

# PHYLLIS COURT CROQUET

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The  
Committee member  
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Older news

### Congratulations to PCC players who Qualified for National Finals

#### English National Singles Championship

Chris Roberts - 12th  
Raouf Allim - 16th - *withdrew ill*

#### B-Level Series (3+)

Robin Coates - *unable to attend*

#### C-Level Series (7+)

Russell Robinson - 4th

#### All England (Handicap)

Helena Fensome - 8th  
Dianne Browne - *withdrew ill*  
Roger Goldring - *unable to attend*

#### Grass Roots (8+)

Tony Peperell - 3rd  
Russell Robinson - 5th  
Steve Morton - 6th  
Madeleine Probert - 10th  
*(in a field of 20)*

### 2019 was our best season ever!

#### **PCC 'A'**

Runners-up in  
Inter-Club National Final

#### **PCC 'A'**

Win the  
Southern Level League

*(see News)*

#### **PCC 'B'**

Win the  
Southern Handicap League  
&

Qualify for National Competition  
in 2020

*(See News)*

### GC season-long competition finals

Open Singles (Club Championship)  
**Charlie von Schmieder** beat Raouf Allim

#### Open Doubles

**Allim & Goldring** beat von Schmieder & Gaynor

#### Handicap Singles

**Chris Roberts** beat Jeff Smith

#### 3+ Singles

**Robin Coates** beat Mike Christmas

#### 3+ Doubles

**Browne & Morgan** beat Wood & D.Norris

#### 7+ Singles

**Russell Robinson** beat Madeleine Probert

#### 7+ Doubles

Chambers & Pitkeathley v Maguire & Walter

#### **Pat Eades RIP - Funeral**

For those of you who knew Pat Eades RIP and would like to attend her funeral, the arrangements have been confirmed by her sister, Sue Taylor:  
**11.30am on Thursday 9 January 2020** at Bix Church, and afterwards at Phyllis Court. Please note that the original time of 1pm has been changed to 11.30am.  
Kind regards, *Madeleine Probert, Croquet Club Chairman and Membership Secretary*

#### **8 December - Sad News - Pat Eades**

I very am sad to have to inform you that we have just learnt of the death of long-standing member Mrs Pat Eades, who died yesterday.



I didn't know Pat very well personally, but Chris Roberts and Roger Goldring have told me of Pat's enormous and highly valued contribution to the Croquet Club. Newer members will wish to know that Pat joined the Croquet Club around 30 years ago and was a very active member, playing frequently until the end of this season. Pat was Chairman of the Croquet Club from 2004 – 2007, during which she also ran Golf Croquet and looked after the courts and equipment for various periods of time. She was always a very active playing member of the club, often captaining teams in friendly matches. She came back on to the committee in 2015, immediately becoming Secretary again. However, her time in office on this later occasion was curtailed after one year, when she was called to a senior post in the regional affairs of the Women's Institute organisation, a recognition of which I know she was most proud. Phyllis Court Croquet Club has lost a long-standing and very valued member. We extend our condolences to Pat's family and close friends at this very sad time.

**Madeleine Probert**  
**Croquet Club Chairman and Membership Secretary**



### **15 November - Prizegiving dinner supported by 67 members**

67 members supported our annual prizegiving dinner this evening. The Club ballroom was quiet a picture and have been beautifully decorated by Social Events Officer Dianna Zatouroff and it was bedecked with silver and blue balloons. New Chairman Madeleine Probert welcomed everybody at the start of proceedings and took wine with guests and several other small groupings of members who shared something in common that MC Chris Roberts dreamt up. The food was really very good indeed on this occasion and the Phyllis Court staff were attentive throughout. Guest speaker Jonathan Lamb (President of the Croquet Association of Uruguay) entertained us with recitals of his humorous poetry and assisted Chairman Madeleine with the presentation of the prizes which, as in previous years, split in two sessions, before and after dinner. It was an excellent evening all round.

- photo by Michael Zatouroff



### **4 November - AGM elects a new committee who vote in Madeleine Probert as our new Chairman**

*E-mail to members from Chairman Madeleine 10/11/19:*

**The AGM** was held last Monday, 4 November. It was good to see 48 of you there, so the meeting was quorate, just. The required number was 45! This meant that we could vote on the proposed change to the Constitution: "That the number of people required for an Annual General Meeting to be quorate be changed from a quarter of paid-up members to a quarter of paid-up members, or 30 paid-up members (whichever is less)". This was passed unanimously. However, please do make a point of coming to AGMs - it is a good opportunity to raise matters of concern to you and which can be discussed with other members. This helps to give a steer to the Committee. In fact, there were some good points raised throughout this AGM, touching on various issues including: how we can maintain the number of new members playing at Mix-In; how to help the more competitive-minded players develop their game; how to attract more members to try Association Croquet. The Committee will now consider how to address these matters.

#### **Now to tell you about the Committee.**

Three people retired this time: Chris Roberts, Pauline Wood and Colin Morgan. We thanked them all wholeheartedly for their tireless work and the huge contribution they have made to the Croquet Club. Between them they have served on the Committee for 23 years, which is an incredible record. In recognition of the exceptional contribution that Chris Roberts has made to both the Phyllis Court Croquet Club and to the wider sport of Croquet, the previous Committee nominated him for a Croquet Association (CA) Diploma for Services to Croquet. This has been granted by the CA and was awarded to Chris at the AGM of the CA a few weeks ago. The full citation for this award will appear as an appendix at the end of the Minutes, which will be sent out very soon. Well done Chris, and our warmest congratulations!

#### **So, now to the new Committee:**

Paddy Bunch, Roger Goldring, Raghu Iyer, Madeleine Probert and Diana Zatouroff were all willing to stand for re-election. Russell Robinson stood for election for the first time (and he only joined the Croquet Club this year!). I'm pleased to tell you that we were all elected unanimously, and we're delighted to welcome Russell on board.

As prescribed by our constitution, immediately after the AGM, the new committee met briefly to elect the Club Officers from within their number and the following were elected:  
**Secretary - Roger Goldring**

Treasurer - Russell Robinson  
Chairman - Madeleine Probert

I am honoured to have been elected as Chairman and look forward to working with the other elected members, as a strong team, to look after the interests of all members of the Croquet Club.  
I want to continue Chris Roberts' vision of "something for everyone" - to provide enjoyable play for all standards and aspirations, from social to competitive play at the highest level, and everything in between.  
Last year we looked at ways to improve the experience for new members and this year I hope we can address the issue of retention. It would be good to look at ways to increase the number who continue playing after the Initial Beginners Training.  
I would be delighted to hear from members, particularly those who have joined in the last two years, with ideas and suggestions about their own experiences and ways to support their continued enjoyment of the game.

Finally, I look forward to seeing as many of you as possible at our Annual Dinner next Friday, 15 November.  
This will be an enjoyable evening, offering the opportunity to socialise with Croquet Club members, as well as applauding those who have done well this season. The highlight will be hearing from our very entertaining speaker, Jonathan Lamb, a former diplomat and now an actor, poet, seriously good croquet player and personal friend of Chris Roberts.  
With this raconteur and reader of his own humorous verse, we are in for a fun evening!  
Don't forget to book by Tuesday 12 November!

With best wishes,  
Madeleine Probert, Chairman, Phyllis Court Croquet Club

Chris Roberts receives a Croquet Association Diploma for Services to Croquet from CA President Quiller Barrett  
(photo by Frances Colman)

2019 CA Diploma Award



Charlie von Schmieder - Our Double Champion  
(photo by Michael Zatouroff)

### 12 October - von Schmieder wins GC Open Final to become our Double Champion

*Report for The Henley Standard:*

Charlie von Schmieder became the Phyllis Court Double Champion on Saturday when he won the final of the Club's Open Golf Croquet (GC) Singles season-long competition.  
He had already beaten all his opponents in a gruelling best-of three round robin series of matches to secure the Association Croquet (AC) title a fortnight ago.

For some years, Phyllis Court Ireland International, von Schmieder was head and shoulders above the skill level of all other players at the club, but in recent times the overall standard of play at Phyllis Court has improved greatly and successful challenges have been made to von Schmieder's twin crowns.  
Indeed, whilst maintaining a vice-like grip on the AC Champion's tag until last season, von Schmieder had had to yield the GC title to Chris Roberts (three times) and Ian Norris (once) and had not won that Championship since 2015.

The top end of Phyllis Court was significantly bolstered in 2018 with the arrival of Raouf Allim who, after a period of re-acquainting himself with AC after a thirty year lay-off from the sport and having to learning the GC game that was new to him, demonstrated his prowess in sweeping the board in winning both Club titles last year.

At the start of this season, it was clear that von Schmieder had decided that this was a challenge that had to be met, and with the added incentive of playing in the GC World Championships this summer, he was seen honing his skills still further on the practice courts far more frequently than before.

It was no surprise therefore that six-time former Phyllis Court champion von Schmieder and the reigning champions Allim should have met in the GC Open Singes final in a repeat of the 2018 end of season finale.

Heavy overnight rain and nearby standing water nearly put paid to the showdown before a ball was played but with both players keen to settle the contest, the first game of a scheduled best-of-three began just after 1015am.

Despite to constant drizzle, half an hour into the match, a good number of club supporters had gathered under umbrellas to see the initial half a dozen hoops shared evenly, but a confident and well stuck seven-yard hoop score from the boundary at hoop 7, gave von Schmieder advantage at the next as well and he saw-off Allim's recovery efforts well to win 7-3.

The second game was more interactive than the eventual score-line suggests, and again hoop 7 proved pivotal, and in establishing a commanding 5-2 lead there, there was no way back for Allim, and von Schmieder cruised to 7-3 for the game, match and club title from there.

### 11 October - Moore and Strachan complete their beginners training

Unusually for this end of the season, two keen newer members completes their beginners training today under the tutelage of Helena Fensome.  
So it's congratulations to Bill Moore and David Strachan, who hopefully will make debut appearances at the last mix-in of the season this Sunday.

### 9 October - Coates wins 3+ season-long competition

Robin Coates (*left*) retained the 3+ season-long competition to day when he beat Michael Christmas in the final.  
He is the first player to win this two season in a row for a decade.  
Congratulations Robin.

### 9 October - Colman & Roberts regain AC Doubles title

Frances Colman and Chris Roberts won the AC Doubles title back for the first time since 2014 when they defeated the Richard Peperell and Raghu Iyer duo +10 this afternoon. It was a close contest throughout and a more interactive game than some, and very enjoyable because of that.



### 8 October - Christmas retains the AC One Ball Handicap Trophy

Mike Christmas became only the second player to successfully retain the AC One Ball Handicap tournament title this morning, when he emerged as the clear winner with a winning record of 80%, ahead of four others tied in second place on 60%. The identity of the winner was in doubt until that last of six rounds because all the leaders had beaten one or more of each other, but Christmas's canny use of his bisques brought him a very deserved victory. Despite this hastily re-arranged date it was good to see the participation number rise from 6 last season to 9 this time, with almost all of our active AC players able to take part.

Mike was re-presented with the lovely Wooden Ball trophy.

### 07 October - Roberts squeaks narrow Handicap title win from much improved Smith

Jeff Smith (handicap 9), pictured left, extracted the best from Chris Roberts (-2, far left) who had to work extremely hard to edge the narrowest of victories in the Final of the season-long handicap competition this afternoon. Smith's 'extra turn' management was, for the most part, well thought out and executed and the most crucial of 'slight edge' clearances at the final hoop of the first game was just enough to cause Roberts to fail his hoop shot and allow Smith to pounce for a deserved 6-7 win.

Roberts had it more his own way in the second game and saw off Smith's 11 extra turns (ETs) by hoop 11, to win 7-4.

But the deciding game saw a complete change around with Smith racing into a 0-4 lead with only four ETs spent.

Good ball placement and confidence in his centre-ball clearances returned for Smith, restricting Roberts to very long range shots only as he struggled to stay in the match as the score line that soon extended to 3-6.

Roberts was not extracting enough ETs from Smith and he was forced to use the best of his tactical experience to keep his opponent from a scoring the one hoop he needed for victory.

At the long contest for hoop 12, the last of Smith's ETs was eventually used and with Roberts drawing level, a fitting finale at hoop 13 ensued.

Smith fell victim to the uneven ground and saw his first approach drift into the back of the hoop and ricochet to a non-scoring position, allowing Roberts into the fight which he won with an 'in/off' from close range.

Full marks to Jeff Smith for a great game that was right up there with the toughest of contests this season.

Expect to hear more of him in 2020!



### 05 October - Allim & Goldring win Open Doubles title in close final

Raouf Allim and Roger Goldring (pictured far left and left respectively) had to very work hard in order to win the GC Open Doubles season long competition title, in a close final today.

Opponents Charlie von Schmieder and Mary Gaynor - 'Team Ireland' - impressed throughout and especially so early on, when they won the first game 5-7 and lead the second 2-4.

Gaynor was plying particularly well with good ball placement and trademark close quarter stop shots.

But Allim and Goldring had the big match experience to hold their nerve to clinch that second game 7-6 at the last hoop.

They then seemed to be well in control of the deciding third game when they established a 5-3 and then 6-4 lead thanks to Allim's deft jump at hoop 10.

But the Irish duo were not laying down with out a fight and a neat promotion of Gaynor's ball by von Schmieder as he score hoop 11 made a fight for the penultimate hoop which they eventually won.

However, conceding the first stroke to the last hoop 13 was always going to be crucial and Goldring was able to score from two yards to complete the 5-7, 7-6, 7-6 match and title winning score-line.

