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# PHYLLIS COURT CROQUET

## News

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### 31 August - Gillian Symons wins 6-9 Evening Series

*Manager Russell Robinson reports:*

Today saw the ninth and final event in our inaugural 6-9 Evening Series competition, which has been open to those who have had a handicap of between 6 and 9 at some stage during the season. Fourteen players participated, although three withdrew during the season.

"Who plays who" on each evening was pre-determined to try to ensure that everyone played everyone else at least once.

[Andy Jones](#), [Gillian Symons](#) and [David Young](#) all went into this last evening with title hopes, having just two losses from their 8 or 9 previous games, and with both Gillian and David to play Andy, a tense climax seemed on the cards.

Andy and Gillian both won their first two games (Andy defeating David), which beautifully set up the evening's final game against each other, with the victor to be declared the outright winner of the competition. After an early tit-for-tat exchange led to a 3-3 scoreline, Gillian stretched away to 5-3, precluding a long contest at hoop 9, eventually won by Gillian as Andy was unable to nail a number of long clearances.

With Andy then unlucky to leave both his balls hampered in hoop 10, Gillian was able to slot a straightforward winning stroke at hoop 11 and thereby lift the "virtual" trophy and reduce her handicap to 6. *Congratulations, Gillian!*

Click on this link for the full final table:

Open Doubles T

### Meanwhile, the 23rd and final event in the 10+ Evening Series competition was also taking place.

With two wins from three, [Steve Morton](#) secured his place at the top of the table.

But with the impossibility of all 66 participants playing each other, the winner is to be decided by a play-off between the "top four" this coming Saturday.

With both Steve and second-placed [Colin Hall](#) unable to play then, the play-offs will be contested by [Patricia Mulcahy](#), [John Rumford](#), [Doug Tonks](#) and [Julia Green](#), who were separated only by "net hoops" in third to sixth places, each winning nine of their twelve games.

Click on this link for the final leader board:

Open Doubles T

### 31 August - PCC 'A' 3 - 5 Ryde 'A' (away)

PCC 'A' travelled with an understrength side to Ryde on the Isle of Wight today, and despite some strong performances were beaten by their very hospitable hosts 3-5.

In the top half of the fixture, Chris Roberts recorded 2-0 wins over Ryde's Roy Tillcock and Stuart Peters, but the home players both got the better of Roger Goldring over three games.

In the lower half, Helena Fensome beat Pam Sim but lost to Andrew Larpent, both in three games, and PCC 'A' debutant Andy Jones (handicap 4) put in two very creditable performances in close defeats against the hosts with 2 and 1 handicaps respectively.

*PCC 'A': Chris Roberts (-2), Roger Goldring (1), Helena Fensome (1), Andy Jones (4)*

### 30 August - Chris Roberts and Rick Lilley shine at the National Selectors' Eights

It was a case of so near yet so far for Phyllis Court's [Chris Roberts](#) and [Rick Lilley](#) last weekend at the Croquet Association Selectors' Eights.

Roberts finished a creditable third in the Second Eight at Budleigh Salterton and Lilley went one better with the runner-up spot in his first appearance in the Third Eight at Eastbourne.

As is the nature of these three-day selection events, the eight players are always very closely matched on ability and the 'best of three games' matches format is the biggest annual test of consistency outside the British Open.

Roberts won four of his seven matches to finish third in the block stage, so faced second placed Lionel Tibble in the semi-finals, with the confidence of an earlier block win over the vastly experienced Northampton player.

He took the first game 7-4 but was always chasing the second and third which both went to the thirteenth and last hoop, where Roberts had a straight forward clearance to sent Tibble's ball to the corner, but a half-ball contact took it to the mid-boundary only and Tibble played an excellent match winning stroke to score from seven yards. Roberts recovered from the disappointment to beat Tim Jolliffe to third place and will see his national ranking improve as a result of reasonably successful weekend. Meanwhile, further along the South coast, Rick Lilley did fabulously on his Eights debut, contesting the third tier Suzanne Roberts Memorial Trophy at Compton CC. He also won four of his block matches, including being the only one to take a match off the top seed Don Beck, and then showed gear character and belief to come through the tightest of semi-finals to beat Paull Gunn 7-5, 6-7, 7-6. He then faced the fast-improving 16-year-old Sam Cuthbert, who has future star player written all over him, and for the second time in the short history of the event, it was a teenager who took the title beating Lilley 4-7, 4-7. Lilley has hit a purple patch of form right on time as the end of season and should be very proud of this achievement.

### 23-24 August - AC tournament successes for **Rick Lilley** (Caversham Plate) and **Kevin Ward** (Zia Sterling Cup)

Rick Lilley scored an unexpected success at Phyllis Court last week when he won the internal Association Croquet handicap tournament undefeated, to lift the Caversham Plate at his first attempt following his elevation from the junior event last season. Playing off a reduced handicap of 16, Lilley was too good for Richard Peperell (2.5), Raghu Iyer (10), Chris Roberts (-0.5) and then met Roger Goldring (18), who was also undefeated, in the final round in a de-facto final, which he won by two points on time. This will give Lilley good confidence as he heads to Corfu for the Greek Championship in four weeks' time along six other Phyllis Court players. These other players include the winner and runner-up of the Phyllis Court junior event which ran in parallel with Kevin Ward earning the Zia Sterling Cup over Patricia Mulcahy.

### 25 August - Play-off finalists emerge from the 10+ Evening Series

*Manager Russell Robinson reports:*

There is one more evening to be played, but it cannot affect the qualification for the 'Top 4' play-offs.

Steve Morton cannot make the date for the play-offs, but will not have played enough to meet the qualification criterion of 10 games anyway.

Colin Hall meets that criterion but cannot make the date either.

That leaves Patricia Mulcahy, John Rumford, Doug Tonks and Julia Green as the four finalists for the play-offs to be held at 1400 on Saturday 3 September.

Open Doubles T

6-9 Evening Series

### 22 August - Lilley joins Roberts in National Selectors' "Eights" weekend action (coming-up) - with Colman as top Ref again

Rick Lilley's improvement had been recognised by the Golf Croquet National Selectors with his inclusion in the Development Squad this year, and he has been further rewarded by being selected for their 'Third Eight'.

This sees him in action at Compton CC (Eastbourne) this weekend in competition for the Suzanne Roberts Memorial Trophy (which was presented to the CA by our Chris Roberts in memory of his late wife).

Chris Roberts himself takes up his regular place in the 'Second Eight' at Budleigh Salterton CC in Devon, alongside the 'First Eight', and presiding over both senior events will be our own Championship Referee Frances Colman.

### 21 August - Iyer joins Goldring, Christmas and Lilley in All England Finals

Raghu Iyer qualified for National Final of the All England AC Handicap competition at Surbiton today.

Iyer won his first game easily 26-11 and his last game more comprehensively 26-0. The games in between didn't go his way and he tied for a place just outside the qualifiers, but subsequently, one qualifier dropped-out elevating Iyer to the Final as the best of the tied players using the 'quality of opponents' criterion.

The AC Final will be held at Watford on 17/18 September.

Another Phyllis Court player making a return to an All England Final is the holder of the National GC title, Roger Goldring and he will be joined the GC final by first time qualifier Michael Christmas and second time finalist Rick Lilley, at Wrest Park on 10/11 September.

The trio came through the Area Final (South) qualifier which was held at Phyllis Court on 10 August and also featured our club members Rick Lilley (who finished just outside the qualifying places in third) Hugh Crook and Carol Wandsworth (although the latter was representing Blewbury on that occasion).

### 21 August - PCC Quartet can't save Oxfordshire from relegation

Oxfordshire's hopes of cementing their elevation to Division one of the GC County Championship were dealt a blow before this weekend's tournament at Cheltenham, when Chris Roberts had to withdraw from the team but hopes were still high with Phyllis Court club mates Helena Fensome and Rick Lilley drafted in as replacements. Lead by Phyllis Court's Roger Goldring and with former member Raouf Allim at number one in the Saturday side, Oxfordshire were disappointed to win only one of their six matches on the first day, and although bolstered by the arrival of Scotland international Stephen Wright, their two Sunday victories were not enough to clear the relegation places and a return to Division Two was their fate. *Oxfordshire (Phyllis Court unless stated): Raouf Allim (-2, High Wycombe), Helena Fensome (1), Roger Goldring (1), Rick Lilley (1 - Sat only), Stephen Wright (-2, Eynsham - Sun only)*

### 19 August - Goldring and Lilley win the Open Doubles day-tournament

The new partnership of Roger Golring and Rick Lilley improved steadily through the day to win the Phyllis Court Open Doubles day-tournamnet and the covered Iain Lindsay Cups today. They beat long establish pairing Robin Coates and Dianne Browne in the final at the end of a long hot day. The beaten semi-finalists were the Frances Colman and Patricia Mulcahy combo and the Fensomes, Helena and Mike. The full results digest will allear here shortly:

#### Open Doubles T

### 17 August - PCC 'A' 3 - 5 East Dorset 'A' - A good fight from our below strength team

Phyllis Court 'A' put up and excellent fight today, in what will likely be the Southern Croquet Federation Open League decider with high flying East Dorset. The visitors paid the Henley side the compliment of fielding two England internationals, Jonathan Powe (-4) and Steve Leonard (-2) for this match, whilst the hosts were unfortunately without the services of team regular Ian Norris.

There was a surprise for Helena Fensome when she was told she would be playing as the Phyllis Court number 2 for the first time, by dint of having overtaken Roger Goldring in the national rankings, meaning that she would have to face the two East Dorset big guns.

Powe duly dispatched Fensome quickly, but there was good stuff to come in the afternoon from the newly promoted home player.

Phyllis Court also gave a first team debut to the fast-improving Rick Lilley and he too managed to come back from a morning loss to record an afternoon victory.

At number one, Chris Roberts should have seen off Steve Leonard in straight games to repeat his win over the same players in the recent World Championships but he allowed the second encounter to slip away and, after a suspension of that rubber, lost again on the resumption late in the afternoon.

Phyllis Court's only morning success was from Roger Goldring who eventually got pats East Dorset captain Keith Southern in three games.

After lunch, Roberts held Powe for a while and should have won their second game but for a poor tactical decision at hoop 12 and Goldring also lost in straight games to David Kendrick.

Home starts of the afternoon however, were Lilley and Fensome who beat Southern 7-6, 7-4 and international Leonard 7-6, 7-6 respectively, the latter quite possibly Fensome's best match result ever.

*PCC 'A': Chris Roberts (-2), Helena Fensome (1), Roger Goldring (1), Rick Lilley (1)*

### 15 August - PCC 'B' 7 - 1 Ryde 'B' - Impressive win sets up crucial title match

PCC 'B' scored a convincing 7-1 win over visitors Ryde 'B' today with an SCF B-Level League result that was never in doubt.

The hosts' Dianne Browne, Michael Christmas and team debutants, Andy Jones and Jeff Smith all won the opening games of their morning 'best of three' matches and followed those up with straight game victories in those rubbers for a 4-0 lunchtime lead.

With all the momentum, PCC 'B' pressed home the advantage in the afternoon session and soon enough, Christmas's second match win secured the fixture win before 3pm.

Ryde salvaged some pride when Richard Hutching beat Smith, but 2-1 victories to Browne and Jones emphasised the dominance that Browne's side had displayed all day.

*PCC 'B': Dianne Browne (3), Michael Christmas (5), Andy Jones (5), Jeff Smith (6)*

- Congratulations to Michael Christmas and Andy Jones who reduced their handicaps down to 4 for the first time.

This is Andy Jones 5th handicap reductin of the year and the second reduction in a week!

This win adds even more importance to the PCC 'B' v East Dorset 'B' last league match of the season, at home on 2 September,

East Dorset 'B' are undefeathed and PCC 'B' have only lost once, so a victory then for our side would take the title to individual 'game wins' - *so very tight indeed!*

### 14 August - Jones wins the Hamptorth 5+ tournament Hamptworth

Congratulations to Andy Jones, who won Hamptworth 5+ tournament today and cemented his latest handicap reduction to that grade.

This 'stand-alone' (not part of a National Series) but a full and strong filed for the range participated and so this is a very creditable achievement and a notable 'notch' of Jones improving journey.

### 13 August - Mulcahy makes almost certain of National C-Level Final place, with yet another runner-up spot (at Hamptworth)

On a tough day in scorching conditions, Patricia Mulcahy ended runner-up at Hamptworth today - her third such result in national C-level tournaments this season.

She now heads the list of points gatherers and is all but certain to be invited to play in the Series national final at Camerton and Peasedown (near Bath) on 17-18 September.

## 12 August - PCC 'D' 9 - 7 Wingrave - Close WIN earns our team the 'North Division' title!

This close win for Patricia Mulcahy's PCC 'D' team won them the SCF Advantage league North Division title.

This was a close one throughout with round by round score lines of .3-1, 3-3, 6-5, 9-7, culminating in the winning hoop aptly being run by captain Patricia Mulcahy, wo along with team debutant Carl Billson, each contributed three match wins to the fixture winning tally.

*PCC 'D': Patricia Mulcahy (7), Christine Searle (10), Carl Billson (11), Paul Franklin (12)*

## 9 August - PCC 'C' 13 - 3 Winchester - BIG WIN earns our team the 'Central Division' title!

Making light of the long journey into Hampshire, PCC 'C' scored a thumping win over their hosts today, and with that, they secured the SCF Advantage League 'Central Division' title.

It also earns PCC 'C' a place in the semi-finals of the Advantage League where they will face the winners of the South and North divisions.

Today, all our team scored three wins and one loss, with the exception of captain Andy Jones who was undefeated.

*PCC 'C': Michael Christmas (5), Andy Jones (6), Colin Morgan (6), Carol Huntington (11)*

- Congratulations to Andy Jones who reduced his handicap down to 5 for the first time.

## 9 August - Mulcahy closes in on C-Level Series National Final place with another runner-up finish (at Bath)

Never one to shout her successes, I have just learnt that a over week ago (on 28 July) **Patricia Mulcahy** finished runner-up at the Bath heat of the National C-Level (7+) Series competition.

This was Mulcahy's third second place finish of the season, a tally that has earned her 18 Series points and she sits on top the list of points gatherers, all of whom are hoping to win a place in the C-Level National Final at Camerton & Peasedown (which is coincidentally also close to Bath) on 17-18 August.

Andy Jones has already qualified for that final 'as of right' as a winner of the Wrest Park Series tournament in May when he pipped Mulcahy in the tight final.

- Also in action at Bath a week or more ago were, Carol Wadsworth (10th) and Christine Searle (12th)

## 9 August - Evening Series in Full Swing **LATEST UPDATE**

*Manager, Russell Robinson reports:*

The remaining dates in the 10+ Evening Series will come thick and fast over the next three weeks, culminating in the play-offs for the top four on Saturday 3 September.

Comments heard by the Manager, ranging from "I'm desperate to get into the top four" to "well, it doesn't really matter, it's not a competition" serve to illustrate how successful this format has been.

It provides, on the one hand, the opportunity to play in a competitive environment without having to commit to a full day, while on the other hand allowing the less competitive members to simply enjoy an evening's croquet with like-minded people, not really minding whether they win or lose.

We have been lucky with the weather and have had some beautiful, warm summer's evenings, with many people commenting what a nice time of day it is to play croquet (even though otherwise the courts have been sparsely utilised after 6 p.m.).

With most of the batch of July/August beginners now jumping on board, the Series will have seen 66 members participating, nearly all playing on at least three or four occasions. This far surpasses the 45 members who participated in its inaugural year in 2021. Indeed, the Evening Series has been particularly popular with beginners, with 26 of the 49 new members who have been trained this year taking part. The leader board, which is updated after each evening, can be viewed on the website at here:

This year, we have also run a similar Evening Series for those with handicaps between 6 and 9 inclusive.

This has been harder to get off the ground, with the smaller population of members in this category, making it more difficult to get a "critical mass" together on the same evening.

However, this is now in full swing, with 14 members having participated, and a number of further evenings coming up this month.

The table of results for the 6-6 Evening Series can be viewed here:

the two link buttons are permanently accessible in the navigation panel on the left hand side of the Home Page

[10+ Evening Series](#)

[6-9 Evening Series](#)

## 9 August - Improver Coaching under way now with the offer of more to come **NEW COACHING OFFERING**

### *Co-ordinator, Russell Robinson reports:*

Coaching for those higher handicapped members who are keen to keep a step ahead of the army of eager and well-trained beginners, is now in progress under the enthusiastic eye of Russell Robinson, ably supported by fellow qualified coaches, Tony Peperell and Julia Green.

All such established members with 12+ handicaps have been invited to a 'Back to Basics' course, comprising 2 x two-hour sessions, the first focussing on basic technique and common faults, and the second on basic tactics.

12 members have so far completed the course and the feedback that has filtered back to the committee appears to have been most favourable. A further 10 members have signed up for dates in August, with a number of others showing interest but unable to make the advertised dates.

Once this additional demand has been satisfied, we will be looking to extend the remit to those with handicap of 11 and below, a number of whom are already asking for coaching, as well as considering how else we can meet the training needs of our members.

## 7 August - GC World Championship - Day 9 - FINALS DAY - Matthew Essick becomes the World Champion!

It was all eyes on the World Championship final today, which was a 'best of five' match

Matthew Essick (USA) beat Robert Fulford (England) 7-3, 6-7, 7-3, 7-3

<https://www.youtube.com/croquetengland>

Recordings of all the LIVE-VIDEO coverage will remain viewable via this link

**Chris Roberts** competed an opening stint of commentary with former AC World Champion Chris Clake, previewing the final and the opening seven hoops.

**Frances Colman** (Championship Referee) was the reserve referee for the Main Final today and was also in charge of the Bowl final.

## 6 August - GC World Championship - Day 8 - Roberts bombs in Plate quarter-finals. - Main Event reaches the semis.

**Chris Roberts** (Wales) was beaten hands-down by the super accurate centre-ball hitting of **Dursan Turcer** (Portugal) in his Plate last eight this morning.

The Portugese is almost unrecognisable from the player that Roberts beat easily in the 2019 Championship/

That is likely to be the end of the road for Roberts now.

**Helena Fensome** (Finland) played some 'Z' games today.

In the Main Event it is semi-finals day (*playing 'best of five'*) - results updated:

Robert Fulford (England) beat Reg Bamford (South Africa) 5-7, 7-6, 5-7, 7-6, 7-2,

Matthew Essick (USA) beat Robert Fletcher (Australia) 7-4, 2-7, 7-4, 7-3

LIVE-VIDEO coverage will start at 1000 today::

<https://www.youtube.com/croquetengland>

Look out for **Frances Colman** (Championship Referee) who is in charge of the featured semi-final match.

## 5 August - GC World Championship - Day 7 - Roberts wins twice to qualify for Plate knock-out. - As the Main Event reaches the quarter-finals.

**Chris Roberts** (Wales) beat **Helena Fensome** (Finland) in a close 7-5 Plate block encounter in the first round of games this morning.

Both then played two more games to play to complete the block, from which four, rather than the previously advised two, qualified for the Plate knock-out.

Roberts beat Judith Hanekom (South Africa) 7-5, then got thumped 0-7 by block leader Sherif Abdelwahab (USA), but still qualified for the Plate knock-out.

Fensome also lost to Abdelwahab and Misolav Havlik (Czech Republic), 7-3 and 7-4 respectively.

In the Plate knock-out, Roberts came up against familiar foe Steve Leonard (Dorset & England) and won 7-3, 7-6

**Tomorrow** he faces **Dursan Turcer** (Portugal) in the Plate last eight

In the Main Event of these World Championships, it was quarter-finals day with all matches from now on being 'best-of-five'. It was a poor day for the Egyptians who failed to get a representative into the semi-finals for the first time in the 14 event history of these Championships.

Reg Bamford (South Africa) beat Richard Bilton (England) 7-5, 7-2, 7-3

Robert Fulford (England) beat Ahmed Nsar (Egypt) 7-4, 7-5, 4-7, 3-7, 7-4

Robert Fletcher (Australia) beat Mohamed Nasr (Egypt) 1-3, 7-6, 7-2

Matthew Essick (USA) beat Mohamed Karem (Egypt) 7-3, 7-6, 7-6

#### 4 August - GC World Championship - Day 6 - Roberts & Fensome in same Plate block - Referee Colman faults Double World Champion!

**Chris Roberts** (Wales) and **Helena Fensome** (Finland) are in the same block in the 24-player Plate event that has started today. Fensome lost to Nick Archer (England) 2-7 and to Judith Hanekom (South Africa) 5-7. Roberts beat Miroslav Havik (Czech) 7-4 and let a big lead slip in losing to Archer 6-7.

**Frances Colman** (Championship Referee) continues to be the busiest of all, and tis morning called a 'fault' stroke on Double World Champion Reg Bamford (South Africa) in his crunch first Round tie in the main event versus reigning champion Ben Rothman (USA).

And lthis evening she had an interesting situation to deal with when Matthew Essick (USA) wanted to jump over the centre peg but the extention piece (which can be legally removed) was found to be stuck fast. Frances had to source an new centre pag, have it sited correctly and then measuer its height exactly before Essick jumped over it impresivly!

<https://www.youtube.com/croquetengland>

#### 3 August - Morton holds lead in the 10+ Evening Series

After this eveingings latest round in the 10+ Evening Series, unbeaten Steve Morton holds a lead. See the latest satndings here:

[10+ Evening Series](#)

#### 3 August - GC World Championship - Day 5 - Roberts and Fensome play to pre-tournament seedings

**Helena Fensome** (Finland) lost to double World Champion Ahmed Nasr (Egypt) 1-7, 1-4 this morning to completer her programme of block matches, Helena was seeded 8 of 8 in his block, so match wins were not expected, and so it has transpired, but she will be pleasd with her singles game in over Spaniard Jose Alvarez-Sala earlier in the week.

**Chris Roberts** (Wales) also comnpleted his block programme with a dispointing 1-7, 3-7 loss to England's Aston Wade.

Chris was seeded 6 of 8 in his block, so two match wins were forcast and again that is how it turned out, and although dispointed not to convert any of his three game match losses in to victioires , his three wame wins in those matches will improve his world/uk ranking.

As the play-offs for the fnal qualifictaion plavces take place this afternoon, Fensoem and Roberts no look towads ther consolatio plate event which looks to be attracting a good number of the other 30 players who have also missed the main event 'cut'.

A reminderr that there is LIVE-VIDEO coverage of the Champioships every day vai this link:

<https://www.youtube.com/croquetengland>

#### 2 August - GC World Championship - Day 4 - Fensome in another tough day

**Helena Fensome** (Finland) lost to Miroslav Havik (Czech Republic) 5-7, 3-7 earlier today and this afternoon took Mostafa Nezar (Egypt) 3-7, 6-7, the latter being a particularly good performance..

**Frances Colman** (Championship Referree) is continuing her duties, and **Chris Roberts** (Wales) has a rest day today.

#### 1 August - GC World Championship - Day 3 - Roberts and Fensome had a tough day

Both Phyllis Court players have been in action again: -

**Chris Roberts** (Wales) was beaten by Don Nunn (England) 6-7, 7-4, 1-7, and as then completely undone' by Mathew Essick (USA) 3-7, 2-7.this evening.

**Helena Fensome** (Finland) was beaten by Tim Jolliffe (England) 3-7, 3-7 and then Euan Burrige (England) 4-7, 5-7

The hardest working of the Phyllis Court trio here is **Frances Colman** (Championship Referree) who will start her thrid day offiating, form 0830 to 2000 very long commitment!

A reminderr that there is LIVE-VIDEO coverage of the Champioships every day vai this link:

<https://www.youtube.com/croquetengland>