



THE STICKY WICKET

MIDSUMMER 2025



Summer League 2025 Attracts over 60 Teams Full of Spirit and Fun

The Lawn Rangers vs The Wicket Warriors

The Hoop Honeys vs The Mallet Mensches

Lawn and Order vs Mallet Mafia



While those names could be on a WWF marquee, they are really some of the creative team titles playing in the CFA's 17th Annual Palm Beach County Golf Croquet Summer League. Yes, a whole year has passed, and old friends and new met in the balmy evenings for our annual summer six-week tournament-inspired League. Seasoned veterans, new members and community nonmembers alike gathered in a spirit of anticipation and comradery.

"Great to see you again!", "Watch out for us this year!" and "Where's that beverage cart?" swirled through the air. Favorite comment overheard from a young, returning non-member: "Don't underestimate the old folks. Some of them are really good!".

"Croquet can be a serious game and we are also here to enjoy ourselves," said **Franck Meunier**, Summer League Tournament Director, welcoming over 160 players in all 60 teams, and explaining the Summer League rules. "We play, we have lots of fun! And there's the beverage cart to make sure you do!"



Kathy and the famous drink cart!

Imagine hoop #1 taking 40 minutes to play, a resplendent full moon and much laughter and goodwill swirling through the air - and that was just week one! The good-natured ribbing continued throughout. Summer League players, while competitive, also share tips and strategies with opponents all in the spirit of fun, fun, fun! Rain squalls did postpone one evening of play.

Why did players chose to participate in Summer League play? Comments heard: "I just learned how to play and I am thoroughly bitten by the croquet bug." "I love that it's a thing my family members do together." "I like to watch the more seasoned players and pick up tips, and I always look forward to the Awards Night and that delicious lobster dinner." Ah, Awards Night...one can always hope 😊



Diane Waterfall, Vern Eglit, Fiona d'Aguilar, Polly Joa

Diane Waterfall

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Club President's Column



John Strasser

New President Takes the Reigns, Sets Agenda

For those I haven't had the chance to meet yet, my name is **John Strasser**, and I've recently stepped into the role of President of the National Croquet Club. I've been a member since 2020 and have mostly played Golf Croquet, though I've dabbled in Six Wicket and plan to explore Association Croquet this fall. Over the past few years, I've had the pleasure of serving the Club in various ways: as Chair of the Nominating Committee (where we introduced electronic voting), on the Transparency and By-Laws Task Forces, and volunteering at the Saturday Visitors' clinics and NCC events.

As many of you may know, recent changes have taken place on the Club Board. **Tom Lindley**, President, and **Bob Broadway**, Treasurer, have both stepped down. Please join me in thanking them for their years of dedication and the many contributions they made to the Club. Following these resignations, the Board convened and voted to appoint me as President and **Trudy Crowetz** as our new Treasurer. Initially, the Board considered also filling the Vice President seat but decided to leave that position vacant until our December elections—giving you, the members, the opportunity to vote on who should take on that leadership role. Trudy brings a wealth of financial and organizational experience, and we're lucky to have her stepping into this vital position. Please help me welcome her to the Board and thank her for taking on this important responsibility.

It's been a busy and exciting summer! You've probably noticed the refreshed Club website. We're integrating new software to streamline many of the things you do as a member: soon you'll be able to renew your membership online, RSVP for events, and even pay fees directly through the website. This will make participating in Club activities more convenient than ever.

We're also launching new initiatives to connect with our members more meaningfully. We want to hear from you, your feedback, your ideas, your experience. Part of this effort stems from the work of the Membership Committee, whose marketing plan is helping us shape a stronger and more inclusive Club. I truly want to ensure that every member feels welcomed, engaged, and valued. If you ever have thoughts to share, concerns, suggestions, or simply something you love about the Club, I'm always reachable by phone, text, or email. You're never a bother.

Looking ahead, some exciting developments are on the horizon at the NCC. Construction has begun on the new Pro/Practice Court near the pond, and the CFA is moving forward with permitting for the Palm Courts, with groundbreaking expected this fall.

One of my personal goals as President is to work closely with the CFA and our Club committees to grow and diversify our membership. As the Center expands, so should our community. Fundraising efforts are underway to help bring lighting to more courts, something I believe is key to improving accessibility, growing the sport, and strengthening our Club. This investment will help us maintain affordable dues, reach new players, and ensure a vibrant future for everyone who enjoys the game.

Thank you for being part of the National Croquet Club. It's an honor to serve in this role, and I look forward to working with all of you to make the Club the best it can be.

John R. Strasser



The NCC is Expanding and Upgrading, Slow But Steady

One new Court. The first of our six new courts is nearing completion by the pond! The grass takes six to eight weeks to grow in, so it should be playable by October. The surrounding area is also being completely redesigned and replanted. The court will be somewhat smaller than a regulation court, so we're making that the Pro Court. It will also be available as a practice court when not required by the Pro. This frees up court 12 for normal booking.



David McCoy



Parking Lot and Five Courts. We just got comments from Palm Beach County this week about the remaining courts and parking lot construction. We hope to resolve those issues and contract for the remaining five courts soon. Unfortunately, work on the parking lot must be delayed until next summer. That will provide 25 new parking spaces and excavate the exfiltration trenches under the parking lot needed to provide the water retention capacity lost by building the new courts.



Pavilions. In the good news department, you'll be happy to hear that we've just contracted to repair and refurbish all of the existing pavilions, including installation of new striped covers. We're also launching a new campaign to find a single donor to fund and name a beautiful new Entertainment Pavilion with handicap-accessible restrooms, entertainment space, and much more. It will be located about where the NCC sign and flags are now.

Court Lighting. We continue to fundraise (please help!) and talk to contractors about new court-lighting layouts and designs. We hope to have at least courts six and seven lit up by fall. Once the courts, lighting, pavilions and other exterior plans are complete, we will turn our focus back to the building itself – bathrooms, locker rooms, ballroom, and a beautiful second floor veranda, kitchen, bar, and offices, as soon as finances allow.



We hope you had a great summer and look forward with excitement to the upcoming season. The highlight will be hosting the World Championship for Association Croquet ("The Worlds") starting mid-October with players and visitors from around the world!

David McCoy

Chairman/CEO

Croquet Foundation of America, Inc.

For those of you who love to travel, How About An Arm Chair Tour of World-class Summer Croquet in Spain?

Tate packed four mallets into our giant case, and off we flew to Madrid to meet European friends whom we had met in years past in various US and European tournaments. Driving five hours south through the flower-covered countryside to the port city of Cadiz, we arrived at the Novo Sancti Petri Club in time to watch world-class play at the GC European Club League Championships. Some top players gave us a thrill, including US Open's traveling Englishman **Guy Scurfield**, US Women's 2025 Open Finalist at NCC **Dominice Aranda** and Portugal's AC and GC great **Dusan Turcer**. Nearby, on a 30knot windy day, we held our hats at Cadiz's Villanueva Croquet Club with leading Spanish Women's champ **Africa Romero**.

Moving on to the amazing Rock of Gibraltar (no croquet lawn there!), we found 55km of tunnels and great views of the Northern Pillar of Hercules that extend across the Mediterranean to the southern mountain footfall in Morrocco. The monkeys took a liking to Tate.



On to Madrid where we were invited to play the following week in the Spanish GC Open at Croquet Club Campo Villa. Some 30 Greats had us needing every best shot we could make, including **Juan Ojeda** and **Andres Alvarez-Sala** part of the family of WCF Hall of Famer **Jose Alvarez-Sala Walther**; also, **Luz Maria** Prado, and NCC member **Greg Fletcher**, 2025 US Open Champ and Australian great, as well as hilarious Mexican icon **Ricky Zanzueta** (in photo above with the flag). We left some serious D-grade points in Madrid as a thank you for a fun week.

We are hoping that some of these great European players will join us at NCC for the October AC Worlds and the January Women's Tournament!

As a wonderful dividend, we returned home in time to compete in the NY City Croquet Club State Championship in Central Park. It never disappoints. NCC was well represented by TD **Tom Cooper**, **Steve Tasker**, **Lois Clay**, TM **Mark Ski**, **Doug Moore** and **Chris Morris** who all played in heat, rain and shine! Tate got Cami 7/5 but she got Steve, Chris and Justin Berbig twice, only to have **Paul Neubecker** show her how it's really done in the Finals. Oh well, she says, the Silver Trophy is lovely.

Hope you enjoyed the tour from your favorite armchair.

Cami and Tate Russack



Tate Russack, Doug Moore at NYC



Tom Cooper, Cami Russack, Mark Ski

Behold the Fresh New Digital Face of the National Croquet Club

Have you had trouble navigating the National Croquet Club website, finding the directory, making court reservations, finding membership information? If so, read on.

The Website Task Force led by **Franck Meunier** has now officially launched our brand-new website that is designed to reflect the energy of the Club, its community and many activities, to attract new members, and to provide information for the media, and for local, national and international clubs and organizations. This website, clearly separated from the CFA and the USCA, is created specifically for you, our Club members, and anyone who wants to know us.

www.nationalcroquetclub.com



"In tandem, we are also pleased to announce a new chapter in the Club's digital presence: the relaunch of our Facebook and Instagram accounts. This is your content, so please follow us and send us your pictures at club@croquetnational.com," says **Franck Meunier**.

Let's give a super shout out to those who made this happen! The redesign was initiated by **Tom Lindley**, and implemented by the Website Task Force led by Franck with members **Clint Fowlkes**, **Caryl Firth**, **Phil Robinson** and **Marie Sweetser**. The technical development was led by **John Strasser** with Consultant **Shana Farr** (who previously worked with the Croquet Museum and the CFA). A well-organized website is essential for any club looking to grow, engage its community, and present a strong, professional image, especially in today's digital-first world. And, it is also mobile-friendly. Well done!

"Our website is the digital face of our Club," says **John Strasser**, President of the Club Board. "We expect it to be your home base, your go-to for all needed information, and the focal point for the sport of croquet and the fun we have playing it. Do please give us your feedback."

They promise this is just the beginning. More refinements and new features are underway, and this platform should serve the Club well for years to come.

Please delete any saved shortcuts or URLs you may have used in the past and clear your browser history. Only use www.nationalcroquetclub.com for smooth access the new website.

Mary Churchill

scan or point your camera
to the QR code




Or go to following link:
facebook.com/nationalcroquetclub

scan or point your camera
to the QR code




Or look for following handle:
[@nationalcroquetclubWPB](https://www.instagram.com/nationalcroquetclubWPB)

OUR CLUB NEW MEMBERS

The Membership Committee and National Croquet Club are happy to welcome our new members:

Letty Aronson, Dennis Fisher, Terry Fisher, Maryann Gordon, James Hawkins, John Lively, Donna Lloyd George, Constance Murrin, Cynthia Rice



by Jane Grandusky

Your social committee keeps the Club calendar humming year-round.



Your Social Committee: **Trudy Crowetz**, Chair; **Jane Grandusky**, Board Liaison **Pam Groh**, **Lois Clay**, **Mary Churchill**. Missing in the picture **Diane Rose**.



Safety First... Help is Now Nearby!!

Good news! We've stocked up on First-Aid kits. While it seems that croquet is the only injury-free sport, we do manage a few emergencies. We encourage bold strategy on the court, but we'd rather your scrapes be treated quickly, and your aches and pains come from the game.

Thank you **Jay Carey** for donating these First-Aid kits. They are tucked inside the cabinets by courts 3-4, 5-6, and 9-10. If you happen to hit the wicket with your leg instead of the ball, and land a little too enthusiastically, you will find First-Aid nearby.

The main First-Aid cabinet is still located in the front office, and the AED (defibrillator) will soon relocate near the locker rooms for quicker access in case of emergency.

Stay safe, play smart, and remember: the only thing we want bruised out there is your ego (just a little) after a good match!



Croquet Day - Pirates of West Palm Beach!



Summer League, cont.

