

Running Hoops

The Newsletter of Kenilworth Croquet



Club Mark

March 2026

Contents

Editorial.....1

Club News

Croquet Gazette.....2

Trifold Leaflets.....3

Winter Maintenance.....4

One Day in March.....5

Other News

Edith Cheung.....6

Irene Rogers.....7

Letter from America.....7

Gazette Snippets.....9

After the final edition of Running Hoops 2025 was published in October, I was astonished when a few people maintained that they had read all 29 pages of the magazine. Quite a feat!

Congratulations to those faithful followers, but I hasten to assure you that this offering will not come anywhere near the October marathon. This year, I hope to make Running Hoops a shorter, and probably more frequent, newsletter.

So I am delighted to tell you that this March issue is only nine pages long, and the Presentation Dinner will wait until the next issue!

It has been a very strange winter, and it's difficult to remember when the last season ended and when this 2026 season began. With the improvements in the condition of the lawns, combined with the variances of the winter weather, it has been possible to play almost every week throughout the winter, with only one week in February when both lawns were closed officially, due to the torrential rain we had experienced. It has allowed members to play croquet and socialise regularly, and when the days became too cold for

play, to retreat to the warmth of the main clubhouse for hot drinks and snacks. And then came one remarkable day on Monday, 2nd of March, when the sun and the warmth brought out the crowds and it felt like an unofficial opening of the season.



So, in what I would call this 'Winter edition', there was still lots to write about, because, for some of our leaders, the work didn't stop, and we have reports from Nick and Adrian. Then there was much to celebrate thanks to Ian and Lynne and all involved in gaining our Silver Club Mark, which has been well publicised in the press.

But apart from Club news, what delights me as much as anything, is to hear from previous members who have kept in touch after moving away to live in new areas. Edith Cheung moved to live in Scotland, but keeps in touch with Adrian and me from time to time, and you can catch up with her news on p6.

We also had a long letter from Irene Rogers, who was a very active member of our club for many years, when she heard of the loss of Nigel. Irene played both codes of the game, GC and AC, and was proficient in both. She was well-known for her willingness to coach new players, for which I was grateful. Irene moved to Wales and you can read her entertaining letter on p8.

These are followed by another fascinating Letter from America, where our friends who spend their winters there, have written of some astonishing experiences beyond their world of croquet.

And finally to all these busy members who have taken the time to write the pages of this newsletter, and to Ian, waiting to distribute it, I extend my gratitude. I hope you enjoy reading it.

Elizabeth

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

ON-COURT MEMORY

Trying to respond to the challenge in your August Welcome with, probably, my favourite on-court memory. It loosely follows the series on oldest, youngest, hairiest (?) member.

They do things a little differently at Sarasota (Florida) County Croquet Club, and the sumptuous spread after the Tuesday afternoon friendly sessions brings onto the lawn some who would otherwise have retired long ago. At one of these sessions, I was paired with one such lady, and we were doing

quite well until she possibly (OK, probably) hit a crush shot. I knew that the opposing, younger, lady could be over-competitive, but, on this occasion, she was very restrained, and let my partner off with "... but just be aware that you will be faulted if you do that in a tournament." My partner's reply was priceless - "my dear, I'm 92, and just happy to be standing!"

Mervyn Harvey, Kenilworth (and Sarasota)

Mervyn Harvey



CLUB MARK ACCREDITATION

KENILWORTH IS AWARDED THE FIRST CLUB MARK

By Beatrice McGlen
Sports Development Committee, Croquet England

The croquet section of Kenilworth Tennis, Squash and Croquet Club (KTSCC) became the first club to achieve Croquet England's Club Mark status when it was accredited with Silver Standard in September. The club has a strategy to:

- be seen as a thriving, welcoming croquet community known for excellent play, superb lawns, and a spirit of inclusivity that inspires new generations.
- grow the game by welcoming players of all ages and abilities.
- find more ways to be family friendly.
- strive for continuous development of competitive teams that succeed regionally.
- maintain first-class facilities for play and events.
- further promote croquet through more community engagement and showcase events.
- secure long-term sustainability through sound finances and alignment with club strategy.

Croquet England is keen to recognise ambitious clubs that provide an enjoyable, safe and fulfilling space for all participants to enjoy playing croquet and to help them grow and develop as well-managed, successful clubs that are known in their local communities. The Club Mark for Croquet has been developed to provide such recognition.



Ian Robertson and Lynne Breedon

Continued on page 12

Ian Robertson and Lynne Breedon

AND MORE RECOGNITION FOR OUR CLUB: ADRIAN MORRIS

Most of you will be aware of Adrian's trifold leaflets available in the club, as a guide to the Rules of Golf Croquet and the Laws of Association Croquet.

A new version of the GC Trifold is now available in the Golf Croquet page of Croquet England's Website under the name – 'GC Rules Morris Trifold', a simplified guide to the key rules, using the link: [Golf Croquet](#), and under the 'How to Play' heading.

I asked Adrian how this had been achieved and he explained:

"I spotted a Facebook group entitled 'GC Rules Training' and thought my trifold may be of use to them. Before I offered it, I thought I ought to check with the relevant Croquet authorities.



They liked the idea, but had views on some changes they would require. This started a series of exchanges with the Rules Committee of the World Croquet Federation and has kept me busy over the winter. I mainly dealt with Ian Shore from this Committee who is also the head of the High Wycombe Croquet Academy, and I have to thank him for his helpful suggestions.

There were errors in my original, some more serious than others. For example, I had used the term 'lawn' when I should have used 'court'. (The area inside the boundary is the court within the area of lawn!)

I was also not allowed to refer to the "4mm rule" as that was not part of the official WCF Rules but an appendix in the Croquet England version of the rules.

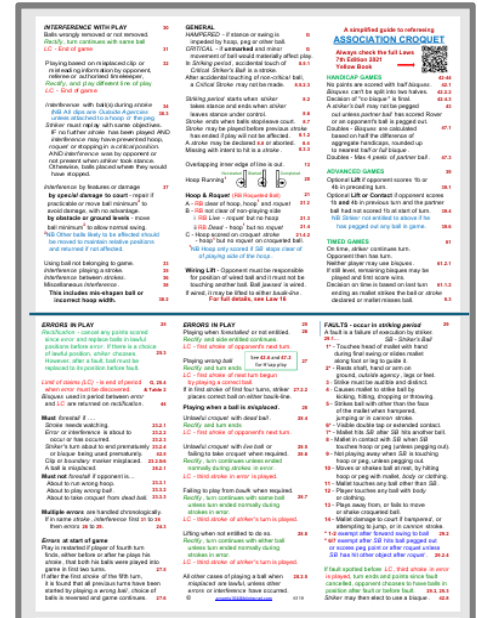
After many tweaks, the WCF Rules Committee accepted the leaflet and I am honoured that it is now offered as a guide to help aspiring referees and, indeed, any player interested in the rules of GC."

We shall be printing copies of this trifold for the pavilion, but in the meantime, copies can be printed from the Croquet England website or from the West Midlands Federation site –

[The Rules of GC and Laws of AC – West Midlands Croquet Federation](#)



Also on this site (WMF) is the Association Croquet Version, but Adrian has no plans to make this an official document unless specifically requested to do so.



WINTER MAINTENANCE NICK HEGAN

Nick has been as busy as ever during the winter months, with two main projects.

First of all it was decided to replace the old noticeboards because the old ones were just old! One had succumbed to damp and the others were just a bit too small to be useful.



The new boards were purchased as they are, and fit quite well into the existing space.

The new noticeboards smarten up this wall of the club house.

The next project was to tackle the wooden companion seat which sits against the front wall of the pavilion. This bench was installed to commemorate former well-loved member of the club, Ray Clipson, who died a few years ago. He was a lovely 'old school' gentleman, kind and very knowledgeable about the game and also in terms of how to look after the lawns. In those days it was not unknown for members to start up the club lawn mower and give the lawn a nice set of new stripes before a crucial match! With his own perfect swing, Ray was always free with advice on how to improve your game, but never in a patronising manner.



Ray's 'bench' was looking tired with green mould and a coating of bird mess, which didn't make for a comfortable sitting experience. The joining 'table' attachment between the seats, had unfortunately started to rot, so they will come back as two separate chairs; however the brass plaque in Ray's honour will be on permanent display on one of them.



Both chairs were jet washed first, and two coats of preservative applied to help them get through many more wet winters. Some way of deterring birds from perching on the chairs, still to be decided, will also be fitted,

Ed: And on one of his visits to the club during the winter, Nick came across this wintry scene, and quickly took a lovely photograph of our club.

Thanks to Nick for all the work he does.

ONE REMARKABLE DAY IN MARCH!

Just as we were beginning to think that winter, the rain, the frost, the wind, would never end, along came March 2nd, 2026, and revived our faith, blew away the cobwebs and the despondency, and enticed more than 20 players to turn out for the Monday afternoon social session. And what an afternoon we had.



Lawn One was suddenly brought into commission to cope with the numbers, and the practice lawn was put to full use. Chairs were arranged outside the clubhouse, and members enjoyed their coffee breaks in the sun. The sky was picture-postcard blue, the sun never clouded over, and only the long shadows over the lawns gave a hint of the early date in the year.



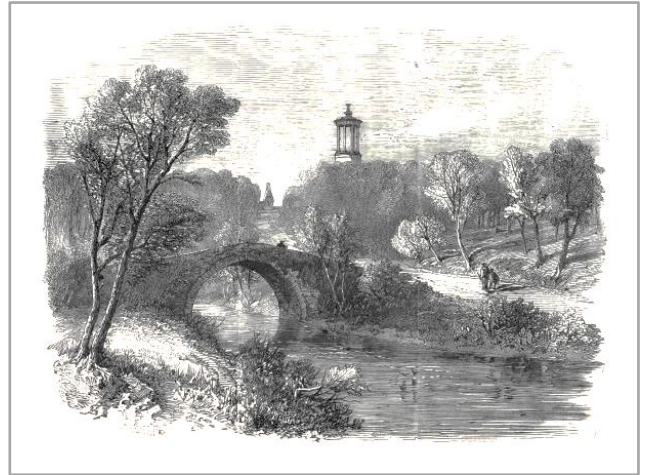
Long may it continue!

GREETINGS FROM EDITH CHEUNG!

Edith was a member of our club from 2023 to 2024. She had played Gateball in Hong Kong, a game similar to Croquet, and adapted very quickly to Golf Croquet and later on, also decided to take up Association Croquet. Sadly, all too soon, her son with whom she lived, decided to move to Prestwick in Scotland and she had to leave us.

Edith was very disappointed at having to give up croquet, until she learned to her amazement that her new home in Prestwick, Ayrshire, was only 2 miles from Auchincruive Croquet Club in the grounds of Oswald Hall; the only croquet club in the SW of Scotland and one of only five clubs North of the border. Edith likes to keep in touch with us, and WhatsApps Adrian and Elizabeth from time to time. It's always interesting to hear from past members, and especially to hear of them joining new clubs.

Edith has 4 children, living in Scotland, Germany and Hong Kong, so spends a large part of each year travelling to spend time with them, or having them to stay in Scotland, but last year, finally managed to join the Auchincruive Club and was delighted to find them a very friendly group. We wish Edith health and happiness in 2026, and a lovely summer of croquet in her new club.



Edith with her grandchildren, standing on the Auld Brig o' Doon, with the Burns Monument in the background, and the same view as it was 200 years ago.



The bridge as it is today, famous for its part in Burns' poem, Tam o' Shanter. After a riotous night in the pub, the drunken Tam was riding home on his horse, Meg, when he spotted witches dancing in Alloway's old church, and shouted out 'Weel done!' to an attractive young witch. The witches gave chase as he raced towards the Brig o' Doon, knowing that witches could not cross water. He only just made it to safety over the key stone of the bridge, except that the witches managed to catch hold of Meg's tail and pull it off, leaving her with scarcely a stump.

A MESSAGE FROM IRENE ROGERS

"I am a member of 2 croquet clubs; Monmouthshire and Garway (the latter is in England!!). Neither, sadly, are close to Kenilworth's standard of venue or play. The Monmouthshire - played on half tennis courts - had its own, unusual interpretation of AC, which caused a little bit of discomfort in the early days until a great, white hope arrived in the place. A former Welsh international, Will Prichard, who is expected to bring "proper" AC to the club, hopefully.



Garway Club

Garway, which involves a 20+ miles drive to and from, offers GC, on a half-sized lawn area on common land. Their premises is an old red telephone box repurposed as a mallets and hoops store. There is, however, a pub very close by. Very useful for after game socialising and the loo.

I can practise on the outfield of our nearest town's cricket ground, which is useful but an absolute no-go at the moment because the ground's saturated.

I am coming to Coventry in April and I hope to be able to fit in one of the sessions on a Thursday, so I look forward to seeing who will be around on that day.

Keep up your good work, and your enthusiasm for the game. Give my regards to the rest of the club, and I hope you will all have fun and success in the game this year.

All the best,
Irene."

LETTER FROM AMERICA

I thought I ought to start with a commentary on the political situation in the US, but the reality is that I know no more than you. In fact, whereas your views are influenced by UK broadcasters and journalists who try to tell it like it is, here, the views are polarised, and rarely have a factual base. Anyway, by the time you read this, everything may have changed.

But we do get a sense of how some of the President's policies affect the average person. Many Canadians, including some we know, refuse to set foot on US soil until there is a change of President. And last year, when the headlines were dominated much more by illegal immigration than "the E files" and the President's health, the concern we heard was "[if he gets rid of all the illegal immigrants,] who's going to cut my lawn?" The truth is: because illegal immigrants operate outside the tax system, they are prepared to work for less. And the individuals, who willingly employ them to do manual work, are the more wealthy, who tend to be Republican voters.

We do hear some interesting anecdotes, including ones about border control. We have long been aware that it is best to laugh at their jokes, and not come back with one of our own. So I reacted with amusement when a border officer looked at my passport and said, "Good to see you again Mervyn, and with a different woman this time". And when I get "You might want to take your shoes off", when going through security, I resist the temptation to respond, "If it's all the same to you, I'll keep them on". (NB Border security guards all brandish guns.) But it is now even more important to avoid saying the wrong thing. We have it on good authority that when someone gave an honest answer to a border control officer who asked an incoming visitor what they thought of Trump, he was banned from entering the country for the next five years.

Turning to croquet, an email exchange with ET (Ed) made me realise that many of you will be unaware of *Croquet Scores*, which is an excellent online "live" website of tournament results, big and small, worldwide. It was designed and written by an Australian called Tim Murphy, who made it very easy for the Directors of each tournament to set up the appropriate framework (usually block play, or knock-out) and enter the scores. The first event on the site dates back to February 2012.

CS GC Tournaments for 2025 - Croquet Scores

https://croquetscores.com/2025/gc

Croquet Scores

shoutout 2/2

What does this page say about "shoo

23-23 Feb	WA Florboard
23-23 Feb	WA Gosnells Championship Doubles
22-23 Feb	5th GC RCGLC Veicar Trophy (Reverse)
22-23 Feb	Forsyth Barr GC Teams Event
22-23 Feb	3rd GC RCGNSP Carnival Trophy
22-23 Feb	Speldhurst Levin
22-22 Feb	9th GC TGCC Social Trophy (Express; DG<1800)
22-22 Feb	Darling Downs GC Singles - Level Play
21-23 Feb	Sarasota County CC GC Shootout '25
21-21 Feb	Auckland - Takapuna Club - G C Silver Badge P/O's 9+ H/C

The system is also simple for the casual peruser to use. To see the scores, you select the year you are interested in, then either "All" or select from AC, GC, A6W (American 6 Wicket) and even RC (Ricochet). You then either scroll down through the list to find the event you are interested in (which is in date order) or "Ctrl F" to search for a word that doesn't appear often.

To get you started, go to GC and 2025, and then search for "Shootout" – the second of which is the SCCC (Sarasota County Croquet Club) tournament I ran last year, and in which Pauline participated. The "Recent" tab isn't very informative, and I have yet to find anything more than house rules under "Commentary". But when you get into subsequent tabs, you see everything you want to know.

And finally - normal practice at a Tournament is for the Director (TD) to welcome the players, tell them anything they need to know, and answer questions. For the welcome at an AC tournament I ran at SCCC in February, I wanted to stress the importance of not letting AC die out. The pages and pages of tournaments on *Croquet Scores* gave me a feel for the relative number of GC and AC events that have taken place all over the world. It was interesting to note that in 2015 they were about equal, in 2020 the number of AC events were about half the number of GC events, and in 2025 this had fallen to about one third. If you want to find out more about AC, come along to Adrian's sessions at 10:00 on Thursdays.



Author's name withheld, as the FBI get everywhere!

Interesting visitors to Sarasota Club from previous years:



An ibis dressed in his 'Whites' for the occasion, and a snake was interested in watching an American version of croquet, called 'A Snake in the Grass'.



FROM THE CROQUET GAZETTE February 2026

NEW HOLDER OF OLDEST COMPETITIVE FEMALE CROQUET PLAYER

According to the April 2025 issue of the Croquet Gazette, June Jury, (93 years and 107 days) a croquet player from Ramsgate, had become the first title holder of Oldest Competitive Croquet Player (female).

Jean Farguson joined Lodsworth Croquet Club in 2021 at the age of 95. With some coaching from club members and Croquet England experts Richard Carline and Stephen Mulliner, on 3rd August 2025, Jean played in the South East Croquet Federation's Carnival Day at Sussex County Club in Southwick. She also won Lodsworth's Vera Baker Trophy in October 2024 and the Golden Mallet in April 2025. Jean who is now 99 has been awarded the title and looks forward to continuing her croquet success in the New Year.

Monica Hill
Secretary, Lodsworth Croquet Club



As the print is so small, I will explain that the title described, has now passed from 93 year old June Jury, from Ramsgate, to 99 year old Jean Farguson of Lodsworth Croquet Club in West Sussex.

Jean is still competing: she won trophies in 2024 and 2025, and is looking forward to continuing her croquet success in 2026! What an achievement!

(Editor: Our next target?)

Lodsworth Croquet Club, West Sussex



Minty Clinch has been my favourite contributor to the Croquet Gazette since I first started to read this bi-monthly magazine, published by Croquet England. She was also a well-known travel and sports writer, as well as writing biographies of some film stars, including Burt Lancaster, Clint Eastwood and others.

An active lady, she loved skiing, riding, golf and croquet. Her comments in the Gazette were sharp and insightful, always interesting and regularly, highly entertaining.

I was very disappointed when I opened the first Gazette of 2026, February, and turned immediately to Minty's column, always near the start. I was puzzled by its omission, until I read her obituary later on. I, and many others, will miss her cheerful contributions.

OBITUARIES

MINTY CLINCH

02.08.1942 - 04.11.2025

By Peter Allan

I am sad to report that Minty Clinch passed away in hospital on 4th November 2025 at the age of 83, surrounded by friends and family.

Everyone reading the Gazette will be familiar with the writings of Minty, aka 'Hibiscus' (a pun on the term high bisquer). Minty joined Blewbury Croquet Club in the summer of 2019 as one of the 'Uffington Three', three women from the village of Uffington in Oxfordshire with a lovely view of the White Horse, who had played bridge and golf for many years and who decided to give croquet a try. I had known Minty for many years as a bridge player, sometimes as a partner, more often as an opponent, so I was not surprised to see Minty throw herself into croquet with great enthusiasm. She applied herself assiduously to learning the intricacies of AC, taking advantage of the coaching available at Blewbury and the Chiltern Croquet Academy, as well as travelling to courses further afield.

As is often the case with players who take up the sport in later years, Minty did play croquet in her youth, against her mother, until one day it became clear that for the first time Minty was going to win. Rather than lose, her mother threw down her mallet and walked off without a word. That was the last of their croquet, and there was no discussion of the incident. Minty did not forget it though – she never forgot when others' behaviour fell short.

Minty played in many tournaments, including the Greek Open Championship in 2023 (as reported in issue 406 of the Gazette). Win or lose, she always enjoyed playing and learning from more experienced opponents. Her most successful competition was probably being runner up to Aston Wade in the Southern Croquet Federation's AC champion of champions competition in the spring of 2022.

A photograph of Minty Clinch, an elderly woman with short grey hair, wearing a grey sweater over a blue collared shirt. She is sitting in a red chair, holding a small glass.

Percival Mallets

A logo for Percival Mallets, featuring a stylized croquet mallet and the text 'Percival Mallets'.
