



April 2014

This month in Croquet Matters

Oh - for some of us the long haul until September and the new season of croquet has begun. We have enjoyed closing day, receiving trophies and started to wonder what will fill croquet time over the winter. A lucky number of clubs are able to open. Here in Wellington we have to give the lawns a rest but our Kapiti Coast clubs invite us to join them so we don't forget how to play. Keep warm and enjoy some of the loveliness of winter such a crisp clear days while reading our newsletter.

From the Exec

The tournament committee met at the start of April to discuss the CNZ tournament calendar for next season, changes to formats, regulations, and other matters. Thanks to all the Associations who have agreed to host tournaments.

The tournament committee decided to:

- play the Gold & Silver Mallets and the Silver & Bronze medals in alternate years. The Mallets will be on the 2014/15 calendar;
- play the GC Gold & Silver Stars in a similar manner to the Arthur Ross competition. There will be play at club and association level, before the winners coming to a national final.

We hope that clubs and associations will embrace this concept so it will result in "more people playing better croquet more often"

- at the request of a couple of clubs, there will be a \$5/day clubhouse fee (which will include provision of

tea/coffee/morning tea) to be paid by each entrant to the host club for CNZ tournaments. This clubhouse fee recognises that the host club incurs some costs other than the provision of tea & coffee/morning teas;

- after the AGM last year it was left to the tournament committee to come up with 4 divisions for the GC Silver Badge competition. The tournament committee decided that the ranges should be 0-2, 3-5, 6-8, and 9-12. It was noted that in the near future it was likely to consider negative handicaps for GC;

There had been some concern by both players and managers that some trophies were not being returned in a timely fashion, some were the worse for wear and some were not being engraved before being sent on to the next tournament. Of course these things can happen, however we remind players that most players do cherish being presented with the trophy at the tournament so it is quite important to ensure trophies are returned.

Several clubs have queried whether it is time to revisit the reimbursements (the amounts and method) made to clubs for hosting CNZ events. The tournament committee has asked for some comparative analysis to be completed. The tournament committee tries to ensure that the cost of the national tournament programme is pretty much self-funding, therefore it was agreed that if increases to club reimbursements need to happen then it is likely that entry fees may also rise.

The Executive met the day after the Tournament committee (meaning a long

tiring weekend for those on both committees!).

The finance committee reported that a deficit of approximately \$30,000 is likely to be reported for the year ended 30 June 2014.

This would include expenditure on hosting the MacRobertson Shield of approximately \$43,000. Croquet New Zealand plans likely expenditure on international events over a four year timeframe, so that some years will yield a surplus and others (like this year) a deficit. This is done to minimise the need for member levies to be raised or a special contribution sought from all players.

The tournament committee reported on the comments noted above

The player development committee reported that:

- Chris Clarke had agreed to join the AC Selection panel now that Aaron Westerby had stepped down. Peter Filbee would be the new panel chair;
- plans were underway for more nationwide coaching for the start of next season. The ED and SDO are currently working on the content and delivery and will be in touch with associations in the not too distant future to arrange matters.
- planning is well underway for upcoming international events

The laws committee reported that:

- work was continuing to align AC and GC processes;
- a new GC exam was available;
- a new system for examinations (process, recording etc.) has been put in place;
- training resources for umpires/refs were being collated by the SDO to include as an addition to the nationwide coaching

The organisation development committee reported that:

- there had been quite positive feedback about Croquet Matters (please continue to send in all your news and results!!!!) In fact there have been queries from Australia for more information about the work the SDO is doing!!!!
- there has been positive feedback about the GC rules booklet and comments suggesting that the yearbook should become a "fixtures" book. ie take out the AC laws and GC rules and have them separate.
- The Committee is in the process of reviewing current complaints procedures and updating/revising them

Please let us know your thoughts on the questions below urgently, as next season's yearbook preparation begins soon!

Do you wish to see a "full yearbook" produced for the 2014/15 season or would you prefer a "fixtures" book?

Do you like the current binding on the yearbook or would you prefer to see a plastic binder type?

Do we need a Yearbook in any form (if the information is loaded onto the CNZ website)?

Sport Development Officer

As another playing season closes, the focus for many of us turns to club governance with club and association AGM's on the horizon. These essential events are not only the time to review performance of the last year; they are the time to establish plans and strategies for the year ahead.

One of the critical activities of CNZ and the SDO's role is to support and enhance Club and Association governance. Last year's AGM reports (available on the CNZ website) indicate a number of 'red flag' regions that would benefit from improved governance procedures. In almost all cases to date, the initial process involves the establishment of a strategic plan, where to start and what to do.

Clubs and regions that are not 'red flagged' are not excluded from the need to establish plans and strategies. The 2013 Club Questionnaire shows that it is a notable omission from the routine activities of most committees and one that the core members of a club committee should address.

The core of a Governance committee will have:

- President
- Treasurer
- Secretary

For all clubs, a very good starting point is to complete the Sport NZ Club Warrant of Fitness. It's a simple online programme with excellent reporting capabilities.

Go to <http://www qlbs.com/webq/SNZIndex.aspx?system=sportnz> to access the programme.

The WoF report will provide guidance on what areas need attention and it will provide support materials to help with the task. If you are looking to develop plans and strategies for your club, it is most effective to involve your membership in the process.

Other key positions should specifically address the key needs of the organisation. To coincide with CNZ initiatives and to ensure they are effective, it is important that various governance roles are filled at club and association levels. For many clubs and Associations, these needs are:
(Identified by the 2013 club questionnaire)

- **Publicity Officer**
Marketing, promotions and grants. Most clubs don't currently have a marketing plan or assigned promotions budget which could include simple printing, communications and online expenses (if any).

Publicity is not confined to external exposure. Communications between the club membership and the croquet community as a whole is vital to a successful club. CNZ publications such as Croquet matters should be made available to all club members which could be a duty of the Publicity Officer to ensure that happens.

Various other CNZ resources are available or are being developed to support this role. For example, generic club posters for local publicity and the Green Prescription programme which will launch with the Ministry of Health prior to next season.

- **Association Coach**
There are several CNZ programmes to support Association Coach activities which in turn support the CNZ mission statement *more people playing better croquet more often*.

CNZ Youth Development

Programme: It is important that Associations that have, or are about to host the programme nominate

an Association Coach to coordinate and support local activities, including the regions club coaches and relations with their RST and School Sport Coordinators. As the programme develops, regular reporting of progress back to CNZ helps to ensure its effectiveness and to advise of any need for additional support or assistance.

- **CNZ Coaching Sessions:** These popular events will be held throughout associations again this coming season. Logistical assistance at Association level is required by CNZ and it is hoped that Association and Club Coaches will be integrated with the delivery of the sessions on this occasion.
- **The new CNZ Coaching Programme** will be launched at the beginning of next season. Refreshers for existing coaches, new coaching qualifications and reporting will need to be administered at least at Association level.

Most importantly, recognise and thank your club volunteers. Our facilities and the game we play would not be available to us without them. All of those that give their time and effort for your enjoyment deserve our congratulations.

Tournaments

It is with regret that the Southern Premier Silver Badges which were to be held in Nelson on 5 & 6 April 2014 were cancelled as there were not enough entries. It seems players had used up their annual leave in earlier major tournaments.

IMPORTANT NOTICE:

Due to all the work, and only having 3 playable lawns, Marewa's 2 winter tournaments have been cancelled.

They are:

Singles Mid-Winter AC Tournament 5 - 6 July 2014 and

Golf Croquet Mid-Winter

CNZ Awards & Qualifications:

Kevin Fellows has been nominated and become a finalist for the Sports Administrator of the Year at the Lower Hutt Sports awards for his sterling work managing the MacRobertson Shield as well as master-minding the move of Waimarie Club from its present site.

Greg Bryant is being nominated for Wellington Sports Person of the year for his successes in the NZ Men's Championship, NZ Open and as part of the winning Mac team as well as many club and Association wins.

TOURNAMENT MANAGERS' DISCUSSION GROUP

An excellent initiative to improve tournament management skills through a discussion group is being led by Chris Clarke. An initial group has explored various tournament formats in the first assignment. The outcomes are very informative and serve as an excellent reference for managers to provide successful and appropriate tournaments.

This group is highly recommended for anyone wanting to up-skill or learn about managing successful events. To participate, email Chris at chrisd4clarke@hotmail.com

Check this out!

Definitely recommended if you are serious about improving your game!

ClarkeCroquet.com



New learning resources website

Top international players and coaches Chris and Jenny Clarke recently launched a new website clarkecroquet.com/ to complement existing croquet websites with learning resources such as self-marking quizzes and video tutorials. The site is currently very new and sparsely populated, but they expect to grow it rapidly.

In Stroke Play, there's an instructional video on how to play corner 1 cannons for hoops 1 and 2, advice on grip and stance as well as short articles on how to shoot and how to play full rolls (instructional video to follow

shortly). There's also a link to Stephen Mulliner's excellent video on hop shots.

In Association Croquet Tactics, there is Pete Trimmer's excellent advice on pegged out endings, formatted into a mini-book, as well as the start of a mini-book focussing on lift leaves by Chris Clarke.

In Croquet Laws, there are four quizzes, each with a bank of questions:

- AC Beginners
- GC Beginners
- GC Intermediate
- GC Referee Training (some tough questions in this one)

Then there's a section entitled Historical Videos from Events which has over 100 videos from games of yesteryear, both AC and GC.

- If you find the text too small, press "control and +" at the same time.
- When watching instructional videos, have your computer's volume turned up high, set the quality to HD and watch full screen.

Dave Kibble – CA website

In addition there are now videos on stop shots, drives, half rolls and 3/4 rolls, also a new section coming soon on the "Top Ten Croquet players", and a tournament management section based on the email discussion site.

Around the Regions

Wellington

Kelburn Municipal Croquet Club Inc.

Along with many other parts of the country the three weeks before Easter had a great run of weather. The Club's improving lawn conditions saw the presence of a good numbers on most club days. Our new members are turning out regularly and other club members have been great at making people welcome and introducing them to the game, if beginners.

Support for our Golf Croquet Tournament and the Twilight Evenings play was enthusiastic, with many of us enjoying the social time on Monday evenings and the final pot luck dinner, so capably arranged by Beverley Upton.

As a last celebration of its centenary year Kelburn Club members were brought together for a New York Garden Party when we savoured the delights of play and hospitality in the 1930s and drank a surprising amount of gin without any apparent effect on our play.

Players dressed in style and the wonderful organiser Lisa Thompson and her sister Ann set the tone with their delightful hats



The club is working on an extension of its "corporate" fundraising event to include some business house groups to see if they can institute a competition between teams from different business houses and introduce younger players to regular play.

The Kelburn Committee are still working with the WCC sports fields' team to institute a more effective maintenance plan for the lawns, in the hope that they will have a better playing surface next year. The Club acknowledges that considerable effort was put into the urgent restoration work by the Wellington City Council necessary to enable the national tournaments to go ahead.

Paraparaumu Croquet Club

Manawatu Exchange: The AC challenges for this annual event were held at Paraparaumu, and the GC competition was held at Rose Gardens on 23 February. The day started out well, until Bryan Barlow decided to investigate the pearly gates. Luckily his opponents knew what to do and after an extremely traumatic resuscitation, Bryan was taken off to hospital in a helicopter, and play recommenced. Despite shattered nerves, Wellington managed to steal the competition from Manawatu by 0.9 of a point, and I am happy to report that Bryan has made a great recovery.

CNZ Arthur Ross Final: Held over three days from 28 Feb to 2 March, this was a great opportunity to watch handicap play by club representatives from all over the country.

Greg Bryant, the Wellington representative was tipped to win, but he was beaten in the final in a cat and mouse final by 13 year old Edmund Fordyce from Methven. The lawns were in great condition, the weather was kind, and the catering was exemplary – thank you to all the helpers.

Association Interclub:

Play between Waikanae, Plimmerton and Paraparaumu for the Paekakariki Cup took place on 22 March at Plimmerton.

Paraparaumu narrowly lost to Plimmerton, by one game, so again our players did extremely well for the Club.

Secondary Schools Competitions: It was reported that 22 children from regional schools (mainly Wellington based) have been playing off to establish teams to be entered into the National Schools Competitions. It was agreed that the WCA will contribute a maximum of \$300 towards team expenses (there will be four), with no more than \$75 per team.

Golf Croquet Silver Badges finals were played on 29 March.

A One Ball Competition was played on 9 March, with the next scheduled for 13 April.

A recent informal visit to Masteron/Carteron was enjoyable, and both clubs have expressed interest in visiting us next year. It has been suggested to Dannevirke that they visit us in spring.

Plimmerton Croquet Club

In April, a golf croquet team of wizards and witches from Plimmerton weaved their magic on other competitors and came up winners of the speedball competition for the Ellis Cup being played at Paraparaumu. The Ellis Cup was donated by former KCDC councillor Peter Ellis four years ago and he has personally presented it each year. This year's

winning time was 3.07 minutes. Their magic spell was not strong enough for the Cherrington Cup as Paraparaumu had concocted their own secret potion and weaving its spell on other teams eventually came up winners. Long time Paraparaumu member Ann Cherrington donated her Trophy as a Golf Croquet challenge to promote competition among the three Kapiti Clubs, Paraparaumu, Plimmerton and Waikanae. It was a hard-fought for and prestigious victory for the winning team and Ann was extremely pleased that Paraparaumu, having won the inaugural match in 2011, were able to beat Plimmerton in a nail-biting final round and bring the trophy back home. The friendship and camaraderie enjoyed by everyone involved is an added bonus to a thoroughly enjoyable day of serious fun! To add fun to the tournament which is played annually between the participants of the speedball traditionally wear fancy hats. The witches were also judged the best hats team.

Bernie Randall



Winners of the Cherrington Cup. Ann Cherrington far right



Winners of the Ellis Cup with donator Peter Ellis

Croquet Nelson

Silver Badges results:

AC

A Grade Neil Seagar (Richmond)
Int Grade Alan Edmonds, Nelson Hinemoa
B Grade Lanna Remnant, Nelson Hinemoa
C Grade Sarah Smale, Nelson Hinemoa

GC

Premier Jace Hobbs, Nelson Hinemoa
Int Lynette Gulliver, Richmond
Primary Hannah Brown, Richmond

In the GC, Hannah Brown was the winner of the Primary grade at just 13 years old. Hannah has been playing for less than two years!

She came along with her Granddad, Colin, to an open day a couple of years ago. She was also selected as a National Youth Development player for Croquet New Zealand last year.

Hannah was also nominated Player of the Day on the Newstalk ZB Nelson, Houston Motors All Sport Breakfast, in February this year.



(L-R, Fred McKee, Marion Prentice, Hannah Brown, Annie Henry)

An up and coming new young player...we need more!

Marion Prentice Publicity Officer Croquet Nelson

Taranaki Croquet Association

St Patrick's Day Inglewood invitation at Hawera.

Because of our busy croquet schedule in March, the 3rd annual St Pat's GC event this year between Inglewood and Hawera, took place on April fool's day. This fun day was the idea of Ava Baker, vice Club Captain golf croquet, and once again with her team it was a resounding success. A green theme was adopted throughout with clothing, food and club room decorations. New innovations this time were a pizza picnic at lunch time (and the perfect weather saw everyone sitting outside enjoying the sunshine). Irish music was played on a keyboard, thanks to Alan McKay, which captured the spirit of the day so well. Oh and the croquet that was great fun too. Prizes were given out at the end of the day, with some Irish jokes told over afternoon tea. A very successful day which will be looked forward to again next year; on the day!

Sue Williams





Golf Croquet sponsored by Yummy Fruit Co. played at Te Mata Thursday 20 & 21 March. Handicap doubles - 14 entries: Winners Tony Stephens & Joan Cook (HB) R/up Carol & Steve Piercy (Bay of Plenty). Open Level Singles - 17 entries: Winner Tony Stephens (HB) R/up Steve Piercy (BOP). Open Level plate - Winner Gary Engelen (Hawera) R/up John Wall (PN). Handicap singles: 12 entries - Winner Gaynor Robertson (HB) R/up Karen Johnson (HB). Terry McBeth Manager

Colleen Stephens Croquet HB Publicity

Croquet Hawkes Bay

Croquet Hawkes Bay remembers Life Member Mary Marshall a former President and Life Member of both Marewa and Croquet HB, who was involved with the sport at many levels, managing, refereeing, and as an Examining Referee. During her time she also helped set Referee Exam papers for Croquet NZ, refereed International Test Teams and was presented with her International Referees Badge in 1994 at United Club in Christchurch at the time of the current MacRobertson Shield Test Series. She was very proud of the fact that she was an International Referee.

Croquet HB 80th Annual Tournament

Association Croquet sponsored by Doorpro played at Marewa Saturday 15 & Sunday 16 March. Open Championship Singles (CNZ cup)- 6 entries: Winner Mike Crashley (HB) R/up John Versey (HB). Championship Singles 4+ (Lange Cup) 8 entries. Winner Top 4 - Lester O'Brien (HB) R/up Graham Edwards (HB). Consolation winner - Diane Charteris (HB) R/up Carl Redvers (Wairarapa). Handicap Singles - (Bone Cup) - 10 entries played Monday 17 & Tuesday 18 March. Winner Melva Jones (Man-Wairarapa) R/up Tom Berryman (Wgtn). Lester O'Brien Manager.

Golf Croquet prize Winners Croquet Hawkes Bay 80th Annual Tournament held at Te Mata Croquet Club, Havelock North over 20 to 23 March 2014



L to R

Steve Piercy (Katikati) - runner up Open Level Championship and co-runner up Handicap Doubles events
 Carol Piercy (Katikati) - co-runner up Handicap Doubles event
 Gary Engelen (Hawera) - winner Open Level Plate event
 Joan Cook (Te Mata) - co-winner Handicap Doubles
 Tony Stephens (Te Mata) - co-winner Handicap Doubles and winner Open Level Championship events
 John Wall (Palmerston North) - runner up Open Level Plate event

Auckland Croquet

Carlton Croquet Club

In March each year Carlton members look forward to their AC Veterans Handicap Doubles Tournament. We're not sure if it is the fact that the play is always on small lawns or that everyone has a scrummy cold open salad lunch provided for them but we always have great fun with our 32 visitors. This tournament is run over 2 days and has been played now for many, many years.

Most clubs in Auckland have representatives and some players even put their name forward from one year to the next!!

The other very happy time we have had in our club this month was celebrating the 70th wedding anniversary of one of our 91 year old players and his wife. Allen has been playing association croquet since the age of 85 when he no longer was able to play a 9-hole game of golf. He began playing and not long after this his youngest son Nick joined the North Shore Club to understand what his Father was so excited about!! Nick now plays in Australia. Allen's eldest son Chris also has just begun playing at the Orewa club. Allen can be seen most club days hoisting the club flag; after all what else would an 'old salt of the sea' do!!

Somewhere between all these social events we do get to play croquet!!

Chris Binns - Club Captain

MAREWA CROQUET CLUB NEWSLETTER EXTRA

Fri, Apr 4, 2014 Jayne Powis who does publicity for the Marewa Croquet Club sent us the following article: > wrote

As you all know, lawns 4 and 5 were today, Monday, ripped up in order for new seed to be sown. I thought that you might like to see how things went:



The machine could not get through the gate!



Let's try the other gate, but take it off its hinges first.

Whose bright idea was it to have a soil storage here?!



OK, let's just rip out the fence.

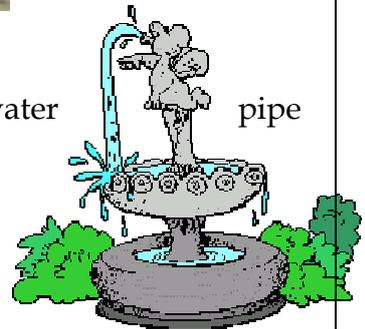


Oh dear, this is all that is left of lawn 5. Better bring in the heavy machinery:

Finally through and able to get on with the job, but not until after a major mishap that could have seen us with this in the middle of the lawn:



Yes, you guessed it - a water pipe was struck, but don't worry as our trusty men were quickly onto it



Well done guys, you earned your cream scones!



The bucket filled and the turf dumped in the awaiting truck



- except for a few strips that have gone into here:

Now we will not have to play over concrete this winter!

Hope you can now appreciate at what goes on and let's look forward to next season with lawns 4 and 5 top notch!

Jayne

powis.family@actrix.co.nz

Coaching Corner

An Occasional Series

This section is divided in 2 this month with both the articles relating to the same general topic - the inner game. Much is written and said about mind control in sport. Hopefully these 2 articles will add to a wider discussion which can be expanded on as time goes on. (Ed)

Croquet Mind Games

I have been watching the Masters Golf tournament and find there are so many requirements of the golf players which can be translated to playing croquet successfully and well. The golf showed how the player's state of mind influenced how well he did, how much good concentration matters and how visualisation works.

One of the best books I read to help me towards my own success was the Inner Game of Golf by Timothy Gallwey. Of course you might well ask - 'what has golf got to do with croquet?' "The short answer is quite a lot. The author considers the mental and emotional side of the game. As golf is essentially the player playing himself, the lawn and the weather it become clear to see the similarities with croquet.

In essence we are our own worst enemy and allow doubt, tension and loss of concentration to sabotage our game.

"Learning to perform at one's best is the clear goal of the inner game (Chapter 1 Page 6. The inner Game of Golf by Thomas Gallwey)

Good performance is obviously achieved by natural talent, lots of hard work and enthusiasm as well as a strong understanding of the potential of the game. The demands of accuracy in the game mean that there is no easy way to release tension if a bad shot is made.

It is necessary to take time between shots to shake off the tension of that last shot and to prepare the mind for concentrating on what to do next.

In order to have settled mind to play the next shot well a few techniques can be employed immediately:

1. Briefly live the emotion – anger, disappointment, fear, guilt at letting your partner down
2. Firmly say to yourself I cannot change what happened
3. Take a long slow breath in down into your belly and release it slowly. If necessary do this a couple of times until you feel calm again
4. Carry on with the next shot to maintain the break.

It is easy to become lost in other thoughts while playing croquet. Especially as the “out-player” while you are sitting waiting for your next turn. So what do you do? I read a book – probably the same paragraphs over and over as I am still aware of my opponent’s every move but I am not giving myself the chance of saying to myself ‘I hope he breaks down, why is he doing that, what should I do in the same situation’?

I used to listen to my favourite music while sitting in a shelter but found a book much more useful.

Concentration is one of the key inner games skills. I am always able to tell when a PGA golf player has not given enough concentration to a shot – it is almost always the seemingly easy shots which go wrong.

In order to concentrate effectively a player has to be fully aware of how his body is performing and at the same time trust that the stroke he is about to play will come off as he wanted it to. I do not mean self-control of the mind – after all with enough good practice a player will have developed a perfect muscle memory for each stroke. I

mean clearing the mind to allow it to do what it knows how to do perfectly well.

Pamela George April 2014

Another aspect of concentration and good performance is Visualisation and the following article from our Sports Development Officer Greg Bryant, gives his wisdom on this vital aspect of success.

The Inner Game: Visualization

How often have you said “*I knew that was going to happen?*”

What you *knew* is called visualization. It works. For you or against you.

When you last said ‘I knew that was going to happen’, was it just after an unsuccessful shot or a successful one?

Consider the differences in what the thought processes are leading up to that statement.

While it is beyond this article to explain in detail the workings of the mind and its relationship to physical outcomes, it does discuss the application of deliberate, purposeful visualization in a croquet context. If you are unfamiliar with the prerequisites to effective visualization, I suggest further reading and reflection to enhance your understanding of what can be as effective as many hours of physical practice on the lawn.

1. Practice does not make perfect.
Practice makes permanent.

Be aware that it is important to practise perfection, especially when it comes to visualization techniques. If you are unsure about what ‘perfect’ is, spend some time with a coach that already does what you want achieve perfectly, in your opinion. Find out every detail that you can to help you develop a mental picture of the ‘perfect’ execution.

2. Practice with purpose.

Visualization is a deliberate process over which you have complete control. You will be most motivated, and will realise the best results if;

- a) You are aware of what motivates you. Think about what interested you about croquet in the first place and how that relates to your personal *values*. Doing things for the right reasons (in your opinion) is very important to outcomes.
- b) Your S.M.A.R.T. goals are as well defined with as much detail as you can think of. This is an important part of the visualization process to create a complete picture in your mind.
- c) Visualizing your technique can be done at almost any time but incorporate visualization practice in your physical practice routines. Visualize the perfect shot – play the shot.
- d) Practice ‘being aware’ of your thoughts. When practising, take note of what you are thinking.
- e) When you catch yourself daydreaming, consider whether or not your inner dialogue is helping you toward your goal... it’s a good check on progress.

3. Engage your senses.

Effective visualization is about providing your body with the right information to act on. It is most responsive to what it can easily relate to – emotion over instruction.

For example, visualise;

- a) The feeling in your critical body points; a relaxed feeling in your shoulders through the swing. Body movement. The feeling in the back of your neck when your head is

pointed down looking at your ball. The feeling in your arms on the full follow through. The tension in your back, hips and legs.

- b) The feeling of hitting your ball in the middle. The feel of the impact. In a good shot, the feeling is quite effortless when you hit the ‘sweet spot’. There seems to be more power with less effort and the ball tends to travel straighter.
 - c) The sound of the shot. What it sounds like when my mallet strikes the ball. What hitting the target ball sounds like (It’s the sweetest sound!). Note: I practice getting familiar with that sound in roquet practice by deliberately keeping my head down until I hear my ball hit the target ball.
 - d) What the shot looks like. Run a video in your mind of your ball travelling from its current position to its target and beyond. In a roquet shot, I visualize where my ball will contact the target ball, which direction both balls will travel after contact and how far... it helps to avoid rushing the long lift target all the way into corner 4!!!
 - e) Practise visualizing in real time.
4. Incorporate visualization routines into your game.

Over time, deliberate purposeful visualization can become automatic – a habit. By the time you catch yourself doing this, you will from time to time have experienced the benefit of influencing your thoughts before you carry out the physical equivalent. Visualization can have a very positive effect on many aspects of your game, but those are for you to discover in what is an infinitely exciting journey of discovery. *Greg Bryant – April 2014*

For the unenlightened such as me (PMG), S.M.A.R.T goals stand for;

- Specific – answering the 6 w’s – Who, what, where, when, which, why
- Measurable – How much? How many? record and review
- Attainable – Breaking the goal down into progressive steps – the plan to attain the goal
- Realistic – the goal represents an objective that you are willing and able to work toward
- Timely – Grounded with a time frame for achievement

Croquet Questions and Answers

This is a new topic for the newsletter and if you have questions you would like to ask, CNZ will do its best to provide helpful answers. The first question to be considered by the Sports Development Officer, Greg Bryant is:

Dr Struth! Mallets n stuff: (for want of a better title)

I am being encouraged to bring my hands to the top of my mallet. I do not feel comfortable holding it at the top and I prefer to have my hands separated. Can you advise me on this please?

At any level of the game, the most critical technique issue is *comfort*. It is accepted that the most accurate techniques involve a pendulum momentum of roughly equal effort from both arms that are working in unison... in the same direction, the result being a reasonably effortless swing from your shoulders *through* the centre of your ball.

It is not uncommon, especially for those that are new to croquet, to have hands well separated and feet wide apart (more than a foot or so). It is after all, the most effective way of getting the job done

initially without causing ankle or lawn damage. The downside is;

- The tendency for the bottom hand to ‘take over’ commanding strength and direction with the top hand going along for the ride, or worse, staying where it is or moving backward toward the body in the forward swing. (more of a ‘flick’ than a swing)
- Being too bent over, giving your arms less room to swing through from the shoulders.
- To compensate bending over, feet too far apart (more than a foot or so) to stay balanced.

Ultimately, these issues will affect consistent accuracy. As players develop their style and ability, and the need to become more consistently accurate, they will tend to move their hands closer to the top of the shaft and bring their feet closer together. In effect, standing more upright and swinging from their shoulders, relying more on the smooth pendulum swing of the mallet and less on their bottom hand to do the work.

Have a coach watch some shots for you. Don’t worry too much about accuracy at this stage. Check to see if both hands are moving forward by about the same amount during the swing to the end of the follow through. Then do another series of shots trying to *feel* your arms and shoulders. Are they working/moving evenly and in unison? Over the course of a season, try several series of 10 – 20 shots at a target ball 3 yards away, maintaining your focus on these same points. If you feel the need to stand more upright as you progress, (a little bit at a time), do so. Above all, have fun with your croquet and don’t sweat the little things too much.

Australia reads our newsletter!

We've had correspondence from a couple of Australian clubs regarding information provided in Croquet Matters. One club asked the Sport Development Officer for more info on our Schools programme. Another asked about the specific work the SDO had done with several of the clubs noted in Croquet Matters.

Interesting to note that in the latest issue of the Australian Magazine, there is a comment that they are considering appointing a Sport Development Officer role over there.

CORRECTION to March Croquet Matters

(With apologies to all concerned)

Just a couple of corrections in the March "Croquet Matters".

1. Sam Treloar and Hemi were noted as coming from Havelock North. They are both members of Thames Valley Assn, Hemi belonging to Morrinsville Club and Sam to Kereone, and both attending St Paul's Collegiate in Hamilton.
2. Hemi's name is McLaren-Mellars (not the other way round).

Croquet Matters was prepared by the Executive Director and Sport Development Officer and Pamela George