



THE STICKY WICKET

JANUARY 2023



HAPPY NEW YEAR!



WHAT'S AHEAD FOR 2023?

Tom Lindley, New Board of Directors President, Stakes Out the Year



Tom Lindley

We are looking forward to a great year of expanding our capabilities, adding new members, and making membership at the nation's best croquet facility even better. It is a big agenda. I believe in delegating for efficiency and increasing widespread participation. Accordingly, with our Board's concurrence, I will appoint diverse Task Forces to make recommendations to the Board. Here are my priorities.

A. IMPROVE COMMUNICATIONS AND TRANSPARENCY

Explore how to make Board activities more open, including giving members the ability to make presentations to or comments to the Board and holding more frequent Open Forums. Also:

- Add a Suggestion Box to our website and install an actual Suggestion Box at NCC.
- Make the Club's financials both more intelligible and more easily accessible so members know where their dues are spent.

B. HIGHLIGHT SPORTSMANSHIP AND FUN IN GAMES

- Talk about and emphasize sportsmanship and fun in our play and games.
- Personalize and make less formal the process for addressing any complaints.
- Appoint a Grievance Committee separate from the Board.

C. MAKE IT EASIER TO RESERVE & CANCEL COURTS

D. IMPROVE OUR CLUB'S MEMBERSHIP SYSTEMS

- Solicit ideas for adding new and retaining existing members.
- Continue to attract enthusiastic members and provide them with more support to integrate into our Club's activities.

(to be continued on page 4)

Newly Elected Officers of the National Croquet Club



President, **Tom Lindley**

Vice-President, **Suzanne Turner**

Secretary, **Robert Rochedieu**

Treasurer, **William Sadowski** (not pictured)

They join Croquet Foundation of America members **David McCoy, Harold Denton** and **Ruth Summers** on the National Croquet Center Board.

Thank you, **John Bannister**, for your three years of service as President of the NCC Board. You spearheaded time-consuming, behind-the-scenes work that is essential for a smooth-running Club, all backed by perseverance and your usual good nature. These improvements included: updating the Club bylaws, implementing a much-overdue annual audit, encouraging new memberships and streamlining documents. We are very grateful for your dedication to the cause!



John Bannister

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NCC's SUDDERBERG IN WORLD AC MATCH



Lynda Sudderberg

The eyes of the world are on **Lynda Sudderberg**. Lynda and her croquet colleague, Dawn Jupin, are in Christchurch, New Zealand, to compete in the 2023 Association Croquet Women's World Championship. A player must be selected by the USCA committee to compete.

"It is the croquet achievement of my croquet career to date, a great honor, she says." She was chosen by the committee based on her D grade, and on her expressed interest. And why not? Lynda's grade is the highest in the nation!

2023 marks the first time that United States women have participated in this World competition. It's only the second time Lynda has demonstrated her unique croquet prowess beyond these shores. In 2019, **Danny Huneycutt**, one of NCC's pros, formed a group of nine women, Lynda included, who called themselves Danny's Dames. They crossed the pond to Dublin, Ireland, where the Dames competed in a friendship tourney with Irish women as well as in the Irish Open.

Congratulations, Lynda. Listen carefully. We will be watching and rooting for you from an ocean away.
Sheila Petersen

Note: The USCA reports that **Sandy Knuth**, a late entry, is also competing at the AC Women's World Championship.

UPCOMING TOURNAMENTS AT THE NCC

- Jan. 13-15: Club 6W AR Singles Championship
- Jan. 19-22: Women's GC Open 2023
- Jan. 26-29: Florida Regional GC Championship
- Feb. 15-19: The Steuber Classic Croquet Tournament
- March 4-5: Snowbirds vs. Flamingos Tournament



WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS

Penny Antonini, Patricia & John Bassett III, Amy Bothell, Kelly Callahan, Debra & Ibrahim Chalhoub, Fiona D'Aguilar, Susanne Dansby, Christopher Darton, Verner Eglit, Ned Fleming, Jane Grandusky, La Neil Gregory, Peter Gruenberger, Halvor Mikel Halvorson, Bess & Richard Hayes, Rudolph Hirsbrunner, Charles Jamieson, Linda Johannsen, Kenith Koenig, Anna Kotsakis, Carin Lamm, Norman McMilcan, Frank Merschman, Juan & Lourdes Milciunas, Rosemarie Montello, Barbara Pine, April Russell, Lavina Seiler, Jane Louise & Robert Smith, Marybeth & Timothy Sotos, Sandy Spaulding, Louise Spencer, Diane Waterfull, Victoria Woodhull

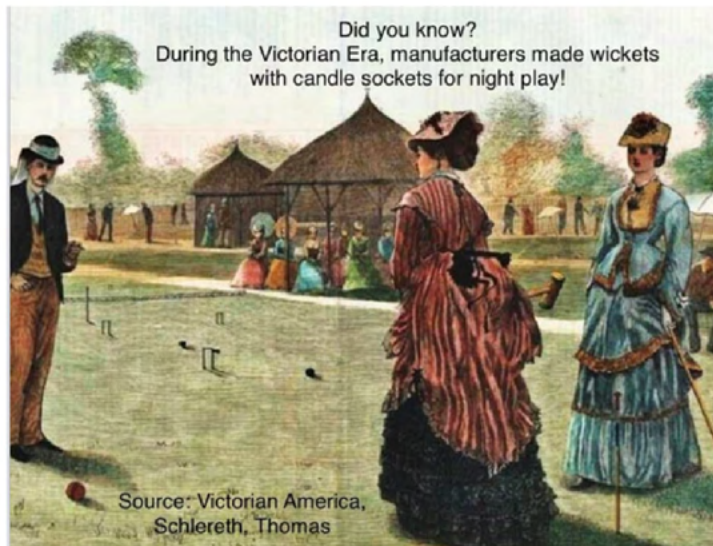
AMERICAN RULES 6W CROQUET: HAVE FUN!

As its name suggests, the American version of six wicket is the most recent version of the game of croquet. Invented in the 1960s in New York by **Jack R. Osborn** (father of Johnny Osborn whom many of us know), American Rules Six Wicket (ASW) combines the best of Association Rules croquet with additional little 'extras' that add to the joy of playing well and the frustration of not playing well. There is always room for improvement, and even the top-flight players, whose skill will stagger you, never stop learning and trying to improve. As with all the best games and sports, the rules and techniques you need to know to start playing are simple, taking only a few hours to master, but to become an expert player takes the rest of your life.

The core rule of American Six Wicket is 'continuation'. When the ball you are playing legally hits another ball (partner's or opponent's) you get two more turns, the first is the famous 'croquet' stroke, followed by one more chance to hit your ball anywhere you want. Usually, this second hit tries to take you through a wicket, at which point you get one more turn and are legally allowed to hit any of the other three balls. And then you start the sequence all over. This 'continuation' needs both skill and a lot of strategy. Really good players, who have mastered both, can 'run a break' and take their ball though all twelve wickets in one turn, a great frustration for their opponents. This ability to 'run breaks' is euphoric and quickly becomes addictive.

Contrary to popular myth, it is not hard to learn this game and at the NC Club we are very, very fortunate to have expert players who will be delighted to play with you or against you, and help you reach the point where you don't want to do anything but get better and better!

John Blamire



CANDLES OR LIGHTS WHATEVER, NIGHT PLAY ATTRACTS

Croquet was immensely popular during the Victorian Era, so popular that manufacturers knew that there would be a market for night croquet! Candles provided the light, quite a challenge. Folklore says night croquet was also a chance for surreptitious flirting. Heaven forbid!

Mary Shields, National Croquet Museum Historian.



Mary Shields

THEN AND NOW...

Speaking of night croquet, the new NCC schedule calls for Tuesday Fortnite and Thursday Night Owls every week, not just every other. And we have lights, not candles!

Come on out at 6pm to get a random draw.
Play starts at 6:30.



TIP FROM THE PRO

Good form equals success

In croquet, good shooting form produces success and confidence. If you practice good and correct form, you will have confidence in your game and winning success



Dick Scherf

When I teach with beginning players, I emphasize good form:

1. Mallet one inch or less from the ball.
2. Your toes located at the back end of your mallet head. No overlapping your toes forward of the back of the mallet head.
3. A comfortable and consistent grip on your mallet.
4. Your eyes directly focused on the back surface of the ball.
5. You will see your mallet hit the ball.

Your swing should occur without any wrist-twisting ("wristiness"). None. And it should all start with your mallet resting on the ground. Do not lift your mallet off the grass in order to hit the ball; slide it once backward and then forward so that its head hits the ball in its center. No "wind-up" movement behind the ball prior to one swing back and one swing forward.

You should think of the distance from your shoulder sockets to the ground as one solid object. With that in mind, swing through the ball as if it's not even there. (Never consider the ball to be an obstruction that must be punched to be moved.) So, then your swing will end with your mallet's head going through the ball, ending up in the air along with your hands and arms. Your eyes will not have moved from their location at the back of the ball; they'll be looking at the grass where the ball had been, and you'll have to ask everyone, "What happened?" That is success!

I'll be happy to demonstrate this for you. Have fun out there!

Fun facts

The oldest document to bear the word croquet with a description of the modern game is the set of rules registered by Isaac Spratt in November 1856 with the Stationers' Company of London.

E. EMPHASIZE THE IMPORTANCE OF VOLUNTEERS

- Member volunteers are vital for both club and non-club events. Streamline our system for enlisting member volunteers, and truly demonstrate our appreciation for them.
- Enhance the Croquet Committee’s new “Thank You Volunteers!” event each Spring.

F. UPDATE OUR GOVERNING DOCUMENTS

- Thoroughly review our Bylaws to reflect prior suggestions, take new suggestions, and prepare proposed revisions within 150 days.
- Follow up that work with two Open Forums specifically for discussions of the proposals. Then give our Members the opportunity to vote on each new proposal separately.

Our Board is looking forward to a year of increased collaboration and participation with our members. Thank you, and let us hear from you!

Tom Lindley, President

HOLIDAY FAMILY FUN DECEMBER 2022

Introduce your whole family to croquet. Beginners welcome. Be prepared for much hilarity and, of course, generate fierce competition!



Jerry and a visiting family



Mary Churchill Family

HEAR YE, HEAR YE! CALLING ALL MEMBERS



Hal Denton

At the 45th United States Croquet Hall of Fame Gala on February 17th, the Croquet Foundation of America (CFA) will be inducting the National Croquet Club’s own Board member and CFA president, **Harold Denton**.

Hal has been a great friend to the NCC, personally funding numerous improvements, including court lighting, mowing equipment, aeration equipment, rollers, golf carts, pavilion chairs, among others. A true ambassador for the sport, Hal has had an excellent croquet career in both GC and A6W, and a long and significant impact on the growth of the sport.

We are also honoring **Bob Alman** (posthumously) a former National Croquet Club and World Croquet Federation Hall of Fame member, and **Rory Kelly**, from the Phoenix, AZ Club.

NC Club members are being asked to support this important event in any of three ways: by attending, by sending a contribution, and/or by donating auction items. Auction items include: home items, artwork, event tickets, gift certificates for restaurants, and professional service.

Invitations will be mailed shortly. For information, contact co-chairs **Suzanne Turner** suzturner29@gmail.com or **Carol Stuart** croquet.hof.gala@gmail.com.

DINE & DISCOVER LUNCH SERIES

December **Dine & Discover** featured **Dr. Maddy Singer** having us all turning our negatives into positives.



Save these Dates!

- **Wednesday January 11th** – 12:00 – 2:00 PM in the Ballroom – **Tom Lindley & Dr. Phil Robinson** – “Alaska”
- **Friday February 24th** – 12:00 – 2:00 PM in the Ballroom – Sponsored Complementary Lunch – Financial Planning – **Craig Kirshner**, Pres. In addition, **David McCoy** – The Future of NCC.