



THE STICKY WICKET

JUNE 2024



Volunteer Recognition Time. Thank you!

It's time to recognize those who have volunteered for the NC Club. The 2ND Annual Recognition and Appreciation Brunch honored those Club Members whose work contributes directly to the success of the NC Club and the Croquet Foundation of America. With so many to thank, each year a different group is highlighted for their work. The 2023 recipients were selected for the number of hours/events they volunteered.



- Saturday Visitor Clinic: **John Strasser and Phil Robinson**. This year, an astounding 469 newbies learned croquet basics.
- New Member Clinic: **Lynn Foley and Bob Broadway**
- Special Olympics Games: **John and Carol Bannister** (Absent); **Lenore Orlowska-Warren**
- NCC Corporate Events: **Jane Louise and Bob Smith** (Absent)
- Continuous volunteering outside official functions: **Marianne Davidson**. Love those cakes!
- Super Star Award for Continuous service for years of growing the Club and teaching 6W: **John Blamire**, whose Saturday morning clinics launched many a 6W player.

This year's Recognition Committee included: **Priscilla Flowers**, Chair of the Croquet Committee, **Franck Meunier**, Chair of the Membership Committee and **Pam Groh**, Chair of the Social Committee.

Board members, committee members all commit to many hours of service. "These are the people who step up and do," said Flowers. "We appreciate everyone who gives their time to the Club."

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NC Club President's Column



Tom Lindley

David McCoy notes differences among the Croquet Foundation of America (CFA), the National Croquet Center (NCC), and the National Croquet Club (the Club) on the Club's website. However, we have some important developments, so I am updating the news this month.

The CFA is a 501 c 3, donations to which are tax deductible. The CFA has no members; its Board oversees its activities. The Club is a 501 c 7 membership organization, donations to which are not tax deductible. The Club is made up of its members, its task forces and committees, and its Board. Currently, the CFA owns all the NCC (lawns, mallets, buildings, etc.) and employs or contracts with the Pros and staff (e.g., the General Manager (GM)). Club members use these NCC resources pursuant to the 2011 Sharing Agreement, posted on the Club's website. Some provisions have been used for years while others have not been implemented. (For example, both the Club and the CFA each are authorized to own property and to have employees, but currently the Club has neither real property nor employees.)

Each party's resources are to be shared; for example, the GM is employed by the CFA but her Job Description details her duties to the Club. The parties are to reimburse each other at Fair Market Value (FMV) for the resources used (such as the lawn resources or the time the GM spends on her duties to the Club). The parties are to meet at least annually to set the dollar amount of that FMV. However, until this year, the parties had never agreed on the FMV. That has now changed.

At the Club's May Board meeting **Bob Broadway and David McCoy** presented the outline of a new FMV agreement that can be reviewed each year so that the Sharing Agreement is complied with. Bob and David deserve great praise for this accomplishment. Their proposal will be voted on by the Club's Board at a coming meeting.

Finally, over 45% of the CFA's income is from the events it hosts at the NCC. These often involve guests playing croquet, which in turn requires Club members to volunteer to coach those guests; these volunteers are very important to the CFA's and the Club's finances. This relationship is governed by a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), which is also on the Club's website. Thank you volunteers!

Tom Lindley, President, Board of Directors

TIP FROM THE PRO

Foresight in GC

When it's your turn to shoot, anticipate what the following balls will do after you shoot.



Dick Scherf

Consider each of the balls:

1. Can you score a wicket? If you can't, then
2. The next ball to shoot is your opponent. Does it pose a threat by being able to hit your partner (or you), or can it score a wicket? If yes, then you must either hit that ball away or block it from what it wants to do. This is your "danger" ball.
3. If your danger ball is not a threat, then can the next ball, your partner, be hit into a better position by you or be protected from a threat by your employing a blocking shot?
4. If you can't help your partner, consider the ball that has just been played, your opponent's other ball. Does it pose a threat similar to your danger ball, and will your partner be unable to hit it away ("clear it")? Then you must hit it or block it.

If your answer to all these questions is no, then set your ball up for scoring the wicket. If you are a beginning GC player, these thoughts will soon become second nature as you play more games. However, your game will improve quickly if you take the time to practice on your own. If you are an intermediate or above player, it never hurts to be reminded.

OUR NEW MEMBERS

The Membership Committee and NCClub are happy to welcome our new members:

Patricia Hertzberg
Michael Hertzberg
Anita Watkins

National Croquet Day Was Just Beach-y Including A SandyJames Buffet

June 1, 2024 was Beach Day on the NCC lawns, part of the National Croquet Day celebration. The weather was downright perfect. How many clubs could say that? Over 80 local participants, including children (some with fearsome shots!) enjoyed not just the glorious weather, but the fun, the games, the SandyJames beach buffet, and the thrill of shooting the ball through those ornery sticky wickets. Three cheers for croquet!



Memorial Day 2024. A Day to Remember

Memorial Day at the NCC would not be complete without salutes to the Flag, the singing of the Star Spangled Banner, red white and blue fashion outfits, and then clams, good-sized lobsters, corn on the cobb, and black velvet cake on the all-American veranda. How patriotic can we get? See below.



Wednesday's 6W Coached Games

Transitioning from golf Croquet to six wicket AR is a lot easier when you have top talent to coach you.

Hall of Famer **Ruth Summers** started this group of newbies off in style and then headed north. Champions **Loretta Cooper** and **Bill Trower** are volunteering to carry on.

L to R. **Charlene Nobel, Jane Gaillard, Loretta Cooper, Bill Trower, Sheila Petersen, FeiFei Williams, Mary Churchill**



What's Up With the Red Spots on the Courts?

No, they are not an Ishihara test for color blindness! Are you curious? If you've noticed those red spots all over the courts, you might be wondering why they are there. Let's break it down.

According to **Omero Garcia**, the NCC Grounds Supervisor, "These spots are crucial during lawn care, as they mark the perfect positions for the wickets", he says. Typically, wickets #1, 2, 3, and 4 are exactly 21 inches from the sidelines, while #5 and #6 are 42 and 36 inches away. A red dot is painted, marking the center of the wicket. Omero and his crew use these red-dot markers to avoid re-measuring every time the courts need resetting, especially for a tournament.

When tournaments aren't happening, the courts undergo regular maintenance: aeration, treatment, mowing, and ultimately moving the wickets in a specific pattern. The crew shifts the wickets side to side a bit each week, about the distance of one wicket, for about four weeks. Then, the wickets will go around the regulatory main spot (red dot), and forward (or backward). This helps prevent permanent holes, brown spots and allows the grass to grow back and heal. To aid this process, they use a mix of fine sand and granular fertilizer (chicken manure). Omero assures us that within two weeks, the old marks are practically invisible.

"Grass is a living thing that needs constant care," Omero notes. "Much like an athlete, it must be fed, prepped and trained to be resistant". If it rains too much, the grass can get sick and may rot. If it's too hot or too cold, the grass also suffers. To keep it healthy and strong, each mow has a different direction (following a strict clockwise pattern). Every Monday, the lawns get fertilized and treated. The crew also "babyfeeds" the lawns with a mix of iron, magnesium, and potassium. Post-treatment, the grass needs time to rest and recover.



Omero Garcia

Omero's passion for the lawns is evident. He and his team bring years of experience from managing golf courses, where greens are typically renewed every ten years, due to contamination and wear. However, the NCC lawns have retained their original grass since its opening in 2002—a rarity and a testament to the team's dedication.

Our lawns have thrived for 22 years, thanks to the hard work of **Omero Garcia, Efrain Guillermo, Alfonso Garcia, Alfonso Garcia Jr., and Leandro Linares**. They start their day as early as 5 or 6am, and often work after hours to ensure we have perfect courts to play on. Hats off to the team!

I am sure now, just like me, you will now look at these red spots with respect!

Franck Meunier

Volunteer Recognition Brunch (continued page 1)



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To better communicate with the members and communities, the Club has relaunched its social media presence. Like us! Follow us! Tag your pictures and comments. We want to hear from you!



scan (point your camera to the QR code)



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