



Cammeray Croquet Club



September 2021

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

Club Closure in October/November

In response to a request from North Sydney Council the lawns will be closed from October 18 for three weeks for essential maintenance.

Olive Trees

North Sydney Council has removed most of the African Olive trees due to shading of Lawn 1 in Winter. The trees are classed as a noxious weed and, while providing useful shade in summer, starve the garden underneath and the lawn of nutrients and drop fruit which stains. They will be replaced by a deciduous species chosen by Council that will grow rapidly and ultimately provide shade in Summer.



The leaves and branches did not go to waste – they were taken to Taronga Zoo

Notes on Golf Croquet by Stephen Howes

We have neglected golf croquet in this newsletter in the past although many of our members play the game. However, Stephen Howes has agreed to provide notes on the laws and tactics of golf croquet. A new set of laws for golf croquet was produced in 2018. Stephen is an experienced golf croquet player and an examining referee for golf croquet.

What to do when your opponent plays the wrong ball

Usually, the remedy is Replace and Replay, i.e., the wrong ball is brought back (and any points scored are annulled), and the correct ball played. The situation should be avoided by forestalling (i.e. warning the player before they do it) if you see the possibility of its happening; it saves a lot of time.

But if the player of red plays yellow instead, or player yellow plays yellow when it is red's turn, then a Ball Swap is allowed. This means that all balls moved as a result of the last stroke are left where they stopped, except that the offending player's ball positions are swapped.

It might not be advantageous to call for a Swap, because the non-offender must play his ball next in sequence as if the opponent had played in the right order.

If you need to read the rules, a copy of the red rule book is in the clubhouse

Next month: Offside balls.

Toilet

The toilet in the clubhouse is still out of action. The most recent investigation by a plumber has found a sediment problem in the sewer line which can only be addressed by removing and replacing the toilet. This could cost between \$500 and \$1000 depending on whether the existing toilet is not damaged in the removal process. The Committee resolved to get a second quote and proceed with the work and a plumber has now been engaged to go ahead. Players can use the public toilets by the oval, just outside the gate.

Current Covid Rules

The new arrangements are as follows:

- More than four can book into a session provided all are fully vaccinated. When booking please put a VV next to your name if this applies to you or any guest you are bringing.
- Unvaccinated members can still make a booking provided there are fewer than four others already booked into that session.
- If one or more unvaccinated members have made a booking into a session, that session is limited to four people (two per lawn).
- The weekday sessions between 3 and 5 will be limited to four people in any case, so unvaccinated members are free to book these sessions knowing they are not preventing any other members from playing.

To reassure all who have booked into a session that their fellow players are fully vaccinated, the Club has established a vaccination register viewable by members from the website. Members can get their name recorded on the website by showing their certificate (pdf or on their phone) to any other member and having that member confirm the sighting to the secretary.

Any member who appends a VV on the booking sheet must either already be on the Club register or show their certification to their fellow players at the time of play. The person confirming should request the secretary to add that person to the register. (It is in fact a legal requirement if more than two are exercising together that all must carry certification with them). You can find the Club vaccination register at this URL <https://www.cammeray-croquet.org.au/pdfs/CCCVR.pdf>

There will be minor changes to the schedule from Sunday 26 September as follows:

- The morning sessions will now start at 8 am and 10 am
- The 10 am session will be three hours with the following designations
- Monday: 12 and under Wednesday: 8 and under Thursday: Golf Croquet
- The weekday 3-5 pm sessions will be limited to four bookings, 2 per lawn

Robert Fulford



Robert Fulford

Robert Fulford (born 1969) is probably the most brilliant croquet player of all time. He did his first triple peel* (TP) three months after taking up the game, and is the only player recorded so far as achieving a nontuple peel (see croquetpro.blogspot.com/2009/08/nontuple-peel-you-say.html for a description on how this was done). He has won the World Championship five times, and the British Open nine times; he has won more games in the MacRobertson Shield (the test match series between England, Australia, USA and New Zealand) than anyone else, with 71 wins. He has done more triple peels and sextuple peels in competition than any other player.

The Croquet Hall of Fame says of him: *In addition to his stroke play he is tactically without equal and has been responsible for the majority of tactical innovations in the sport*

during his time in the game - innovations which he has always been happy to share with and explain to others, inspiring, challenging and assisting whenever the opportunity arises. He is the only non-North American player who is a tactically sound US rules player and he is also a world class golf croquet player where again tactics are his biggest asset..... Robert previously spent many years travelling the world playing and coaching the game, particularly in the US. He also forged a strong relationship with the late Kevin Brereton during his time in Australia, producing a series of coaching videos with him (sadly these are on VHS are thus not readily available).

Many of us saw him playing in the 2006 Australian Open at Chatswood, where he did 4 consecutive sextuples in the Block Play and 4 consecutive sextuples in the KO before losing to Jenny Clarke (nee Williams as she was then) in 2 straight TPs. In the consolation rounds he did another 2 sextuples bringing his total sextuple count to 10 for the tournament.

Alan Walsh remembers: *I had only been playing competitive croquet since 2005 so had no prior knowledge of sextuples. I was totally confused watching RF do one. He had one ball making hoops going clockwise round the lawn and in the same turn making hoops going anti-clockwise round the lawn with the other ball. It made no sense to me at the time*

Rosie Landrebe writes: *He is one of the kindest and most generous croquet players I have ever met. During the mid-nineties Rob spent a lot of time in Australia on coaching tours with Kevin Brereton. In fact Rob spent so much time in NSW he was eligible to be selected for the AC State Team ! Instead he came with us to South Australia and the following year to Perth as part of the "team". This was Rob first real experience of an Interstate Cup and he was amazed at how*

tough it was, he thought it was gruelling every day, moreover the “friendly” rivalry among teams was a real surprise. He worked hard for the team being the cup of tea and lunch runner and did lots of support work we all appreciated.

When I partnered Rob in the New Zealand Open in 2003, about 3 months before the event he requested I practise hitting the 6 yard duffer tice opening and if possible cut it toward the east boundary balls. Normal for him, formidable pressure for me, it got us to the semis however, being knocked out by Chris and Jenny Clarke, it has been my successful “go to” opening for many years since, so thank you Robert!

The other thing is the English sensibility and why I feel they so often get better depth in their club play. They encourage each other to try to triple and try advanced play early on, opposite to us they ask you why you didn't try if you get the chance, this applies to everyone from Bronze division upwards. They also learn a lot by watching advanced play; because of their weather they don't get enough play, so they seem to love to spend all day at the lawns in the summer, from 10am until and often including dinner in the evening.

Rob is very much loved everywhere he goes, I know he loved his time coaching in North Carolina, he is a generous honourable player, a croquet strategy genius, often touted as the best player ever, for those who keep the stats.

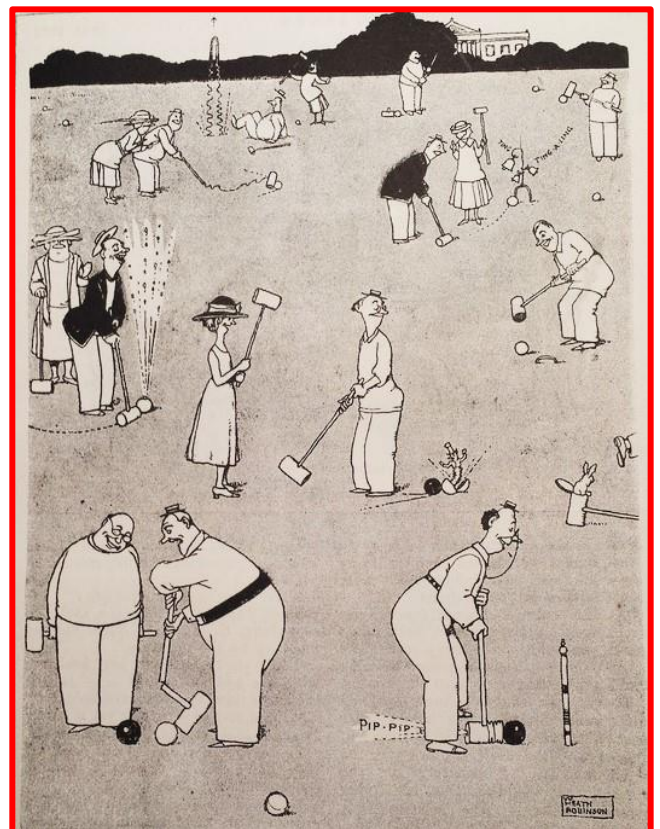
Pete and I were lucky enough to be at Cheltenham UK for the British Opens when Rob Fulford and Rob Fletcher played for the first time, on probably the worst and fastest court there. Rob Fletcher won after 9 hours of play, [I think he was 18] and when I spoke to Rob Fulford afterwards he said he had never seen a player like Robert Fletcher before. Which translates as very high praise indeed.

Peter Landrebe has commented: Robert has been at the top or close to the top of the croquet world for a period from the late 1980s to 2013, 2014 when he was ranked either 1 2 or 3 . However the impressive part of late for me is

that in 2013 , Robert dipped below 2500 grade for the first time - he needed to change mallets, grip and reinvent his roquet (due to wrist issues) Not easy to do at a late stage as a recognised #1 player in the world , however from 2015 till now Robert has returned to not being ranked outside of the top 3 in the world again from 2015 to 2021.

He also is proficient at Golf Croquet , being ranked #1 in the world in 2012 and 2014, and a top 10 player in the world for the period 2010 to 2018 - he has played in two World Championships but it appears only if the timing or location didn't conflict with his AC goals.

*For the uninitiated, a triple peel is where the player takes his/her first ball round to 4-back, then on his/her next turn makes twelve hoops with the second ball, while peeling the partner ball through its remaining three hoops, then pegging both balls out. In the nontuple peel the first ball is taken round to hoop 4, then on the second turn the player peels their partner ball through its remaining nine hoops.



Some cheering little stunts for the stimulation of good humour and the prevention of quarrelling at croquet (A Heath Robinson depiction of croquet provided by David Stanton)

Helen Grasswill

We have among our members a number of people of great talent and impressive achievements. We plan over the next few months to highlight a few of these, and will start with the well-known journalist Helen Grasswill, who is a member of one of our Sunday golf croquet groups.

Helen Grasswill has been a journalist, author, editor and television program-maker for more than 50 years, starting as a freelancer while still at school and later working for both Australian and international broadcasters. In almost 30 years at the ABC, she worked for news programs including *The 7:30 Report*, *The Bottom Line* and *The Investigators*, with stints at *Lateline* and *Foreign Correspondent*. She is best known as a foundation member and 22-year veteran of *Australian Story*, where she was responsible for many landmark stories. Her work has been acknowledged with numerous awards including the Walkley, peer-voted Logies and the Human Rights Award for Television. Helen is also author of the groundbreaking book, *Australia: A Timeless Grandeur*, a 130,000-word exploration of the Australian environment (Lansdowne, 1981). She is a co-founder and deputy chair of ABC Alumni - former employees of the Australian Broadcasting Corporation who believe passionately in the need for a fearless and independent national broadcaster as a vital part of Australian democracy. Helen says: *My husband Bruno and I started playing croquet about ten years ago with our friends Lyndey Milan and John Caldon*, who had a croquet lawn at their Jamberoo holiday house. Lyndey then suggested the four of us join the Cammeray Croquet Club, along with some other friends. We play once a month, COVID-permitting, and love it. All those in our group are great cooks, and we're lucky to have two professional chefs among us (Lyndey and Victor Pisapia), so whenever possible we enjoy a great meal in the clubhouse after playing.*

*Sadly John died last year

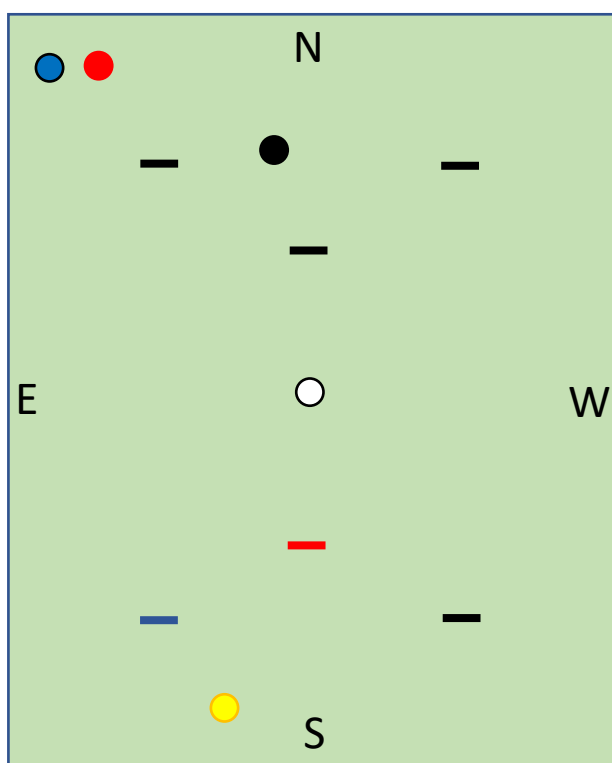
Helen's husband, Bruno Grasswill is a notable painter who we hope to report on in a later newsletter.



Bruno Grasswill, Jim Bahr, Helen Grasswill and Victor Pisapia

Tactics Problem from last month

The problem was: Red is going for hoop 1. Blue is in corner 2, and yellow is two yards off the south boundary. If you are a gold + player, work out how to create the break directly. If you are bronze/silver, create the break using one bisque.



There are many solutions, and your best option depends on which shots you play best; but a couple of possible solutions are as follows:

Bronze-silver: roquet blue with red; play a split shot (a drive would do) putting blue near the hoop as a pivot, and sending red near to black. Roquet black, and send black close to hoop 2. Now use your continuation shot to send the red ball over the south boundary (note that by convention A baulk is defined as South, the compass direction does not apply) to the east of yellow. Mark the red in, take your bisque, and you should have an easy rush to send the yellow near to hoop 1. Make hoop 1, and your 4-ball break is set up. (If you are confident with take-offs, you might try to save a bisque by doing a

thick take-off on black, putting it near hoop 2, while sending red down the lawn where you can roquet yellow and possibly roll to hoop 1 – but you are likely to end up with a poor pioneer at hoop 2 and no chance of making hoop 1).

Gold +: roquet blue, and do a pass roll putting blue near hoop 2 and getting a rush on black down the lawn. Rush black down to the south boundary east of hoop 5. Mark black in and do a stop shot putting black past hoop 5, and red in a position to rush yellow to hoop1