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Coronavirus

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PHYLLIS COURT CROQUET

News

30 November - Court improvements started today

Our fabulous Gardener Mark Beckinsale and assistant Stefan began work on the East boundary of Courts 1 and 2 today. Turf has been stripped-off the entire length of both courts in preparation for that ground to be raised, there by correcting the significant slope-off in the direction of the pathway.

Also part of this project is the moving back of the access steps.

Please note that these works are being entirely funded by us, The Croquet Club - please do mention this to other members of the Main Club should the opportunity arise, to counter any misunderstanding.

29 November - Record numbers attend our Prizegiving Dinner to salute our winners

Over 80 members attended our prize-giving dinner this evening, easily surpassing any previous record - and well done to committee member Hilary Cowley for orchestrating such a large and enjoyable event.

It was especially nice to see so many new members joining in, and others who were not collecting trophies yet supporting the event to honour those that had had success this season.

The bulk of the trophies were presented after the meal but Chairman Chris Roberts opened proceedings with the announcement of four very special presentations.

Helena Fensome - A Croquet Association Diploma for Services to Croquet.

Helena is only the 5th Phyllis Court member in our history to have been so honoured.

She joins Vivian Thompson, Brian Bucknall, Frances Colman and Chris Roberts in our Honours and Benefactors Book which is read aloud at every AGM.

[See the full Diploma citation \(click on this button\)](#) and reflect on Helen's wonderful contribution to our club and sport.

2022 CA Diploma Award

Patricia Mulcahy - The Croquet Association's Most Improved Female GC player 2022 - "The Colman Trophy"

Patricia's award is a 1st for Phyllis Court and a thoroughly deserved mark for a remarkable playing year.

She received the bespoke cast bronze and wood "Colman Trophy", which was commissioned and donated to the Croquet Association by our own Frances Colman.

Frances had engaged with fellow Croquet Club member and sculptural artist Allan Henderson who came up with the unique hoop and two balls jump shot design and oversaw the foundry work

Frances was on hand to present the trophy to Patricia herself, on behalf of the President of the Croquet Association.

[See the full Nomination words \(click on this button\)](#) that lead to the CA Handicap Committee making this award.



Above: Helena Fensome with Chris Roberts
(photo by Patricia Mulcahy)

Below: Patricia Mulcahy with Frances Colman
(photo by Paul Franklin)

2022 CA Diploma Award

Madeleine Probert - Retirement of former Chairman, current Secretary and Committee member. Madeleine completed five years of committee service including serving as Chairman in 2020, the very difficult 'Covid year'. She was thanked for all she has done for the Croquet Club with croquet themed scarf and mug.

Roger Goldring - GC All England Handicap Champion. Roger is the only player ever to have retained this National Title, which is a superb and unique achievement.



MC Chris Roberts with trophy presenters Madeleine Probert (left) and Patricia Mulcahy, with our impressive display of trophies (photo by Ruth Raunkier)



25 November - Roberts retires as SCF Chairman after 10 years

Chris Roberts stood down as Chairman of the Southern Croquet Federation at its AGM at Winchester today. After 10 years at the helm, Roberts retired from the post to be replaced by Peter Allan of Blewbury. He was thanked for his time leading the area governing body (which, amongst other things, runs our league competitions) and was presented with a bottle of champagne by Federation Secretary Brian Jamieson.

Roberts recently took over from fellow Phyllis Court member Frances Colman as Chairman of the Croquet Association's Handicap Committee (Colman remains a committee member) and he follows her in leaving the SCF Committee to concentrate on the national role.

With the retirement of Roberts, and Colman before him, Phyllis Court now has Richard Peperell as our sole representative on the SCF Committee.

25 November - Members take full advantage of visit by Mallet Maker Mike Percival

Mallet Maker Mike Percival attended Phyllis Court today for the convenience of members who, together with a few visitors from local clubs, places order for 17 mallets. Phyllis Court Croquet Club also gain as a club from Mike Percival's visit, as he gave us two mallets as 'commission' following his first visit in the spring, and has promised us another one for this latest visit. These mallets which have longer shafts on request, are added to our cob stock for issue to our beginners each year.



15 November - Top National Award for Patricia is a first for our Club

I am delighted to bring you the news that, for the very first time, a Phyllis Court member has won a Croquet Association Most Improved Player Award - *It's Patricia!*

Patricia Mulcahy is the UK Most Improved Female GC Player of 2022

Huge congratulations to Patricia!

The award is judged by the CA Handicap Committee and awarded annually by the Croquet Association.

Statistically, Patricia has achieved the largest increase in international Ranking Grade of any female player in the World, and she is second over all to a male US player.

Patricia's prize is her name on the impressive 'Colman Trophy', a beautiful cast bronze and carved wood piece, designed by Phyllis Court member and artist Allan Henderson, commissioned and donated to the Croquet Association by our own Frances Colman. A presentation will be made in due course.



12 November - Ruth Raunkiaer & Andy Jones have qualified as Golf Croquet Referees

Hearty congratulations to Ruth and Andy, who studied exceptionally hard before attending a preparation course and examination last weekend at the Chiltern Academy, High Wycombe.

Ruth and Andy are very welcome additions to our band of Qualified Referees (see below).

It is worth noting that few other clubs have anything like this number of qualified referees in their memberships, and as members of Phyllis Court Croquet Club we are especially fortunate to have this expertise in such abundance.

Championship Referee (GC)	Frances Colman, Chris Roberts
Referee (GC)	Frances Colman, Raghu Iyer, Helena Jansson, Richard Peperell, Andy Jones , Ruth Raunkiaer , Chris Roberts, Russell Robinson, Raymond Wood
Referee (AC)	Chris Roberts
Assistant Referee (AC)	Frances Colman

11 November - News of Court Improvements

Levelling

You may remember from previous AGMs, we have been building-up our financial reserves for a few years now, with the intention of undertaking some large-scale levelling work on our courts. One of the courses of action we have gone so far as to have had the courts laser-levelled and, as we reached the financial position that was becoming feasible, we sought advice from our splendid grounds contractor Mark Beckinsale.

With his expert knowledge of our location (gained from many years working on lands around the river), Mark has told us that the unstable nature of the ground beneath our courts, means that any overall levelling work would likely need to be repeated within five years, and therefore, a better approach is to address this with more localised and more frequent levelling applications.

We will be undertaking a site levelling survey fairly soon, to map the dips and humps which will inform where raising and lowering are needed, before a first tranche of work is undertaken.

I do not envisage that this localised levelling work will necessitate court closures other than by the occasional maintenance days here and there.

I will keep you all updated as progress is made with this.

Hopefully starting as early as next week (weather permitting):

Raising & Levelling the east side boundary of Courts 1 & 2 and repositioning of the access steps

The ground falls away markedly right along this edge (the one nearest the main PC building).

Members will know the difficulty in getting an even stance and having to hit up-hill from here, which doubtless contributes to the severe accidental damage inflicted in the start corners.

For this separate project we have engaged the tried and trusted Mark Beckinsale and his company who aim for completion by the end of November.

- Mark will pre-mark out a temporary new boundary line, making the courts narrower, and I will re-site the hoops accordingly, so that play will be able to continue throughout.

- The narrowed courts will remain set that way until the spring, so that the worked-on area is given time to bed-in and the (some new and some reused) turfs and seeding can take hold.

- A secondary likely gain could be winning a small amount of playing area as the bank is re-shaped but it may not be noticeable.

- Included in the project is the re-siting of the access steps back by the width of at least one paving slab way from the playing area, which will mean easier mowing for Mark and his team, less ball damage (hitting the sharp bottom step) and the elimination of our backswing collisions with the handrail that occur when playing out of corner 3 on court 2 - So good news all round.

The first sign of these boundary works starting to happen will probably be the new painted temporary boundary line, or me moving the hoops further over than usual in the next few days.

Shortly, via In touch, Chris Hogan will be informing the PC membership about these works which are being funded entirely by the Croquet Club.

2 November - Mike Percival Mallets visiting PCC on 19 November

2022 beginners - Return of loaned mallets

Please remember that period of loan of club mallets comes to an end shortly, because they will be needed for issue to our 2023 beginners.

We will put out a call for mallet returns very early in the new year.

Now is the time to think about a mallet of your own - and Christmas is coming!

Everyone - Buying your own first mallet / upgrading your existing mallet

We are pleased to announce:

Mallet Maker, Mike Percival will be visiting Phyllis Court on Saturday 19 November

Making Mike will be in attendance from approx. 1030 to 1530.

Chris will be there too with advice on the best mallet to suit you.

- There will be mallets to try and buy on the day, and others to order.

- There will also be examples of Mike's full range of bespoke hand-made models to order.

- Mike is an enthusiast for beautiful and unusual woods, and he also has a range of striking all-aluminium mallets if you are looking for something a little different!

To whet your appetite, here is a link to the Mike Percival Mallets website: <https://croquetmallets.co.uk/index.html>



2 November - BOOK NOW for our Annual Prizegiving Dinner (on 29 November)

Come and celebrate the individual and team successes at our two course-'Black' Tie' dinner. This is our big formal occasion of the year - it will be lovely to see you all there.

BOOK NOW

- online at: members.phylliscourt.co.uk
- via Elite Live app (make sure that you receive an email confirmation),
- or via the Club reception on 01491 570 500

- Here is a photo from our archives: Phyllis Court 'C' celebrate in 2014



1 November - Reminder, NO PLAY if there is Standing Water or Waterlogging

This is our courts this morning and clearly there should be no play anywhere.

To clarify, the previously advice 'No Play if the ground is waterlogged' also covers when there is Standing Water.

28 October -

Winter Rules will apply
(from this Sunday, 30th)

WINTER RULES

IMPORTANT - We are all going to have to be very careful with how and when we play in order to protect the courts, otherwise the facility may be withdrawn.

- No play if ground is frosty* - you will have to wait for it to thaw please

** treading on frosted grass seriously damages the grass plant (so don't do it).*

- No play if it's waterlogged or there is Standing Water on any court

- you will have to re-book for another day please

- No jump shots