



# Running Hoops

The Newsletter of Kenilworth Croquet

September 2018

Welcome to this edition of the KCC newsletter. I have used a fairly basic layout for my first production as editor. If you would like a particular style or format, just let me know.

I must thank Cliff Daniel and Philip Wood who have taken the time to produce articles for this newsletter – very much appreciated. I hope it encourages the rest of you to put pen to paper or fingers to Word Documents. Articles don't have to be complicated or long, a couple of paragraphs about anything croquet will do but, if using email, please send any contributions as attachments to it. I don't have the facility to download an article from the main body of a letter, instead, I have to transcribe it then process it.

I must also thank the members who sent very nice emails to me when they knew I was taking on the Running Hoops editorship. Again, very much appreciated. I hope the newsletter lives up to your expectations.

Irene Rogers

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## Editorial (There has to be one!)

"Chicken Croquet" the YouTube caption said; my attention was caught, was it like the croquet in Disney's "Alice in Wonderland" where the mallets are cartoon, pink flamingos, or was it croquet with real chickens? If so, how do you get your chicken through the hoop? Hopefully not with the firm application of mallet to feathered rump! Maybe, it referred to the other meaning of "chicken" and a daring opponent was allowed to step into the path of your struck ball and deflect it with his/her body. (Definitely not to be tried in front of the big hitters unless you wanted to be spending time in A & E!).

I clicked on to the YouTube site and found it was a misspelling of "Chicken Croquettes"! That's the trouble with YouTube productions; what with croquettes and crochet, you have to be prepared to sift the pebbles from the gold nuggets, and there are some. I particularly liked the "Game 1. Golf Croquet World Championships Final" between Bamford and Nasr. It was played in Cairo – capital of, apparently, the best Croquet playing nation in the world. The two players spent most of their time smacking (hitting is too mild a word in these circumstances!) their opponent's balls off the lawn so that most play was done from the boundary lines.

I also liked the "Virtually Unhittable Leaves in USCA 6 Wicket (hoops, to us) Croquet". It's a well-presented animation of strike play in this Association Croquet match showing the 4-ball breaks and other tactics.

Other animations include the "Tom and Jerry play Croquet show" showing their typically violent take on their subject – definitely not an educational production – but obviously professionally well-presented, which, sadly, cannot be applied to most of the other productions on YouTube. There's

amateur and there's amateur! Most feature earnest young people (mostly American) armed with bent wire, a garden croquet set, a "backyard" full of tussocky grass, and a video-camera'd friend with shaking hands! They mean well but, if you take the time to search, there are better amateur and semi-amateur educational productions available even though their audio and visual quality may sometimes leave much to be desired.

If you feel that you need a little extra armchair coaching then taking the time to find the better quality videos on YouTube may be of use to you, and, of course, there are the books and DVDs available in our pavilion to be borrowed but, personally, I believe that playing against more experienced and lower handicapped players who are prepared to share their knowledge with you is the best form of casual, additional coaching even though you may not appreciate it at the time!

**Irene Rogers**

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**EARDISLEY v KENILWORTH**

**West Midlands Federation Association Game on TUESDAY 26 JUNE 2018**

**Eardisley - Roy Knowles (handicap 8), Tony Johnston (10), and Tom Tibbits (10)**

**Kenilworth - Cliff Daniel (5), Philip Wood (5), and Alan Richardson (8)**



The village of Eardisley is located on the Welsh border and has a small croquet club venturing into the West Midlands League. The journey for us was a full 2 hours but the rural location and the warm welcome we received made the day extremely enjoyable, even though we lost the match 1-6!

For this match, with just one lawn available, the format was adjusted to comprise 3 rounds of 18 point games lasting 2 hours with each round having one singles and one doubles.

In Round 1 Cliff played Roy who squandered his 2 bisques quite early in the game. Cliff soon became comfortable on the lawn, approaching several hoops with confidence, and steadily built up a commanding lead. When time was called Roy was faced with all of the balls well separated and the 6 hoop margin clearly decisive and he lost 7-13.

In the doubles game Alan and Philip each struggled to engineer a decent break and eventually lost a low scoring game by the margin of 3-8.

In Round 2 Alan played with Cliff and started well, especially with making roquets. However Cliff lost confidence with his own roquets and the home pair won comfortably 13-4, not even using their 2 bisques!

Philip's singles game was considerably closer and, for some time, thanks to one particular lengthy break, he held the lead. His opponent Tony rallied well and when time was called the score was 10 – 10. Philip had one chance for the 'golden hoop' but missed the medium length roquet and Tony made no mistake as he ran the decisive hoop.

In Round 3 Philip was paired with Cliff to play the game randomly chosen to be the 'two pointer' and, conceding 2.5 bisques, prospects did not look good. Cliff again wasted short roquet opportunities. Philip had great success with his 'pass rolls', which were noted by the opponents, but was let down by poor 'rushes' and found it difficult to approach hoops and the home pair won comfortably 10 – 4.

In the singles game Alan played doggedly to create a promising lead but his opponent Tom cagily preserved his bisques and eventually won 8-4.

All of the 6 games were decided on time possibly due to the fast pace of the lawn but Eardisley clearly deserved their victory of 6-1.

### Cliff Daniel

**Cliff adds: As we lost all our League matches this year, the only way is Up! And we know we have, at least 1 really promising new AC player on the horizon...not difficult to identify! So let us look forward with optimism to 2019!**

#### Final WMF Association Croquet League Table as at 11<sup>th</sup> September 2018

<u>Club</u>	<u>Matches</u>			<u>Match</u>		<u>Points</u>	<u>League</u>	<u>League</u>
	<u>Played</u>	<u>Won</u>	<u>Lost</u>	<u>For</u>	<u>Against</u>	<u>Net</u>	<u>Points</u>	<u>Position</u>
Broadwas	4**	3	1	19	9	+10	17**	1st
Church Stretton	5	3	2	20	15	+5	14	3rd
Eardisley	4***	3	1	19	9	+10	15***	2nd
Edgbaston	3	2	1	11	10	+1	7	5th
Kenilworth	5	0	5	8	27	-19	0	6th
Shrewsbury	5	2	3	14	21	-7	10	4 <sup>th</sup>

*If you really want to know how the points are calculated and what all the asterisks are all about, I will insert the details in the next newsletter. Irene.)*

### **31/8/2018 Sapcote Rules at Kenilworth.**

With a flash of cherry red and a glimmer of grey, Alan Worrall's and Robert Zara's brand new mallets (a mere 1 day old in Robert's case!) were unsheathed and readied to be metaphorically bloodied in the friendly GC competition with Sapcote's band of warriors.

Sapcote's players had some fitness problems but they were keen to play so the game organiser, Pauline Harvey, arranged for their team to be augmented by Ken 1 and Ken 2 (Alan Worrall and Irene Rogers respectively).

Kenilworth's team consisted of Lynne Breedon, Tim Leggatt, Mike Cox, David Green, Robert Zara and Stella Gill.

Play could proceed at a fairly leisurely pace as the games were of 40 minutes' duration, but there's leisurely and leisurely and when one hoop (number four) with the primaries took David Green and Lynne Breedon v Kens 1 and 2, nearly 20 minutes, I'm almost certain I could hear snores from Mike, Robert and their Sapcote opponents as they lolled with the secondaries on the bench by the tennis courts.

Croquet brings out the Victor Meldrew in all of us: cries of disbelief as a hoop is missed from a straight line distance of 2 feet; or as the most gentle of gentle taps sends the ball hurtling past the hoop, off your lawn and onto the next; muted but murderous muttering as your partner dislodges your skilfully (not by luck, honest!) and immaculately placed ball, and wails of despair as you send your ball from one hoop to the next to a perfect hoop running position just as the whistle to end the game sounds. No names, no pack drill – but all this happened in this game and we can all empathise.

Everyone enjoyed themselves: the weather was fine and sunny; the lawns are greening nicely and providing variable speed challenges and play proceeded smoothly thanks to the efforts of the organisers, David and Lynne, with help from Diane Fitch, Cliff Daniel and Pat from Sapcote. As usual, everyone helped in the clearing up of the lawns and club house - and Daisy the dog provided light relief.

The teams were evenly matched but there has to be a result that was: Sapcote 5, Kenilworth 3, and 1 game drawn.

**Irene Rogers.**

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## WMF GC Match, Kenilworth vs Broadwas, September 13<sup>th</sup> 2018.

The Kenilworth GC team of 4 hosted Broadwas in the last match of the season. Both teams had already won all their previous 4 League matches. We needed to win by at least a margin of 4 games to win the League since Broadwas had won their 4 earlier matches by bigger margins than we had, thereby gaining more League bonus points. Team captain, Philip Wood, was unable to play due to recovering from a strained back; Philip Mander (5) took his place and did very well. Also in our team were Adrian Morris (1), Mervyn Harvey (2) and Pauline Harvey (3). In contrast, the Broadwas team had handicaps of -1, 0, 1, and 2.



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In the 4 rounds of singles, we started very well, winning 6 games out of 8 in the first 2 rounds: In Round 1, Philip was 3 – 5 down, recovered to 6 – all, and then ran the 13<sup>th</sup> hoop backwards from 22 yards to gain a winning advantage. In Round 2, Pauline won from 4 – 6 down, and Mervyn made an extremely angled 11<sup>th</sup> hoop without which he probably would have lost. In Round 3, we lost 1 – 3 as they probably got used to the lawns. Lawn 2 was tricky with its fast and dry areas after the dry summer. Round 4 games went 2 – 2. Adrian was fortunate after his opponent committed a foul which gave him 2 attempts to clear a ball from in front of the 13<sup>th</sup> hoop. He did this with his second attempt and went on to win the hoop. This left Kenilworth 9 – 7 up on games.

We needed to win either of the 2 doubles games at the end to win the match, but to win the League, we needed to win both the doubles – sadly we lost both.

This was a tremendous match (speaking as the non-playing captain); the weather was good and I really enjoyed spectating.

The Broadwas team were very appreciative and stayed a considerable time for tea, cakes and a chat afterwards. Adrian won 3 games, and the others won 2 games each.

### Philip Wood.

### The WMF Golf Croquet Final League Table:

1. Broadwas	21 points
2. Kenilworth	16 points
3. Edgbaston	10 points
4. Shrewsbury	9 points
5. Himley	7 points
6. Eardisley	5 points

## **Kenilworth Festival GC Tournament Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> September 2018.**

Eight pairs competed, playing all-play-all, each game to only 6 points. Two pairs came from Edgebaston, 1 from Ashby, 2 from Kenilworth and 3 from Northampton.

The handicaps of a pair had to add up to at least 8, the idea being that a low handicap player could guide a high handicap player in tactics etc.

In spite of the forecast, we had a dry and pleasantly mild day. Mervyn Harvey and Philip Mander emerged the winners with 7 games out of 7. Two pairs from Northampton came = 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Edgbaston produced 2 pairs with very high handicaps totalling 24 and 18; they enjoyed competing, though they found it tough.

2 of the playing pairs had the stronger player on the handicap of -1 which met our aim of the better players helping the others.

Next year, we hope to get more different clubs involved; the format is better not to be made more prescriptive as this would prevent some players/pairs competing.

As organiser, I found it all most interesting and enjoyable.

**Philip Wood**