

## **Report to Croquet Australia AGM 2009**

### **From the Executive Director**

The year 2008 – 2009 has been busy from an administrative point of view. My report will include a summary of ACA tournaments.

#### ***ACA Executive***

Max Murray became President at the last AGM after one year as Vice President. Max is a very hard working and supportive President who has also assisted me with the role of Events Manager (attending all events) and in all other areas as required. Over the past 12 months we have both come to the realisation that events management should be the responsibility of a committee that reports to the Executive. Max has prepared a discussion paper for the Executive and we will be reporting the results of those discussions to the Council at the AGM. Max is also the Australian Representative on the WCF Management Committee and has been working on a draft for the new ACA Constitution.

Stephen Meatheringham has completed his three years on the Executive Committee as Senior Vice President and will be retiring at the AGM. I would like to thank Stephen for his invaluable experience and assistance during the time I have been on the Executive and also for the positive support that he has been for me throughout that time. There have been so many occasions when I needed an expert opinion and Stephen has been able to reply to my email in record time. Stephen has spent more time working in his voluntary roles on the ACA than he has spent on his full-time occupation. I would not be able to list all of the tasks that Stephen has undertaken during his term on the Committee. He has willingly taken on major tasks and assisted in so many areas and we will all miss his proof reading and formatting skills. He has agreed to continue to manage the Croquet Australia web site and will continue as National Handicapper, but will retire from the Selection Committee. We wish you all the best in your retirement from the Executive Stephen, now you can have a life outside croquet!

Bruce Fleming assumed the role of Vice President at the last AGM. Bruce's expertise in Croquet matters has provided assistance to the Executive. Bruce took on the role of Insurance Officer and has arranged through Broker, John Barclay National Insurance Scheme with Barclays in which all states participate resulting in savings for all. Bruce is the manager of Croquet Australia Magazine together with the capable editorship of Carolyn Ribone. Bruce is conducting a review of all ACA events and the results of that review will be conveyed to states following our executive meeting on 28 March 2009. Bruce has updated the Strategic Plan for the ACA with input from the other executive members. This will be distributed to States prior to the AGM.

Tony Hall has continued as ACA Treasurer (since 2004) and has mastered MYOB. He provides monthly reports to the Executive and monitors the accounts as well as paying all invoices and arranging the annual audit of the accounts. Tony has had a stressful few months watching the world markets fall and with them the value of ACA investments. He has obtained professional advice throughout his term regarding ACA finances. Tony is the Australian Representative on the WCF Golf Croquet Rules Committee and is conducting a review of the AC Tournament Conditions and writing a set of GC Tournament Conditions. Tony assists with the formulation of policies and submissions. We are fortunate to have such a diligent and hard working Treasurer. Tony, your expertise and willingness to assist in all areas is much appreciated.

John Fransen will retire as Immediate Past President at the AGM. John retired last year from the Presidency due to his work commitments but has continued to take an active interest in the activities of the Executive.

I have continued in my position as Executive Director and Honorary Secretary. The duties of the position are at times very challenging. As the only paid officer of the organisation, I am

required to be involved across the board in all ACA activities. The only way a national organisation can function effectively is through good communication. I have found that it is necessary to be flexible and to be prepared to reconsider and prioritise at all levels.

At the time that I became Executive Director, it was the goal of the Executive to begin a process of consultation and to address some of the long-standing problems within the Sport. We have continued to build upon this original goal. The aim of this approach is to ultimately bring about a new era of good communication and co-operation to Croquet in Australia and to build better teams.

I would like to thank the Executive 'team' for working together to address the enormous task of administering this sport; the 'team' of players who constantly assist and advise me in all aspects of the sport; the 'teams' of people who take on positions as appointed officers and members of the ACA committees; the 'teams' of volunteers who generously give of their time and expertise to organise and run ACA events and the 'teams' of people in the states who carry out these duties at state level. You are the backbone of this sport and without your participation, my job would be impossible.

### ***Member Protection Policy***

The Policy is amended annually and is available on the Croquet Australia web site. Throughout the past 12 months, I have been consulted on numerous occasions with regard to MPP matters. Some of those matters have required formal dispute resolution processes to be established. I would like to thank those who have assisted me in bringing these matters to resolution, in particular the legal experts who have given their time and expertise to assist the sport.

Not surprisingly, these matters take up a lot of time. The Executive will be looking at ways of streamlining the process and delegating some role within the process to states. Each state should have a procedure for dealing with grievances and complaints.

### ***Revised Anti- Doping Policy***

This policy is amended annually according to ASADA's guidelines and is available on the ACA website.

### ***BPR System***

The BPR system of breaking ties within blocks was used in ACA events during 2008. Players requested that it be revoked in favour of an alternative method. The Executive debated the matter and agreed to use another method of tie-breaking.

*Ties within a block will be resolved before across blocks.*

*Players to proceed will be:*

- *Those who have lost least games.*
- *If there is a tie on games, those with the largest net points.*
- *If there is a tie on games and net points in a block*
  - *between two players, the player to progress is the winner of the game between them;*
  - or*
  - *between more than two players, those to progress are the winners of the most games between the players in the tied position.*
  - *If there is still a tie, a tie-break of such form as the Tournament Manager deems fit may be imposed.*
- *If there is a tie on games and net points across blocks a tie-break of such form as the Tournament Manager deems fit may be imposed*

## ***ACA Coaching Accreditation***

The Australian Sports Commission has registered the Croquet Australia Level 1 and Level 2 Coaching programs with the NCAS. The Beginner Coaching Program will be ACA accredited only as it does not fit within the NCAS guidelines. Thank you to John Riches and Eileen Ferguson (SDC SA) who have assisted me in the production of the final syllabuses for both courses. John has rewritten the coaching manuals and they are available for states to purchase through the ACA Equipment Officer. John and I will work together over the next few months to formulate a suitable syllabus for the Level 3 coaching program.

John is at present working on updating procedures for coaches wishing to reaccredit.

All accreditations will be recorded online at the ASC's Sports Accreditation Online site. States have been emailed by the ASC with details of how to access the site.

John and I will write and circulate a procedure for states to follow with regard to registering their accredited coaches.

The Level 1 and Level 2 Syllabuses will be available on the ACA website this week.

## ***ACA Tournament Committee***

Once again I thank Tim Murphy, Trevor Bassett and Kevin Beard for their support and expertise in relation to the draws for ACA events and for their willingness to openly discuss matters in relation to formats and other issues that impact on events. This process of consultation has proved invaluable in tailoring events to fit the needs of our players.

Thank you, Tim, for setting up the scoring program for all ACA events. We are fortunate indeed to have your expertise to assist us with the publishing of results.

## ***Players' Meeting***

A Players' meeting was held in Melbourne in November 2008 during the Australian Open Championships. Some of the suggestions have been adopted and others have been included in the review of events being conducted by Bruce Fleming.

1. The Executive agreed with the suggestion that the Tournament Manager have discretion over court allocation.
2. Players suggested a court setting roster be established at every tournament. The Executive decision is that the host state association should be responsible for appointing suitable persons to set the hoops. The Tournament Referee or appointed deputy should check the hoops before play as a part of his/her normal duties.
3. Players requested a review of reimbursement of costs. Tony Hall has produced a review re the reimbursement of travel costs that has been endorsed by the Executive.
4. Gauges. It was the decision of the Executive that Feeler Gauges are difficult to use and should not be used to set hoops. Hoops should be set as close as possible to 3 11/16 inches. Approved gauges will be provided at all ACA Events.
5. Time limits. The decision of the Executive is that the games in the Women's Eight will remain untimed.

## ***Vice Regal Patronage of Croquet Australia***

Ms Quentin Bryce AC Governor General of the Commonwealth of Australia is the new Patron for Croquet Australia.

### ***Insurance***

The National Insurance policies have been placed with Barclay Insurance Brokers. John Barclay will attend the AGM during the lunch break to meet with ACA executives and state delegates. Please see the report from the Insurance Officer for details of the 2008/09 policies.

### ***Students and Junior Players – Fee Reductions***

The ACA has decided that full-time students will be entitled to a 50% reduction in entry fees for all ACA Events.

### ***ACA Junior Scholarships***

Croquet Australia awarded three AC scholarships to junior players to attend the NZ Open Championships. Chloe Aberley, John Smith and Robert Fletcher were selected. Chloe withdrew her nomination due to work commitments. Robert and John played in the NZ Open and found it to be valuable experience. Croquet NZ arranged doubles partners for both players. John Smith was defeated in the first round of the singles knockout. Robert Fletcher played well to get to the singles semi-final where he was defeated by Stephen Mulliner.

ACA has nominated two players for a Junior GC Scholarship to play in the WCF Under-21 GC Championship in Cairo Egypt on 18 - 23 July 2009. The nominees are Malcolm and Robert Fletcher.

### ***Recognition of Significant contribution to Croquet***

ACA will present an annual award to people who have made an outstanding contribution to croquet. There are a significant number of people who would qualify for the award. The award will be called the 'Medal for Meritorious Service'. States will be invited to nominate a suitable person and guidelines will be provided.

### ***AC Handicapping Regulations***

The restriction to alter AC handicap points between the ranges of 0 – 10 by no less than 3 bisques has been revoked.

### ***60<sup>th</sup> Australian Croquet Championships Sydney NSW 2009***

The Gold Medal, Men's and Women's Singles and the Eire Cup will be played in Sydney at numerous venues beginning on Wednesday 18 March 2009. The NSW Organising Committee under the leadership of Ken Edwards is to be congratulated for the excellent planning and organisation of all aspects of the events. On behalf of the ACA, I would like to thank all the volunteers who are contributing towards the hosting of the events.

### ***WCF AC Championship Florida USA 2009***

The following players will be representing Australia in Florida: Ken Bald, Kevin Beard, Bruce Fleming, Elizabeth Fleming, Robert Fletcher, Stephen Forster, Mark Prater, Simon Watkins and wildcard, Tim Murphy. Congratulations to all and the best of luck.

### ***Australian Women's GC Championship***

The event will be held at the VCC on May 1 – 4 2009 for women GC players from handicaps 0 - 7. Entries close on 17 April 2009. ACA selectors will be present and will utilise the event to assist them in determining their nominations for the WCF Women's World GC Championships in November 2009.

### ***3<sup>rd</sup> WCF Women's GC Championship***

The event is scheduled for 21 – 28 November 2009 at the VCC. The VCA Organising Committee is working on gaining sponsorship for the event and plans are underway for each area of responsibility to be developed. Max Murray has attended all meetings of the Organising Committee and Chris Pont and myself attended the first meeting in 2008 and the meeting held on 28 January 2009.

The WCF has indicated that the plate event will be a Swiss with an 8 person Knockout.

### ***Parity between AC and GC Events***

The ACA Executive recognises the need to ensure equality in the number and format of GC and AC events played nationally. To this end we are planning to develop the GC playing calendar over the next 12 months.

### ***GC Coaching Manual***

Bill Lawson from South Australia has written a GC Coaching Manual. The Manual has been sent to the states for their review and will be discussed at the AGM with a view to using it as a basis for a National GC Coaching program.

### ***Eire Cup and Championships in Brisbane***

The Championships were held in Brisbane at seven different croquet clubs. The ACA would like to thank all the volunteers who worked very hard to make the Tournament a success.

Peter Landrebe (NSW) won the Gold Medal and Shane Davis (QLD) won the Silver Medal; Margaret Melville (QLD) won the Women's Singles [runner-up Creina Dawson (SA), Plate winner Miranda Morgan (SA)]; Bruce Fleming (QLD) won the Men's Singles [runner-up Trevor Bassett (Vic), Plate winner Ken Bald (Vic)].

The Eire Cup was won by Victoria [runner-up QLD].

### ***Australian Golf Croquet Championships Sunshine Coast***

The Open Singles GC Championships were held at the Sunshine Coast from 6 – 9 September 2008 and the Interstate Shield on 10 – 14 September 2008. Thank you to Headland-Buderim, Coolumb, Caloundra and Nambour Croquet Clubs for hosting the events and to all the volunteers who willingly assisted to ensure that the events were successful.

Congratulations to Kevin Beard (Vic) who won the Open Singles and congratulations again to the Victorian Team which won the Interstate Shield convincingly for the second year in a row.

### ***President's Eights***

The President's Eights were held at Cairnlea on 3 – 6 October 2008. Thank you to Tournament Manager, Brian Reither, and the team of volunteers at the VCC for conducting the tournament on our behalf.

Congratulations to the following winners: First Eight, Harley Watts (SA); Second Eight, Mark Prater (SA); Women's Eight, Claire Bassett (VIC).

There have been a number of suggestions from players in relation to the Eights and the review of events will address these matters.

### ***Australian National Handicap Championships Rich River***

The AC Handicap Tournament was held at Rich River CC on 12 – 18 October 2008. Thank you to the Rich River Golf Resort and the volunteers from RR Croquet Club. Although entries were low, those who participated enjoyed a full program of play.

Congratulations to Ian Bassett (Vic) and Philip Wise (SA) who won the Doubles Championship and to Doron Gunzburg (Vic) who won the Singles Championship.

### ***Australian National GC Handicap Championships Deniliquin***

The Handicap Singles and Doubles Events were held at Deniliquin on 20 – 24 October 2008. Thank you to the Deniliquin Lawn Tennis and Croquet Club for making us all feel so welcome.

Thank you to Deniliquin Council and all the volunteers who assisted in setting up the courts. The Deniliquin Lawn Tennis and Croquet Club has agreed to host the tournament in 2009.

Congratulations to Tony Hall (NSW) and Beryl McDonald (NSW) the defending champions, who won the Doubles Championship again. Congratulations also to Creina Dawson (SA) who won the Singles Trophy.

### ***Australian Open Championships Melbourne***

The Australian AC Open Championships were held at Cairnlea on 22 – 30 November 2008. Thank you to the VCA for again hosting the championships and to all the volunteers who assisted throughout the events.

Congratulations to Stephen Mulliner (UK) and Kevin Beard who beat Peter Landrebe (NSW) and Margaret Melville (QLD) to win the Doubles Championship. Congratulations to Peter Landrebe (NSW) who defeated Robert Fletcher (Vic) to win the Singles Championship.

### ***5th Australian Gateball Championships Rockhampton QLD***

The Rockhampton Mallet Sports Club will be hosting the National Gateball Championships on 16 – 18 October 2009. It is quite an achievement for a regional club to be awarded a national championship with international appeal.

Our very best wishes to the host club and the players.

### ***Trans Tasman Test 2009***

The Trans- Tasman Test was played at Palmerston North (New Zealand) from 11 to 16 February 2009.

The Australian team is to be congratulated for its fighting spirit and for playing many exciting games and giving the NZ team some real competition.

NZ won the Series by two tests.

Maree Skinner  
Executive Director Croquet Australia  
March 2009