

PHYLLIS COURT CROQUET

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21 February - Allim's call up to the AC International Development Squad is a PCC first!

Congratulations to Raouf Allim on his selection for the AC International Development Squad - this is a FIRST for and PCC player. The catching of the Selectors' eye is a just recognition of his progress in the AC game and he will be a member of that squad for the next two years. Raouf is already a member of the GC International Development Squad and is in the final year of that appointment. Previously both Chris Roberts and Roger Goldring have attended the GC Squad, where PC have had an 'ever presence' since its inception six years ago.

The
Committee member
i/c this web site is:
Chris Roberts
079 7378 7710
info@kickphoto.co.uk

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20 February - Success and up-set wins for Colman & Roberts in South Africa

Frances Colman (*seated far left in winners photo*) won her Singles Class trophy at the Southern Cape AC Championship in South Africa last week.

Chris Roberts was runner-up for the second year running in the Open Singles event.

And both Phyllis Court players scored 'against the odds' wins versus much higher ranked opponents during the 8 day tournament, played at Somerset West CC (about 45 minutes east of Cape Town) - victories that will see their AC rankings improve no end!

Colman (AC handicap 9) was handed a tough assignment when her C Class event was combined with the tougher B Class meaning she faced a string of higher ranked players all week. She got off to a great start with a hard fought victory over midlander Paul Swaffield (4), and later in the week, took the scalp of the top seed, South African Sylvia Short (3.5) before missing-out by a single point in the last turn of her match with Surbiton's Chris Osmond (8).

Colman saw her handicap automatically reduced from 9 to 8 and was presented with the C Class trophy.

Roberts (AC Handicap 0.5) did well too in the Open Singles, beating Australian David Wise (0) in a 'sweaty' three ball ending, bettered that with a seining win in as many contests against (Northampton's Lionel Tibble (-1.5) in which he contrived a one-ball game ending, and he also beat the aforementioned Sylvia Short on his way to a semi-final berth against the tournament seedings. A first ever win over Surbiton's George Noble (-1) put him into the last day final where he lost for the second time in the week to Somerset's Jim Filed.

In the handicap knock-out and plate, Colman and Roberts (*in action, left*) won 50% and did likewise as a pair in the Doubles.

9 February - Another positive tournament result for Goldring

Yesterday, in perfect weather at Hamptworh (before the expected storm!), Roger Goldring had to give away a huge amount of extra turns - Roger is handicap -1 and his nearest opponent was a +4). Nevertheless he managed four wins and two losses, so remarked that "it was quite a reasonable day for me".

6 February - Sad News - (former member) Bob de Board

We were sorry to learn that former croquet member Bob de Board passed away on two days ago.

Professor Bob de Board was an enthusiastic croquet member from 2012 to 2017 but his advanced years, meant that didn't play very regularly.

He was however, always extremely interested in how our teams had got on and was a keen follower of the exploits of individuals playing away from PC.

Bob had a long life and at the time of his passing – He was known to have been eligible for our Over 80's Tournament since at least 2013.

He did have one notable claim to fame when, in 2012, he landed our number 1 player Charlie von Schmieder, who looking for a high handicapped partner to team up with in the Open Doubles.

Guided by Charlie throughout, the partnership actually reached the final only to fall at that last hurdle to TJ Johansen and Raymond Wood.

So Bob's name is on the Alex & Dilys Cups as a reminder of his greatest croquet triumph – RIP Bob.

~ Funeral details will be posted here when and if known ~

3 February - Norrises find croquet opportunity on South African golfing holiday

Delia and Ian Norris have been in touch to say that they followed a recommendation to look-up the croquet club at Port Alfred in South Africa this week. They were welcomed by club members and had an enjoyable time taking a break from their golfing holiday.

30 January - A fabulous record 82 members attend our pre-season meeting

This event was perhaps rather wrongly-titled as a 'pre-season' meeting this time, because the it opened with [Chairman Madeleine Probert](#) introducing the main Club Chief Executive, Chris Hogan, to explain why the regular early January start date for play hadn't happened this year.

In a nut-shell, the Club has a new temporary head gardener who has convinced Mr Hogan the playing in the winter months will be detrimental to the playing conditions of our courts come the warmer months.

There is considerable evidence that questions this view and the croquet committee are taking steps to reach an amicable decision on this subject as soon as possible.

Otherwise, the meeting was a very positive affair with Chairman Madeleine taking the lead with aplomb.

She updated members on the improvements to the [pavilion steps](#) (which now have a less steep incline), work being progressed to improve the main club's on-line booking system (which is poor for us), the plans for dealing with beginners training and other coaching opportunities for our existing members.

The news that [subscriptions](#) will be very likely to rise at the end of this year, was greeted with general approval, now that the majority of the money collected is paid out again to the Croquet Association to cover our Club's membership.

Madeleine ended with the [fabulous news that 36 new members](#) have joined us since the end of last season (undoubtedly a record number), and several more still are in the process of joining.

She also announced the return of our Croquet [themed Quiz on 19 March](#) (details to follow).

Chris Roberts outlined the expected program of [season-long competitions and day tournaments](#) for 2020, which are unchanged from 2019 save the intention to rest the Womens Singles tournament (which has not been well supported) but this is to be countered by the return of the popular PCC Olympics event making it's third edition (because of courses it only happens in an Olympic year!).

Chris also announced a 'First' for any croquet club in the country - [we will be hosting a visit by the Croquet Association Shop on 21 April](#), where you will be able to see the latest mallets and 'try before you buy' as well as order waterproofs and other shop wares.

Teams:

We will again be entering the National Inter-Club Championship (having been runners-up in both 2018 and 2019)

Additionally we will be returning to the second tier National Inter-Club 'Murphy' Shield competition.

And, we have qualified for the GC Federations Shield (a national knock-out competition for Handicap League Champions).

[So, Nationally we look like this:](#)

PCC 'A' - National Inter-Club Championship

PCC '2+' - National Inter-Club 'Murphy' Shield (2+)

PCC 'Handicap' - GC Federations Shield (handicap)

We will field 4 League teams this year (one more than 2019), as we support the SCF's introduction of a new B-Level League.

[So, for the Southern Federation \(Berks, Bucks, Oxon & Hants\) we look like this:](#)

PCC 'A' - SCF A-Level League

PCC 'B' - SCF B-Level League (3+)

PCC 'C' - SCF Handicap League



12 January - Goldring gains points at Hamptworth

Roger Goldring reports:

I went to the Hamptworth Winter tournament today, hoping not to sustain too many losses and thereby risk my "being in the minus world" status. In the morning, I managed a win, a loss and a draw, but in the afternoon I was fortunate enough to get all three wins, and so it was up 30 points and "safe for another day".

I've been going to the six winter tournament for many years now (four are handicap, two are level), and they are a great way to keep yourself in tournament training.

Admittedly the format is a little non-standard, but the format allows six games to be played in the short winter days, and it most definitely has a strong tournament feel.

You have to wrap up warm! Lunch is served in the club house, and on a really cold day a quick break for a hot meal is most welcome.

The entries from Phyllis Court tend to be a little on the low side, but it really is a good tournament, and the high-handicappers have just as much chance as the low, because in the handicap events, 'extar turns' are used, so "all are equal".

It's good to see that Steve Morton has entered some Sunday tournaments at Hamptworth this winter.

9 January - Pat Eades RIP - funeral

The funeral for Pat Eades RIP was very well attended by approximately 150 mourners at Bix Church today. (see December 2019 News for an obituary)

The Croquet Club was well represented by our Chairman, several committee members and others.

It was a lovely service and fitting tribute to very full life, very well lead.