



# Cammeray Croquet Club

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

## June Newsletter

### Club News

We had a very pleasant Social Day where newer members had the chance to meet more experienced members. A fine morning tea was followed by some cheerful golf croquet.



Members chatting beforehand



Morning tea



golf croquet

**Steve Miles** has just been appointed Croquet Australia treasurer; our congratulations go to Steve, and we thank him for all the work he has done for croquet.

## Croquet Publicity

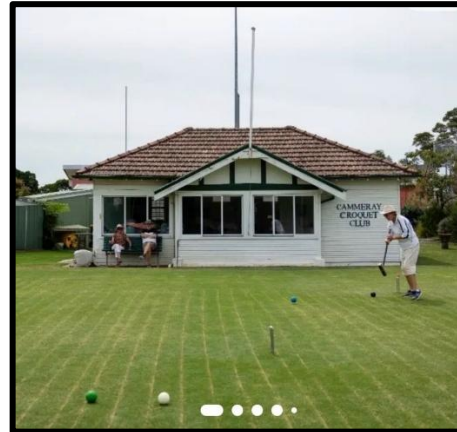
There has been some interesting coverage of croquet in the media lately.

**The New Daily** reported on May Beveridge who is claiming a Guinness World Record as the oldest croquet player. She is 101, a great grandmother, and still plays a reasonable game at the Lakes Entrance Croquet Club.

**The Sydney Morning Herald** had an article on life in Cammeray, and included pictures of Cammeray Croquet Club:



Malcolm Sheldon, Sue Nicholas, Di Loveday,  
Warren Yates, Gail Parrott, Rob and Marg Barrie  
Mary Goldsack



Suzanne Lulham and Kristin  
Kool-Clarke

## Tournaments

**The NSW Men's Open Singles** had the strongest entry for many years, with six players in the top 20 in Australia – Greg Hill (Vic) (4), Stephen Forster (Vic) (7), Callum Hyland (Tas) (9), James Carlisle (12), Peter Landrebe (18) and Trevor Bassett (19).

James Carlisle and Peter Landrebe both reached the semi-finals, but lost to Greg Hill and Stephen Forster. Greg went on to win the tournament, while James beat Peter to come third.

**Urunga:** Bernie and David Gibson travelled to Urunga for their annual AC tournament. Urunga is a very beautiful place, courts good and accommodation next to the courts comfortable and reasonably priced. Every one was disappointed with the low numbers (making handicap play necessary) but play was enjoyable and interesting - scores were close. David came second. They intend to hold a tournament next year but hope for more entrants. *Bernie Gibson*



## James Carlisle

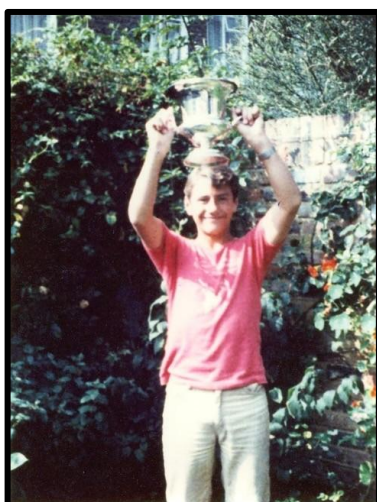
James joined Cammeray Croquet Club early last year, having played no croquet for twenty years, and in the last few months has established himself as one of the leading players in Australia. He has had a remarkable croquet career, starting at an early age.

His parents both played croquet (and still do) so he had an early introduction to the sport watching and knocking balls around while they played in tournaments at Hurlingham and Hunstanton in the UK.

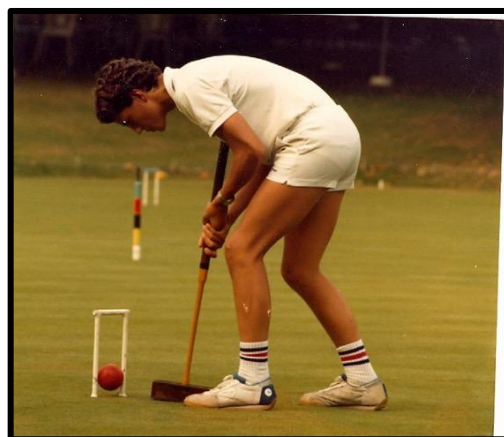
His first taste of competitive croquet came in 1980 at the age of 12, when he played handicap doubles with his father at the annual tournament at Hunstanton. They lost in the first round and he was crushed, but he stuck with it and - with the greatest respect to his father - began to choose his partners more carefully, winning the men's handicap doubles at Hurlingham the following year with British number one Nigel Aspinall. Nigel wasn't used to having bisques, and used one in the final to hit in, before completing a double peel to peg out one of the opponents' balls, while at the same time promoting James's ball through four hoops (the maximum permitted under the rules of handicap play) from 6 to 4-back.



**Attempting a hoop at  
Hunstanton – Age 2**



**Winner of Silver Jubilee Cup  
age 13**



**Playing in Hurlingham Tournament  
age 14**

James continued his rise through the ranks and in 1985 he won the Great Britain U-18 Championship, before captaining, in 1988 and 1989, a Great Britain U-21 development team that included Robert Fulford, Chris Clarke and David Maugham, who would go on to win eight world championships and fifteen British Open championships between them. The squad was coached by Keith Aiton, who would go on to captain the Great Britain MacRobertson Shield team.

James remembers one weekend training camp which was attended by the legendary player and tactician Keith Wylie. On the first morning, Wylie, who was keen to dispel the developing notion of the 'supershot', laid his mallet at one end of the lawn and bet the assembled squad couldn't hit it from 34 yards. In a sign of what was to come, James remembers that he missed his shot, but the others certainly didn't. Wylie lost his bet and almost needed a new mallet.

As part of their development, James was delighted to be paired with Chris Clarke in the British Open doubles in 1988, reaching the final, only to be defeated by Nigel Aspinall and Steve Mulliner. Among various club trophies, the most notable is probably the Open Mixed Doubles in the Hurlingham tournament, which he won three times with his mother Veronica (who was British Women's Champion in 1978, 1981 and 1984).



**Winner of the Great Britain under 18 championship 1985**



**With Rob Elliott in the NSW Open Doubles**



**Winner of the Tom Howat Cup (President's Eights)**

James's form tailed off during the 1990s, during which he played mostly in 'social tournaments'. To give a sense of what this entailed, James has the distinction of being the only person (on record, he believes) to complete a 'supernewt' triple peel. The rules of 'supernewt' croquet stipulate that you must drink half a pint of beer between every point scored and must not leave the lawn for any reason during a turn. So the triple peel (starting at hoop two and excluding the second peg point which could be drunk at leisure in the bar) involved the consumption of 7.5 pints of beer and took about an hour. He no longer condones this sort of behaviour.

After moving to Sydney with his Australian wife in 2002 and playing (very badly) in a couple of tournaments in 2004, he stopped playing for over 20 years. Purely by coincidence, that was also the year that he finally gave up drinking alcohol.

In 2022, his parents were threatening to drive down to Melbourne to watch the MacRobertson Shield, so James did the decent thing and drove them down himself. Watching the top players there sparked his interest again and when Cammeray Club President Michael Strickland (a friend of his parents) offered him a game in 2024, he jumped at the opportunity. The lunch at the Oaks Hotel was better than the play that day, but James was keen to play again, and Michael set him up to play Rob Elliott a couple of weeks later. That game finished on a golden hoop, in pouring rain, and James was hooked again.

After 20 years, he's been making up for lost time and applying a focus that had previously been lacking, with many hours spent practising and many more spent reading croquet websites and watching videos of top players.

During a steady climb in 2025, he finished 8th in the NSW 3 and Under, and then 5th in the NSW Men's Championships, before winning the NSW Selectors' Squad tournament and then the NSW Open Doubles with fellow Cammeray member Rob Elliott. He then won the NSW Platinum Brooch and the Croquet Australia 2nd Eight, as well as the Cammeray Club Handicap and Open Championship and the NSW 'Champion of Champions' trophy.

This run of form has continued into 2026, with wins in the NSW 3 and Under and the 5 and Under Mixed Doubles, with fellow Cammeray member Liz Montague. In the 18 months or so since he started playing again, his world ranking has improved from 259 to 55 and his handicap has fallen from 0 to minus 1.5. To cap it all, he was part of the NSW team that won the 2026 Eire Cup.

In July, he will play his first competitive croquet in the UK in 24 years, in the British Opens in Cheltenham (partnering Cammeray member Alison Sharpe in the doubles). After that, he will stay on in the UK as reserve and manager for the Australian team in the MacRobertson Shield. He is very grateful for all those at Cammeray and elsewhere that have helped rekindle his love for the game.