



The MacRobertson Shield
International Test Series
Media Pack



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The MacRobertson International Croquet Shield is the premier croquet teams event in the world, sanctioned by the World Croquet Federation as the World Teams Championship. It is currently competed for by top four croquet playing nations; Australia, England, New Zealand and the United States.

The series is now played in rotation between the competing countries every three or four years.

This series will be held from **30 December 2013 to 15 January 2014** in New Zealand.



MACROBERTSON SHIELD 2014

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SERIES DETAILS

The Participants

The series is played by four countries, New Zealand, England, USA and Australia in a round robin of test matches. England are the current holders of the MacRobertson Shield.

Each Test Match played between two countries consists of 21 matches, being 12 singles matches and 9 doubles matches. Each team comprises 6 players.

How the series is decided

Countries are awarded two points for a Test Match win and one point for a draw

The series will be decided in the following way:

1. The country with the most number of Test Match wins will be declared the winner;
2. If two or more countries are tied by Test Match wins, then the countries with the highest percentage of won matches throughout the series will be declared the winner;
3. If 1 or 2 does not find a winner then the trophy will be shared.

Where and When the Test Matches will be played

First round of Test Matches will be played at ***United Croquet Club in Hagley Park, Christchurch***

Mon 30th Dec 2013 to Fri 3rd Jan 2014 NZ vs USA

Mon 30th Dec 2013 to Fri 3rd Jan 2014 England vs Australia

The second round of Test Matches will be played in the Hawkes Bay region.

The New Zealand match vs Australia will be held at ***Marewa Croquet club, Whitmore Park in Nuffield Avenue, Napier*** whilst the USA vs England match will be held at ***Te Mata croquet club (341 Napier Road, Havelock North)***

Sun 5th Jan 2014 to Thurs 9th Jan 2014 NZ vs Australia

Sun 5th Jan 2014 to Thurs 9th Jan 2014 USA vs England

Third round of matches will be played at ***Croquet Mt Maunganui at Blake Park, Mt Maunganui***

Sat 11th Jan 2014 to Wed 15th Jan 2014 NZ vs England

Sat 11th Jan 2014 to Wed 15th Jan 2014 Australia vs USA

PREVIEW OF THE 2014 SERIES

By

John Prince MNZM

(NZ rep 1963, 1969 (c), 1974, 1979 (c), 1982 (c), 1986 (c), 1990 (c), 1996 (c), 2000, 2003)

The MacRobertson Shield Test Series is the oldest and greatest international croquet contest, the jewel in the croquet world's crown.

No other croquet competition produces the tension, the drama, the elation that comes when a series is won, or the devastation of defeat.

Some years ago a young player, now an established member of the NZ team, was asked during the NZ Open about his ambitions in croquet. His reply was not a self centered "win the Open" response but, to play for NZ in the MacRobertson. Such is the mana that goes with the Mac.

Since the first contest between England and Australia way back in 1925 the MacRobertson has enjoyed a rich history with many wonderful encounters, triumphs and bitter disappointments but above all the MacRobertson has made croquet the international game it is today and for those of us fortunate to take part life long friendships were formed. Apart from an isolated anti-Mac rumbling from within the World Croquet Federation in its early days the MacRobertson has been seen as the "Everest" for croquet players worldwide.

As I reflect back on past series from, of course, a Kiwi perspective I recall reading about, hearing about, or witnessing Australian Billy McCleery, in 1930 completing all three peels of a triple before running hoop five, and N.Z's Arthur Ross "hurdling" the first hoop to hit the cross wire. Ashley Heenan playing a sensational jump shot through rover against Dudley Hamilton-Miller, when NZ first won the shield in 1950.

My own debut aged 17, midway through the 1963 series, and the huge thrill in playing against the legendary John Solomon from England. 1969 saw the arrival of two new young outstanding players in Nigel Aspinall for England and John Magor for Australia. N.Z mounting a challenge to the top order of British croquet in 1974, this led to victory at home for the Kiwis in 1979. I'll never forget Bob Jackson's match saving straight triple at Westport against Aspinall and Paul Skinley becoming the first player to compete a sextuple peel in the MacRobertson at Rotorua.

At Adelaide in 1982 we experienced for the first time hoops becoming too narrow when set in rock hard ground, Kiwi Richard Clarke in desperation letting fly at hoop six with a massive jump to have the ball finish wedged in the hoop six inches above the ground!

The huge excitement as that series was decided on the last match of the final test between Great Britain and Australia. Keith Wylie (GB) game down turned his match against until then the "player of the series" and undefeated in singles Neil Spooner before a large crowd at Warleigh in Melbourne.

1986 saw history made when Great Britain for the first time lost the series on home ground. The "tension in the twilight" doubles and the sensation hit in and finish from Paul Skinley against William Prichard. And, so the rich tapestry grows. In 1993 against Bob Jackson Dave Maugham

with just two balls left on the court played a sensational break from hoop one to the peg to win the Shield for G.B. At United in 2000 the final test, the final match, the final game again involved Dave, this time with an immaculate triple peel on a rock hard court with unforgiving hoops he secured the shield for G.B. who defeated NZ by the narrowest margin 10-11. Meanwhile the test between Australia and the U.S.A. also came down to the wire.

2003 saw an out of sorts Kiwi team having already lost to Australia and the U.S.A. at the National Croquet Centre in Florida face an undefeated G.B. team. On the back of a fantastic "Captain's knock" from Toby Garrison who won 5 from 5 matches the Kiwis went down 10-11. 2010 saw an amazing comeback by the Kiwis in the series decider against the old foe needing to win all 6 singles on the last day they came up just one short but gave the holders a huge shock.

To the current series being played in New Zealand at three venues, United in Christchurch, Marewa and Te Mata in Hawkes Bay, and finally Mt Maunganui. All four countries have selected teams with players ranked within or near to their top six. So all should be more or less at full playing strength. Australia have three new caps in Ken Bald, Malcolm Fletcher and Tim O'Leary, former Cantabrian Ian Dumergue will captain the side which also includes World Champion Robert Fletcher and the stylish side stance player Stephen Forster, with Kevin Beard from 2010 at first reserve. The holders also have three new players their Captain Samir Patel, Jamie Birch and James Death plus the hugely experienced trio of Robert Fulford, Dave Maugham and Stephen Mulliner. Team USA contains just the one debutant David Maloof, former Australian rep Damion Bidence, Danny Honeycutt, and Ben Rothman, with the experienced pair of Jim Bast and Jeff Soo completing their line up.

The hosts have one player making his first appearance for N.Z. but he's no newcomer to test match croquet! Chris Clarke the current World number two, a former G.B. team member and former World Champion joins, wife Jenny, Greg Bryant, Paddy Chapman, Toby Garrison and Captain Aaron Westerby in a very strong Kiwi side. The amazing Jarrod "Courtside" Coutts as Team Manager will provide great inspiration and support off the court.

With potentially three extremely strong doubles combinations and if Hawkes Bay and Mt Maunganui can produce the same challenging playing conditions United is renowned for, then I firmly believe the Kiwis go in as favourites.

John Prince

Former NZ MacRobertson Team Captain and player.

CONTACTS

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NZ's most capped player:	John Prince	021 355 924	jprince@vodafone.co.nz
Australian Team Manager:	Bruce Fleming		
Australian Team Captain:	Ian Dumergue		
English Team Captain:	Samir Patel		
USA Team Manager:	Erv Peterson		
USA Team Captain:	Danny Huneycutt		

Croquet NZ

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World Croquet Federation

Website: <http://www.wcfcroquet.org/>
Event Link: <http://www.wcfcroquet.org/joomla/index.php/2014-ac-world-team-champ>

MacRobertson Shield Series website: <http://sportsground.co.nz/macrob2014>

Results and Commentary website: <http://www.croquetscores.com/>
Event link: <http://www.croquetscores.com/2013/ac/macrobertyson-shield>

HISTORY OF THE MACROBERTSON SHIELD

In the early 1920s, Australian confectionery maker and philanthropist, Sir Macpherson Robertson played croquet as his pastime. He enlisted returned World War I veterans to take up concessions for his products and encouraged them to try croquet also, believing it to be a teaching aid for developing skills in self-discipline and risk management. Eventually, a pool of players were participating in regular tournaments. In 1925, with a growing interest in the sport, he established the MacRobertson Shield, an international tournament of croquet "Tests" between Australia and England. The Victorian Croquet Association sent a team of four players to England to contest the inaugural tournament. England won easily and Robertson presented the Shield personally.

In 1927-8 an England team played in Australia and was narrowly defeated. In 1930, New Zealand was invited to participate in a series between themselves and Australia, with Australia winning comfortably and the first triangular series was held in 1935 in Melbourne as part of the Melbourne centenary celebrations. In 1993, a United States team was admitted into the tournament.

The last Series (2010)

The 2010 Shield was contested in Great Britain, across 5 different venues.

Fri 6 – Tue 10 August: Great Britain v USA at Bowdon, Greater Manchester and Australia v New Zealand at Heaton Park, Manchester

Results: Great Britain 12 - 9 USA Australia 8 - 13 New Zealand

Thu 12 – Mon 16 August: Great Britain v New Zealand at Nottingham and Australia v USA at Roehampton

Results: Great Britain 11 - 10 New Zealand Australia 7 - 14 USA
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Wed 18 – Sun 22 August: Great Britain v Australia and New Zealand v USA both at Surbiton

Results: Great Britain 14 - 7 Australia USA 5 - 16 New Zealand

Past results

Year	Host	Countries	Winner
1925	England	England, Australia	England
1927–	Australia	England, Australia	Australia
1930	Australia	New Zealand, Australia	Australia
1935	New Zealand	England, Australia, New Zealand	Australia
1937	England	England, Australia	England
1950–	New Zealand	England, New Zealand	New Zealand
1956	England	England, New Zealand	England
1963	New Zealand	England, Australia, New Zealand	England
1969	Australia	England, Australia, New Zealand	England
1974	England	Great Britain, Australia, New Zealand	Great Britain
1979	New Zealand	Great Britain, Australia, New Zealand	New Zealand
1982	Australia	Great Britain, Australia, New Zealand	Great Britain
1986	Great Britain	Great Britain, Australia, New Zealand	New Zealand
1990	New Zealand	Australia, NZ, Great Britain & Ireland	Great Britain
1993	Australia	Australia, NZ, Great Britain & Ireland, USA	Great Britain
1996	Great Britain	Australia, New Zealand, Great Britain, USA	Great Britain
2000	New Zealand	Australia, New Zealand, Great Britain, USA	Great Britain
2003	United	Australia, New Zealand, Great Britain, USA	Great Britain
2006	Australia	Australia, New Zealand, Great Britain, USA	Great Britain
2010	Great Britain	Australia, New Zealand, Great Britain, USA	Great Britain
2014	New Zealand	Australia, England, New Zealand, USA	

TEAM BIOS – NEW ZEALAND



Aaron Westerby (Captain) Aaron Westerby from the Epsom/Remuera Croquet Club started playing croquet in 1986 and his career highlights have included winning the 1994 and 1995 NZ mixed doubles title with his grandmother, being named “player of the series” at the 2009 Trans Tasman and captaining the New Zealand MacRobertson Shield team to the brink of success in 2010. A past New Zealand Open champion, two-time NZ top Invitation winner, 1997 winner of the British Men’s championship and past world number 1.



Greg Bryant: CNZ Player of the Year 2012, Greg has represented New Zealand as a member of the MacRobertson Shield Test team in 1993, 2003, 2006 and 2010 and in the Trans-Tasman Team from 2004 to 2011. Currently based in Wellington, Greg has played in 5 World Croquet Championships and also represented New Zealand at Sonoma-Cutrer on three occasions. Greg won the New Zealand Open singles in 2011 and 2012, holds two NZ Open Doubles titles, 2 NZ top Invitation titles and several English Silver Medals and NZCC Silver Mallets. Greg is currently the Croquet NZ Sport Development Officer.



Paddy Chapman: Paddy began playing croquet in 1999 and, under the guidance of seven-time NZ Open singles champion, John Prince, he has had great success within the New Zealand croquet scene. Previous successes include the NZ Open Singles, Australian Men's Championship, Australian Open Doubles and ACA Gold Medal. He has also competed in two UK President's Cups, finishing runner-up in 2012. Paddy won the silver medal at the 2013 WCF AC World Championships in England. This is his third MacRobertson Shield series.



Jenny Clarke: Jenny is a lecturer in sports science at the University of Canterbury. She was the 2010 Australian Open Champion, Swiss Open Champion 2007, and NZ and British Women’s and Mixed doubles twice. Jenny also won the 2007 NZ Open Doubles title with husband Chris Clarke. Jenny was captain of the NZ Trans Tasman teams in 2009 and 2010, and has played in all the Trans Tasman teams since 2004. Jenny was a member of the 2010 NZ Mac team, winning all her matches in the final Test against the United States. She is current Women’s World Champion and is ranked world number 14.



Toby Garrison: Toby Garrison is a silver medalist from the 2002 World AC champs and was winner of the Centenary New Zealand Open after being runner up in the 2012 NZ Open. Living in Wellington and playing for the Waimarie Croquet Club, Toby is a market analyst for a NZ Trading Bank. Toby has played in two MacRobertson Shield teams, being captain in 2003. He has represented New Zealand in Trans Tasman tests, World Championships and three times in the Sonoma World Championship. Toby also won the NZ Open in 2001 and the top NZ Invitation in 1999, 2003 and 2013.



Chris Clarke: Chris works as a sports trader, specialising in USPGA Tour golf and is also groundsman at the United croquet club. He started playing at the age of 13 in Blackburn, Lancashire, England. He won the Presidents Cup at the age of 17, becoming the youngest ever winner. Chris is 2 time World Champion (’95 and ’08) and has won the Open Singles Championship in England, Australia and New Zealand. Chris Captained GB to victory in the 1996 MacRobertson Shield and was on the winning team in ’93, ’00, ’03 and ’06 as well. Chris became the youngest person to be inducted into the WCF Hall of Fame in 2010.

TEAM BIOS – ENGLAND



Samir Patel (Captain): Samir has been playing croquet since taking up the sport in the mid-nineties at Oxford University, and won his first A-class tournament in 2001. Major tournament successes include reaching the British Opens Final (2008) and Quarter Finals of the World Championship (2012). He has represented England in the Home Internationals and European Championship, and Great Britain in the Maugham Salver and Solomon Trophy since his debut in 2007. Samir has been as high as fourth in the world rankings.



Jamie Burch: from Reigate Croquet Club in Surrey, England. A painter & decorator by trade. He is a busy family man who enjoys spending time with his wife and 2 young children. He still finds enough time for croquet and darts - his winter sport.



Robert Fulford: Robert is one of the most successful players in the history of the game. He has won the world championship a record 5 times and has been part of a winning British MacRobertson Shield team on an unprecedented seven occasions (twice as Captain). Other achievements include winning the British Open 9 times, the British Open Doubles 12 times, 10 with Chris Clarke and twice with James Death. He is the current holder of the President's Cup which he has won 11 times. Robert plays with a fluent style and loves tactics, employing a wider range than other top players.



James Death: James has been around croquet since birth. A member of Nottingham croquet club, he has been part of the successful club and county sides. Individually he has also won the UK's Men's Championship and Presidents Cup (1st Eight). In the last 3 world championships he has reached the last eight twice and the semi-finals back in 2005. Outside croquet, James enjoys food, drink and computer games.



David Maugham: David started playing competitively in 1985. He has won various singles honours including the British Open Championship, British Mens Championship, British President's Cup on 4 occasions, the Sonoma-Cutrer World Championship 3 times, the Australian Open, the US Open and 25 British Regional Championships. His doubles successes include three British Open Doubles titles (with Steve Comish, Chris Clarke and Mark Avery) and three British Mixed Doubles (once with Jenny Williams and twice with Ailsa Lines). David has also been on six MacRobertson Shield winning Great Britain sides, and considers his best match to be the one in which he completed a TP to win the deciding game of the final match of the test against New Zealand at Christchurch in 2000 when the scores were level.



Stephen Mulliner: Stephen took up tournament croquet in 1976. He won the British Open Championship in 1988, 1990 and 2000, the Open Doubles 9 times, the President's Cup 5 times, the Sonoma-Cutrer Championship 4 times, the European Championship 11 times and the Mens Championship twice. He was 2nd in the 1997 and 2008 AC World Championships and has represented Great Britain in the MacRobertson Shield in 1982, 1986, 1990, 2000, 2003 and 2010. He began to play Golf Croquet seriously in 2000 and has won the British Open Championship 8 times, the European Championship in 2007, 2009 and 2013 and the English National Championship (Ascot Cup) in 2012. He reached the GC World Championship semi-finals in 2000 and 2006 and captained England in the inaugural GC World Team Championship 2012.

TEAM BIOS – AUSTRALIA



Ian Dumergue (Captain): Ian is an Underground Safety & Training Advisor with Gold Fields Australia at Darlot Gold Mine in Western Australia. He is married to Ceridwen and they live with their young children in the Perth Hills. Ian is a member of the Forrest Park Croquet Club. Born in Christchurch New Zealand, Ian was introduced to croquet by his great-uncle Jack McNab in 1986 at the Sumner Croquet Club and has represented both New Zealand and Australia in the Trans Tasman Test Series. This will be his third appearance in the MacRobertson Shield Test Series and first time as Captain.



Ken Bald: Ken, a retired builder started playing croquet in 1993. Ken has represented Victoria nine times playing for the Eire Cup and other highlights have been playing in the 2005 World Championships; representing Australia in the Trans Tasman in 2006; playing in the Resort Invitational held at Timberline Mt.Hood (USA); being invited to play in the World Championships in Christchurch, Florida and Adelaide; and finally of course his selection in the MacRob Team at the grand age of 69.



Malcolm Fletcher: Malcolm at the age of 19 is playing in his first MacRobertson Shield Test Series and is very excited and proud to be wearing the number 67! By the beginning of the competition he expects to have completed both Year 12 and a Cert 3 in Agriculture. Malcolm enjoys playing his guitar, working with his three sheepdogs, eating most foods that aren't too spicy, and beating his brother Robert at croquet, tennis, squash, table tennis and all video games.



Robert Fletcher: Robert started playing at the Lismore Croquet Club, in South West Victoria, in 2004. This year he represented Australia in the Trans Tasman and his most recent international event was competing in the WCF AC World Championship which he won. He is currently completing a course in Agriculture through Ballarat University, while working in the family business. His interests include watching and playing sports like tennis, cricket, snooker, table tennis, AFL, hockey, and anything else that looks interesting. Robert is looking forward to being part of the Australian Team.



Stephen Forster: Stephen is a Theatre Technician at the Geelong Hospital Operating Suite and has been married to Julie for 22 years and they have two children. This is his fourth time in the Australian MacRob Team, a tournament that he enjoys. He is looking forward to another tough competition as well as catching up with the players. Playing for his country in this event is the highest achievement and he very much wants to play in the next MacRobertson Shield.



Tim O'Leary: Tim started playing croquet at the age of 8 in country South Australia and two years ago moved to Adelaide with his wife and two boys. He played in the World Championship in Adelaide and was awarded a Croquet Australia scholarship to play in New Zealand earlier this year. Also in 2013, Tim represented South Australia in the Eire Cup, won the Tom Armstrong Memorial Trophy and in June was winner of the Patron's Trophy. He is looking forward to playing in his first MacRobertson Test Shield Series.

TEAM BIOS - USA



Danny Huneycutt (Captain):



David Maloof: Born in Massachusetts in 1954, David has been the director of tennis at Mountain Lake in Lake Wales Florida since 1979. David teaches croquet in the summers at Grandfather Golf and Country Club, Linville Ridge Golf and Country Club, and Linville Resorts in Linville NC, as well as his winter job in Florida. The desire to represent his country and the support of his clubs made it possible for him to start competing and he secured a spot on the US National Team after a successful Selection 8's in 2011 and 2012. His first international competition was this past July when he played the Solomon Trophy in England.



Jim Bast: Jim began playing in 1981 and was named the USCA Rookie of the Year in 1982. He became the USCA Singles and Doubles Champion in 1984. Jim took a ten year break beginning in 1996 to raise a family and began playing in earnest again in late 2005. He has also won the Canadian Championship twice. Jim has represented the USA as a member of 11 national teams, including 3 MacRobertson Shield teams. He was a member of the first USA MacRobertson Shield team in 1993.



Ben Rothman: After many years of casual toiling, Ben joined the ranks of championship players in late 2007. Ben joined his first US Team for the 2008 Solomon Trophy and won his first National Championship in 2009. That same year he battled through his first World Championship and lost the final to Reg Bamford. Ben has since been a member of two victorious Solomon teams (2009 and 2011) and the 2010 MacRobertson Shield team as well as team captain of the 2011 Carter Challenge. Ben has now the most US National Championships (14) and is the only player to have held all 6 titles at once. Ben works as a Croquet Pro at the Mission Hills Croquet Club in Rancho Mirage, CA.



Jeff Soo: Jeff Soo has been playing competitive croquet since 1994. The 2014 MacRobertson Shield is the 11th time he has been selected to represent the US in an international team competition. He has won US national titles in Association Croquet, Golf Croquet, and American-rules Croquet.



Rich Lamm: Recently shifting to Palm Springs, California, Rich Lamm made his US team debut at the 2004 Solomon Trophy event in Bowdon, UK. He also contributed to the US team victory over Ireland in 2009. A member of the 2006 and 2010 MacRobertson Shield teams, this is his third MacRob appearance. He enjoys American, golf and association rules croquet, winning the US association rules 2007 and 2012 national titles and the 2002 and 2003 US Open. He also holds the US 2011 golf croquet singles and doubles titles (partnering with MacRob team member Danny Huneycutt).

Images & Logo's



Croquet NZ

The NZ National Sports Organisation. (NSO) of croquet. Host of the 2014 MacRobertson Shield.



World Croquet Federation

International sanctioning body of the World Teams Championship (MacRobertson)



MacRobertson Shield

JPEG images, PSD / PDF files available by request. Contact croquet@croquet.org.nz