



Cammeray Croquet Club



NEWSLETTER December 2010

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

From the President

October and November have been frustrating months here at Cammeray. After a first-class renovation of the lawns by our new green keeper, Tim Favoloro, there followed a long period of rain with flooding making the lawns unplayable.

Drainage or, rather, the lack of it, is certainly the major problem that we face. Unfortunately, the remedy is expensive – probably over \$100,000 – with the added inconvenience of having the lawns out of action for a lengthy period.

Not all is gloom however; our strip of native plants enjoyed the rain; they have had a trim too. The flowering gums and the Tibuchina are budding up nicely and should give us a good show over the summer and autumn.

One item of interest relates to our newly installed solar panels. The first quarterly account for electricity since the installation includes a credit of \$246 for the electricity generated from the panels.

Our players have again distinguished themselves in the State competitions the most recent of these being the Silver Handicap Singles won by Barbara MacDonald. This extends a very dominant performance this year by our players at all handicap levels.

With the start of daylight saving, we have reintroduced the Monday social games followed by wine and cheese. A number of events have also been organised for late afternoon and evening play under lights. Do have a look at these in the Calendar and join in when you can.

Finally, I warmly welcome Rosemary Graham as a new member of the Club. Rosemary will be known to some of you as a top player and State representative. She has long experience in the catering industry and will be of great help to me in organising the Christmas Party on 11th December.

Christmas Party

The annual party will be held on Saturday 11th December at 12 for 12.30 pm.

Now that we have a good barbecue with plate, grill, wok burner and lid, we will be able to do more than was possible in earlier years. We are therefore raising our sights to include more hot food – turkey and fish – in addition to our normal barbecue fare. We will cater for the vegetarian also; please indicate this preference with a “V” after your name on the list on the table just inside the door of the clubhouse.

Our party is always a generous spread as well as a social occasion where we can meet and talk with other members, an opportunity much needed in our fairly solitary one-to-one sport.

The fee of \$25 covers food and drink. Please put your name on the list in the clubhouse, put your \$25 in an envelope with your name on the front, and put the envelope in the locked box near the kitchen.; we would appreciate payment in advance as this helps our budgeting.



Neil Hartley
President and Social Co-ordinator

Cammeray Tournaments

1. Open Handicap

All games have been played in Block A of this competition, with Mike Hughes undefeated as winner of the block. There are still two games to be played in Block B. Barbara McDonald has played all her games, with two wins and one loss, and is hoping for the results in the remaining two games to go the right way so that she can win the block. Barbara has been involved in two very exciting games, each being decided by a golden hoop. She lost 23-22 to Neil Hartley, and beat Neil Hardie 24-23. It is expected that all games will be completed in time to play the final on Friday 10 December, probably at 10 am.

2. Summertime Tournament

Organising games for this tournament has proved to be something of a challenge, with competitors being overseas, involved in HSC marking or having to work. Unfortunately, Jake Henzler has withdrawn because of HSC marking commitments, leaving a field of five. Many games have been played, and it is expected that the final will be played on Friday 10 December, at the same time as the Open Handicap final.

3. Platinum Invitation Evenings

The first platinum invitation evening was held on Thursday night 18th November. It was a very pleasant occasion, with wine and cheese before play. Any Cammeray members who are gold, platinum or better are welcome to come to the next one on Thursday 9th December at 6.30 p.m. The cost is \$7.

Croquet NSW Events

Congratulations to Barbara McDonald on winning the NSW Silver Handicap Singles event played at Tempe. Barbara needed to win her last game against Lesley Fransen by at least 8 hoops to take the title, and used her bisques well to win by 10. Lesley came second in the event. David Stanton, as the saying goes, "also played".

Australian Croquet Association Events

1. ACA Bronze Medal

The winner of this event represents New South Wales in the ACA Gold Medal. Peter Landrebe played in the event this year, an event which he won in 2009. This year he finished second, beaten on hoop differences by Jim Nicholls. Well done, Peter.

2. Australian Open Singles

41 players have just completed play in the Australian Open Singles, at ACA Headquarters, Cairnlea, Victoria, five of them from Cammeray:

- Rosemary Graham was seeded 5th in Block C, and won 4 of her 7 games. She beat two players ranked ahead of her and finished 4th in the block. Rosemary went on to lose in round 1 of the knockout, after which she won the first two rounds of the "Y" knockout and lost in the semi-final.
- Stephen Howes was seeded 8th in Block C, won one game (against a higher-ranked player) and finished 8th. He went on to win 3 of his 6 games in the Plate.
- Mike Hughes was seeded 7th in Block C, and won 5 of his 7 games. He beat four players ranked ahead of him, including the top two seeds, and finished 3rd in the block. He won his first knockout match, but lost to tournament second seed Greg Fletcher in the second round. He beat Alan Walsh in the first round of the "Z" knockout, and lost to Malcolm Fletcher in the semi-final. Mike reduced his handicap from 0.5 to 0 as a result of the week's croquet.
- Peter Landrebe was top seed in Block E, and won 6 of his 7 games to finish 1st in the block. He won the first three rounds of the knockout to get to the semi-final, where he played outstanding croquet to beat tournament favourite Robert Fletcher 3 games to 2. Unfortunately, Peter lost the final 3 games to 1 to Jenny Clarke of New Zealand, after winning the first game convincingly and being in a very good position in game 2.
- Alan Walsh was seeded 4th in Block B, and won 6 of his 8 games, including beating all three players seeded above him, to finish 2nd in the block. He won his first knockout match, then lost to Kevin Beard in round 2. He then played Mike Hughes in the "Z" knockout, losing to him 2 games to 1.

All in all, a great result for Cammeray members, all of whom either met or exceeded expectations in block play. Particular congratulations to Peter Landrebe on making it to the final, giving him 22 games of croquet in six days.

Closure of the Anzac Memorial Club

The North Sydney Anzac Memorial Club is closing in December (they are combining with Kirribilli RSL), and North Sydney Council has asked local residents for their views on what should be done with the site. The Council has put forward six possible options including:

- mothball the site until funds for development become available
- sell the site and use the funds to develop and maintain sporting facilities in North Sydney
- sell 2/3 of the site, and use the money to build and maintain an indoor sports and community facility on the other third
- develop the site as a park (but with no funds for maintenance)

The preferred option of the Council is the second – sell the site and use the money to support sporting facilities. It is also the preferred option for Cammeray Croquet Club.

There were several speakers at the public meeting asking for the site to be used for primary school children, aged care facilities, and other uses. It would help the Council (and our club) if club members who are North Sydney residents could let the Council know that they support the second option.

Beginner Refresher Lessons

Neil Hardie will hold three lessons for beginners (and for bronze players who would like some revision) on Tuesday afternoons in December from 3 pm to 4 pm. Dates are December 7, 14 and 21. The lessons will cover a revision of the basics of shots, and an introduction to bronze-level tactics. Contact Neil on 9958-7261 or [Error! Hyperlink reference not valid.](#) for further information.

Photographs in the Newsletter

It has not been my practice to acknowledge the source of photographs used in the newsletter in the past, and it has been drawn to my attention by Judy Hammond that “these days, recognising and naming the original writer/photographer is increasingly important, as copying (and passing it off as the copier's own original work) is so easy using computers and the internet. Newspapers, eg SMH, name photographers, and it seems to me that newsletters, like Cammeray Croquet Newsletter, should also do so, to ensure there is no ambiguity about where you acquire your information from.”

I am happy to acknowledge Judy as the source of the photographs in the November newsletter, showing children enjoying themselves at the North Sydney Council Children's Festival. Most of the other photographs I have used in the last year or so have been taken by Neil Hardie, some by Michelle Nixon, and some I have taken myself. If other members have provided photographs and I have not acknowledged you, I apologise for the oversight.

Using Bisques

Recent games in the Open Handicap and the Summertime Tournament have demonstrated that bisques are not always used wisely or to good effect. The following extract from “Complete Croquet” by James Hawkins (in the Club library) sets out some of the basics of handicap play, including advice about using bisques:

“How Handicaps Work

If you play at club level, you will receive a handicap. Beginners start with a handicap of 24 and more experienced players have a lower one. The higher-handicapped player receives a number of extra turns, or *bisques*, calculated as the difference between the two players' handicaps. So, a 29-handicap playing a 5-handicap would receive 15 bisques. A tally of these is usually kept by placing white sticks in the ground beside the lawn.

There are a number of important things to note:

- A bisque is an extra turn, not just an extra stroke. The striker can use a bisque to roquet and croquet each of the other balls, and to score hoops as in a normal turn.
- Bisques can only ever be taken at the end of a striker's turn. For example, I might opt to play my normal turn so that Red lands close to a faraway ball; my turn would normally end, but I can then use a bisque to make the roquet, and gain the subsequent bonus shots.
- Bisques may be taken in succession. For example, a player might play their normal turn, then take a bisque to use the other three balls, then take a second or third bisque to use the other three balls again.

- Sometimes *half-bisques* are used. A half-bisque is one where the other three balls may be used, but no points may be scored for any ball. The half-bisque is most useful for tidying up an awkward position, or using in conjunction with a full bisque.

Using Bisques

It is difficult to reduce the essence of bisque-taking to a simple formula. There are times in a game when it is a good idea to take bisques, and times when it is not productive..... Bisques are at their most powerful if used together, one after the other. Try to use your standard turn to get control of the game, a first bisque to set up a break, and a second bisque to start scoring.

Using a Bisque Mid-Break

Maybe your opponent has made an error, and handed you a perfect set-up.....You are on the lawn, Red and Yellow are together at hoop 1, Black is in the middle and Blue is at hoop 2.....You hit Red to roquet Yellow, and approach the hoop with Red. All is well, but then you mishit Red, it rattles in the hoop, and sticks where it is without going through. Your turn ends, and all for the sake of a ball which has landed an inch short of where you wanted it. Take a bisque, tap Red through, and carry on with the break.

Continuing with this turn, you roquet Yellow, and send it to hoop 3. Red lands 6 feet from Black, and you have a ball at each of your next two hoops. You play your shot at Black, but you miss and finish 6 feet on the far side of Black. For the use of one bisque, you can hit Black and carry on as before. Do it. Everything is set up, and you have an ideal scoring opportunity.

That can, of course, go wrong. If you have missed one 6-footer, you can miss another, and find yourself having to take another bisque, and maybe even a third. Windscreen-wiping – moving back and forth without making the vital roquet – happens to every player as he is learning the game, and it is something you will grow to recognise. You have chosen to take a bisque, and it was the right decision. One, two or even three vital misses are disheartening, but the decision to carry on with the break was still the correct one. There are times when you will miss successive roquets, but your handicap should have been set at a level to give you plenty of bisques for dealing with this sort of error. Just take a deep breath, concentrate, and make sure of the roquet.

So, you have regained control. You have now roqueted Black (your pivot ball) and you have found yourself at hoop 2 with Blue. You roquet Blue, approach the hoop, and over-hit the shot. You have lost position, and are faced with an un-runnable hoop. Red is 3 inches away from where you want it, but you have still got one more stroke before your turn ends, when you need to decide whether or not to use another bisque.

One obvious thing to do is tap Red 3 inches back into position, then take the bisque, score the hoop. And everything is back to normal. Wait just a moment though; there is a better option. Instead of using a bisque just to carry on with what you already have, you can use it to improve the other balls. You have three options:

- A use your last shot to tap Red into position at the hoop, and take the bisque to score
- B play your last shot to the far side of Blue, take the bisque, and have a second attempt at a hoop approach
- C play your last shot to Black or Yellow, use the bisque to improve the position of one or both of these. Before returning to Blue, scoring, and carrying on with a better break than before.

The first option is generally a bad idea....Tapping a ball a tiny distance is one of the hardest things to judge in croquet, even for the most experienced player. You are inviting trouble if you rely on one difficult shot rather than on three easy ones.

The second option is much better. You are giving yourself the opportunity of another rush, another approach and another hoop shot. This should give you a much better chance of success.

You should never lose sight of the third option. Maybe your set-up is perfect already, in which case there is no need to worry. However, maybe Yellow is a long way from hoop 3, or maybe Black has been left in a position which is not ideal. In this case, play your last shot close to Yellow, giving yourself a useful rush to hoop 3. Take the bisque, and improve Yellow's position. Now you have the option of tidying up Black before returning to Blue at hoop 2. All the balls are tidied up for one bisque, and you can carry on with the break."

Chapter 9 of "Complete Croquet" goes on to discuss such things as 'Using a Bisque to Get Control' and 'Setting Up for One Bisque' (this section gives 11 useful rules for using bisques), 'Ending the Break', 'Half-Bisques', 'Non-Break Bisques', 'Not Having Bisques', 'The Last Bisque' and 'Giving Bisques', all of which are worth studying if you want to improve your handicap play.

Crossword

This month's crossword does not have any clues, but I have given you all the answers. Each answer is the name of a croquet club affiliated with Croquet NSW. Have fun fitting them all in to the grid on the next page.



Cammeray Croquet Club



PROGRAM: December 2010

	8-4.5	9-10	10-11	11-12	12-1	1-2	2-3	3-4	4-5	5-6	6-7	7-8	8-9	9-9.30
Wednesday 1	Lawn mowing												Bronze games	
Thursday 2							Bronze games							
Friday 3		Handicap games (all grades)					Private hire					Golf croquet (all welcome)		
Saturday 4				Croquet NSW Xmas lunch			Bronze games							
Sunday 5			Golf Croquet (Denis Rolles' group)											
Monday 6		Games for all grades					Bronze games			Twilight games		Wine & cheese...		
Tuesday 7		Gold/Platinum games					Beginner games & refresher coaching					Summertime t'ment <1 lawn>		
Wednesday 8	Lawn mowing		Summertime t'ment <1 lawn>										Bronze games	
Thursday 9							Bronze games						Gold/Platinum Invitation games	
Friday 10		Finals of Open Handicap & Summertime Tournament						Private hire						
Saturday 11				Christmas Party										
Sunday 12			Golf Croquet (Lyndey Milan's group)					Private hire						
Monday 13		Games for all grades					Bronze games			Twilight games		Wine & cheese...		
Tuesday 14		Gold/Platinum games					Beginner games & refresher coaching							
Wednesday 15	Lawn mowing							Private hire					Bronze games	
Thursday 16							Bronze games						Gold/Platinum Invitation games	
Friday 17		Handicap games (all grades)						Private hire						
Saturday 18	Committee meeting						Bronze games							
Sunday 19			Golf Croquet (all welcome)											
Monday 20		Games for all grades					Bronze games			Twilight games		Wine & cheese...		
Tuesday 21		Gold/Platinum games					Beginner games & refresher coaching							
Wednesday 22	Lawn mowing							Private hire					Bronze games	
Thursday 23							Bronze games							
Friday 24		Handicap games (all grades)												
Saturday 25														
Sunday 26								Golf Croquet <1 lawn> (Jake Henzler's group)						
Monday 27		Games for all grades					Bronze games			Twilight games		Wine & cheese...		
Tuesday 28		Gold/Platinum games					Beginner games							
Wednesday 29	Lawn mowing												Bronze games	
Thursday 30							Bronze games							
Friday 31		Handicap games (all grades)												

- Lawns available for independent play
- Bronze games
- Tournaments
- Wine & cheese (lawns available)
- Games for all grades
- Gold/Platinum games
- Golf croquet
- Committee meeting (lawns available)
- Coaching Sessions/Beginner games
- Private hire
- Lawn mowing/maintenance