

2015, played well, got through block then lost in round of 32 to a top Egyptian, but performed well in the consolation and ended up in 13th place - which was ok, or satisfying enough for my first GC WC.

2017, played some of my best GC (after a bad illness, and little preparation) made the knock-out, won round of 32, won round of 16 and lost quarter final - ended up 6th place, and happy feelings as I performed a PB when I only had mental experience skills to draw on with no lawn practice leading in.

You are the coach of the Australian AC team – what does this involve? What kind of advice and training do you give them? The coaching role differs from event to event, depending on the players make up - mostly it's putting a plan in place on what you think will be the skills and tactics required and then getting the players to believe in the plan and for them to put the practice in to be able to make the skills or lines of play familiar, come event time.

The one important factor is getting the players to take control and make me work more as a facilitator - getting players in an open forum to discuss what will be needed to win and then how do we go about getting those skill -it removes all excuses possible, as they can't use a coach as the reason, and makes each player self-responsible to perform and do the work.

You are also a top-level golf croquet player; how are the skills different from AC? GC and AC skills are all very similar and most times you can make small adaptations to make both work - with the exception for successful GC, it needs the ability to hit harder and vary your power on various shot; swapping between hitting soft, then medium pace and then hard in GC is tough to build up, so you can trust the swing to perform and let you play the correct required shot each time, rather than play

all shots the same pace - whereas AC you are looking for consistency and a nice even pace to perform at your best each game.

Mental skills are quite a bit different - GC has lots of high and lows, random factors that you need to deal with quickly.

What advice would you give to a mid-level player (silver or gold) of AC to improve their game?

Improvement for these tiers may take different routes - if a player has been in one spot for a while and is not improving, then acknowledgement that something needs to change, as a first box to tick, then I would suggest watching and talking with other players that are playing at some levels above them, try to get a better understanding of what some may do, or why some players do things a certain way, then use that for your plan to improve in practice before stepping in events, and always follow it up with an inner debrief (or a trusted friend who can analyse some of your game).

Never be afraid to ask for some help, be it one on one with another player, possibly better than yourself, never be afraid to play around with new mallets, grips etc if it gives you a push (but I would advise that you try this after you have gathered some intelligence on games and tactics through watching and asking questions).

Get some regularity in time spent on lawns, but be prepared to play out of your comfort zone of lawn conditions, time of sessions, different clubs, events etc.

If you are coming through the grades as an improver and a flat spot has not happened as yet- keep doing what is working, but put some energy to seeking what the next step requires (similar to above, but different in that it sometimes is harder to change what is currently giving success, but probably won't at the next level. Be prepared to make a change if a trusted voice suggests it); as you go through the grades there will always be (and the middle tiers more often) "one step back two steps forward". For many it's difficult to cope with the idea that to get better, some sacrifices of things that had worked before need to happen