



The Bear of Rodborough Croquet Club

May 2011
Newsletter

Annual Dinner

Another excellent dinner at The Bear attended by twenty-two members and supporters.

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Bear Snooker Champion.

After a fiercely fought season, Richard receives the winner's trophy from last year's champion (Stephen). As ever, Richard and Rosemary's hospitality over the winter has been second to none and appreciated by everyone.

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Good News.

Alex is not now moving to the USA so is still a member.

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Secretary's Shield.

Having won the Federation League last year, we qualified for entry into The Secretary's Shield – a national competition organised by the CA. Our first round match is against Nottingham on Sunday 22nd May. Richard Way is the Bear's team manager and will be selecting players shortly.

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Good Luck to all teams.

The new league season kicks off with gusto and all our teams are in action this month. The B League team has its first match on 22nd, the Intermediate (North) team is in action on 7th, the Intermediate (Central) team also plays on 7th, the Federation team plays on 15th and 21st, and the Parkstone team has its first ever match on 8th and its second on 14th. We wish them all well.

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Coaching.

Monday 2nd May - 6.00 p.m.

Different shots – Improving your positioning (Rob)(aimed at beginners).

Monday 9th May – 6.00 p.m.

Using bisques to win matches (aimed at all levels). See attached preparation sheets. (Rob)

Monday 16th May – 6.00 p.m.

How to get the best from extra turns in Golf Croquet (Don)

Handicap changes.

Robert changed to 3.5 after the B Level tournament and then dropped to 3 after the Easter Advanced tournament, both at Cheltenham.

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Club Matches

The 2011 lists are now published so please arrange your matches as early in the season as possible to avoid congestion/frustration around summer holiday time. With a record number of entrants and matches to play, it is even more important to "get on with it".

We now have the results of two of the delayed 2010 finals.

Congratulations to Richard Danby who has won the 2010 Advanced Play Block, beating Don 26-21.

The game swung back and forth but the decisive point was when Don stuck in 3-back on his finishing turn allowing Richard to go round and peg Don out. Although Don hit in twice he was unable to capitalise on them.

Robert beat Richard D 26-20 in the singles competition,

The doubles and golf finals are due to be played imminently.

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Monday 30th May.

We have two special guests joining us for club night. Steve and Julie Thornton live and play croquet in Australia and are coming to England for a holiday, staying at The Bear for a few days. They have ordered Bear polo shirts from us to take home as souvenirs. Although we do not wear whites for club evenings, it might be nice to don our shirts for this one occasion. The lawn will be set up by 6.00p.m. – earlier if the sun is shining.

Lawn Bookings (at time of going to press)

May

Away matches

- 1
- 2 Club Night/coaching
- 3
- 4 Club Night
- 5 Hotel All Day
- 6
- 7 Inter'C v Weston *Inter'N v Worcester*
- 8 Park' v E.Dorset
- 9 Club Night/coaching
- 10
- 11 Club Night
- 12
- 13 Hotel from 6pm
- 14 *Parkst' v Cheltenham*
- 15 Fed v Dyffryn
- 16 Club Night/coaching
- 17
- 18 Club Night
- 19
- 20
- 21 Fed v Swindon
- 22B v Llandaff *Secretary's Shield*
- 23 Club Night *(in Nottingham)*
- 24
- 25 Club Night
- 26
- 27
- 28
- 29
- 30 Club Night
- 31

Referee's Corner.

What assistance can you give in a match if you are not a qualified referee?

We all know that in croquet, both players are their own referees and **MUST** ask their opponent if they want a stroke watched if there is a risk of a fault being committed. If a referee is available, s/he should be asked to watch the stroke: otherwise you will have the unsatisfactory situation of having to rely on negotiation with your opponent.

A referee will **not** normally intervene unless asked to do so by one of the players.

No-one should give an opinion unless a player or a qualified referee requests it.

Laws are continually being monitored and amended where necessary and the regulations governing refereeing have been updated this year. In the regulations, there is now no distinction between Golf Croquet and Association Croquet except where shown in square brackets. The following is an extract from the new Tournament Refereeing Regulations:

R7 Players Performing Functions of Referees

a. Players who are Qualified Referees

Players who entered the tournament and who are qualified referees may act as referees on request, unless the tournament referee or the

organising body responsible for the tournament direct otherwise.

b. Other Players

Unless the tournament referee directs otherwise, all players in the event who have played in more than three previous tournaments may decide the following matters, but only if requested by the striker or his opponent:

1. watch a stroke to decide:

A. where a ball crosses the boundary.

B. [AC: whether a ball hits the peg or another ball.]

C. [AC: whether a ball is moved or shaken, but only if specifically asked.]

2. decide whether a ball:

A. is on or off the court.

B. breaks the plane of a hoop

- for instance to see if a ball has run a hoop or not.

Observant Bears will notice two things:

There is no mention of the word "Umpire" with which we are all familiar. This is because the regulations are now international rather than British and some other countries have a different meaning for the word Umpire. However, regulation R7b (above) describes what we all understand as an *umpire's* role and traditionally, anyone can be an *umpire*.

The second point is that to act as an *umpire*, now you should have some experience of the game and have played in three previous tournaments.

It may take some time for this information to filter down to all croquet players!

Beginners' matches are allowed to have a Supervising Referee (new term) who **can** intervene if the players are about to break a law. This may be useful to help guide players new to match play but should be agreed by both teams prior to the day of the match.

Bisques – When to use them for best effect.

Most players do not know how to use bisques effectively and waste them. The chances are that your opponent will fall into this category so if you learn some of the basic ideas about creative bisque use, you will be at a great advantage.

Beginners often panic when something goes wrong and immediately take a bisque only to find they are no better off – i.e. they have wasted a golden opportunity. A typical example of this is when a ball bounces off a hoop = panic = take a bisque = set up again and bounce off the hoop again. As you play more games, you will see many, many examples of your opponent wasting bisque after bisque. I see more bisques wasted than used creatively! The purpose of this course is to ensure you do not fall into the same trap but become an “educated” bisque user.

The first general principle is that you should plan to use bisques creatively rather than just take one to get out of trouble. The best time to plan the use of a bisque is either **before the first shot** of your new turn or **before you take your continuation shot**. On every occasion, stop and consider:

- what will you gain if you take a bisque and what will you surrender if you don't. If you take a bisque, will you just make one hoop or just put your two balls together or will you create the possibility of running another two or three hoops?
- if you don't take a bisque, will your opponent hit in? make one hoop? Or pick up a four-ball break?

Sometimes, it is better to let your opponent take over, make a hoop, realise that he cannot make any further hoops, set up with his two balls together at a “convenient” place and end his turn. You may then be able to use one or two bisques to create a break and run a few hoops by using the balls he has carefully left for you.

The second general principle is that if there is a good pioneer and a good pivot ball, it may be worth taking a bisque because you may not get balls in more useful positions. This is something you need to consider at the time.

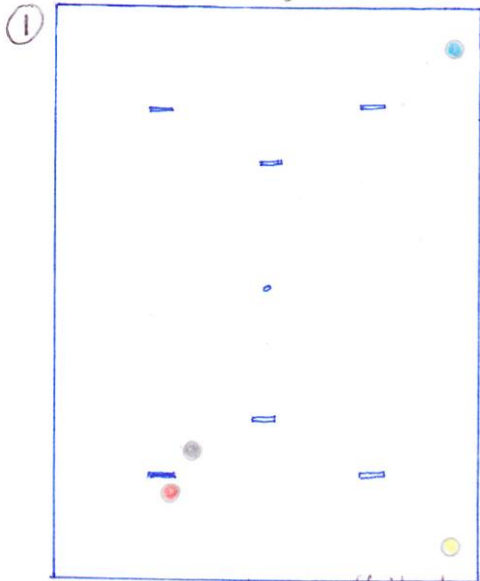
The third principle is that it is often better to play your **furthest** ball, take a half-bisque or bisque to get others into useful positions on the lawn and then take another bisque to start your break.

There is plenty of advice and coaching hints available if you know where to look. Don Gaunt's book *Plus One On Time* is considered one of the best available and starting on page 25 is a good place to enlarge on this course. www.oxfordcroquet.com collects together help and advice from all corners of the world and makes it very accessible. It is a huge resource and has advice for all levels.

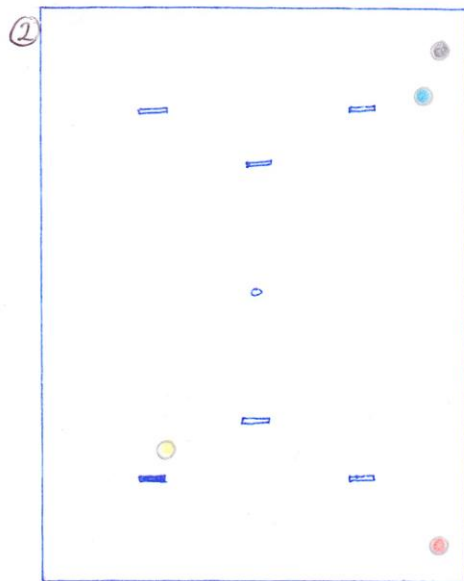
My final piece of advice is **DO NOT GET BISQUE DRUNK!** Every bisque should be planned and carefully used. You will see others using 3,4,5 bisques and achieving nothing. Treat each bisque as a golden gift and treasure it.

In each of the following situations, what would you do? We will look at each of these in the practical session on the lawn on Monday 9th May.

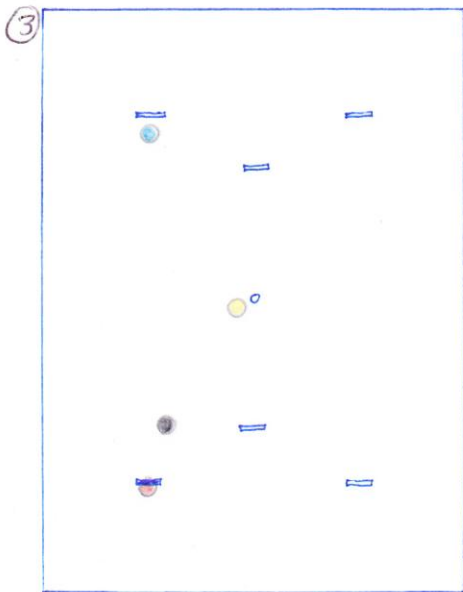
You are playing red. Bisque or no bisque? (No-one has yet scored hoop!)
What are you going to do?



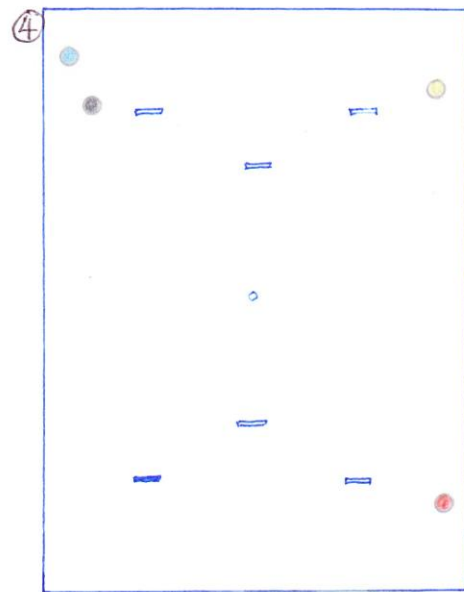
Red has just bounced off the hoop



Red missed yellow + ended up here.



Red stuck in hoop!



Black has just finished. Your turn now. You have $6\frac{1}{2}$ bisques.



For more information:

Our Club Website- <http://www.faydon.com/Bear/Bear.html>

Archived newsletters and coaching hints - <http://www.faydon.com/Bear/News.html>

Croquet Association (of which the club is a member) -www.croquet.org.uk

South West Federation of Croquet Clubs (to which we are affiliated) – <http://www.swfcroquet.org.uk>

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The Bear of Rodborough Croquet Club.

Chairman and Hotel Liaison:	Robert Moss	01453 872386
Secretary:	Rosemary Danby	01453 872456
Treasurer:	Brian Pittaway	01453 860610
Handicapper and club competitions manager:	Don Gaunt	01453 822507
Lawn Manager:	Nick Hurst	01453 882960
Equipment Manager:	Richard Danby	01453 872456
Webmaster:	Don Gaunt	01453 822507