



# CROQUET MATTERS

# MARCH 2021

## Contents

Chief Executive .....1

Tribute to Paul Skinley .....2

Croquet New Zealand Tournaments .....3

    Miss Edwina Thompson Silver Tray Invitation .....3

    Roger Murfitt Trophy Invitation .....3

    Mrs R.A. Clarke Copper Tray .....3

    Don Reyland Stars Final .....4

Gateball .....4

Player responsibility to declare faults against themselves .....4

No More Cheques .....4

most. Always happy, always positive, always welcoming. It was impossible to walk away from an interaction with Paul without feeling better about your day, even if it was just a simple “Kia ora, how’s its bro?”.

I am grateful to have been lucky enough to know Paul.

Paul, you will be greatly missed.

Included in this month’s edition of Croquet Matters are some tributes to Paul as well as other updates from March.

*Jake Inwood*

## Chief Executive



March 2021 was a difficult month for many in the croquet community as one of the legends of the game, Paul Skinley, passed away.

The loss of Paul was felt around

the world as people have paid tribute and shared so many fond memories on the Nottingham List and Facebook.

While Paul enjoyed a decorated career and was a more than willing volunteer to help the game he loved, it will be Paul’s demeanour that I will miss the

## Tribute to Paul Skinley



1982 Past NZ Open Champions

**Chris Clarke** – originally posted on the Nottingham List.

Paul had been seriously ill for some time, but had still been intending to play in the NZ Open last January had his health permitted. He was a central figure in NZ croquet and even more crucial to "the best little croquet club in the world", Wellington MCC.

I am sure others who knew him for longer will be able to add further, but here are some of my memories of Paul.

I first met Paul at Hurlingham at the 1989 World Championship where he kindly gave me a Jaques mallet bag. He was already a "legend" in my eyes having been part of the NZ MacRobertson Shield winning team of 1986. Some of the spectators at that event said he played at a similar level to Hogan and Jackson. He was always popular with spectators - his nickname of the "Earl of Elegance" was true both for his croquet and dress. Immaculately turned out (he also did most of the NZ team's ironing!), Paul had a highly unusual technique, playing Solomon grip with his toes pointing together so that the mallet would not pass between them, but instead had to be lifted over them. He had a long backswing for power strokes which often went past 90 degrees and yet it was his touch that was his major strength.

Paul won all of his MacRobertson Shield doubles when partnering Bob Jackson. They didn't really get on too well personally, but this seemed to bring out the best of them at doubles. He played in seven MacRobertson Shield teams, winning twice and is one of only 6 players to have won over 50 matches. He won the NZ top Invitation ten times, NZ Men's 5 times and NZ Open 3 times. He also completed the

first sextuple peel in the MacRobertson Shield in 1979.

Paul was made a Life Member of Wellington MCC, a place that will not feel the same without him. He served in many capacities on CNZ committees including Selection, Handicapping and Tournament. He was made a Life member of CNZ in 2019, where he had already been inducted into their Hall of Fame. In his acceptance speech, Paul emphasised how important being a gay Maori man had been in his life at a time when there was less tolerance than nowadays. With a life filled with croquet, Paul could always be relied upon to find an entertaining story about croquet from the past and was good company. Many thanks to everyone in Wellington who has supported him in recent years and condolences to all his friends and family.

**John Prince** – Originally posted on the Nottingham List.

For many of us tournaments won't be quite the same anymore without Paul.

His first NZ Championship was in 1974 (if my memory is reliable) where he won the Heenan Plate, the following season he was runner up in the NZ Open. Chris has covered his impressive record, including his never losing an international doubles match partnering Bob Jackson. Paul's MacRobertson sextuple was at Rotorua against Australia and in a doubles match, not sure whether Bob discussed the one back leave with him or not! I remember a high-tension doubles match during the 1982 series when partnering Paul against a formidable Australian pair. At one point Paul considered he had a lift from a hampered position, so we called the referee who readily agreed, Paul picked up his ball and there was an immediate explosion from the opposition who demanded he replace the ball. The tournament officials took over, the referee went home in tears, the opposition were still fuming, Paul who said his knees were knocking took his lift and we went on to win the match +1, +2. In 1986 at Cheltenham in a vital match against William Prichard, Paul hit a magnificent last chance long roquet on a ball partially wired for victory. Paul was a very stylish touch player and inspired many players who adopted his technique. A challenging opponent who was always a pleasure to play against regardless of the result. On tour he was a great team man and wonderful company at the end of a day's play. We were David Godfree's guests at Wimbledon for a game of croquet

leaving and returning to the Hurlingham club in David's vintage car, a delightful day, Paul turned to me and said, "Ah this is the life". He delighted in meeting John Solomon, John's wife Barbara and mother Pat, the latter was so impressed by Paul's demo of a break played one handed at the Crawley club. For many years prior to the introduction of the automatic handicap card system Paul was the CNZ Handicapper, he kept extensive records of countless players results and made handicap adjustments in a completely impartial manner. We will miss you so much Paul. R.I.P. The Earl of Elegance.



1982 MacRobertson Shield Team



Paul receiving his CNZ Life Membership in 2019

## Croquet New Zealand Tournaments

### Miss Edwina Thompson Silver Tray Invitation

The Miss Edwina Thompson Silver Tray Invitation was contested at the Takapuna Croquet Club from 18<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> March 2021.

A reduced field of 6 players contested a double round robin format vying to be crowned 2020-21 champion.

Steve Clarke (Bay of Plenty) won 9 of his 10 games accumulating +103 net hoops on his way to claiming the 2020-21 title.

John Christie (Thames Valley), who had one this tournament the past two season, came second with 7 wins.

Full results can be found [here](#).

### Roger Murfitt Trophy Invitation

The Roger Murfitt Trophy Invitation was once again staged at the Petone Central Croquet Club in Wellington from the 18<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> March 2021.

Similar to the Edwina Thompson Invitation, a reduced field of 6 meant that they played a double round robin over the 4 days.

Len Lea of Wellington was crowned the 2020-21 champion after he amassed an impressive +110 net hoops during his 9 wins. Jim Wardle (Auckland) came second with 7 winds.

Full results can be found [here](#).

### Mrs R.A. Clarke Copper Tray

The Mrs R.A. Clarke Copper Tray invitation saw 9 players compete for the title at Leamington Croquet Club from 19<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> March 2021.

The field proved to be very even as four players were tied after the 3 days with 6 wins from 8 games each. Coming down to net-hoops, Bonnie Johnstone (South Taranaki) claimed victory with +36 over Mike McClure (Nelson) who secured second with +32.

Full results can be found [here](#).

## Don Reyland Stars Final

13 Associations were represented in Nelson over the 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> of March 2021.

Due to the weather forecast, players were split into two blocks for Saturday with super sections to be played on Sunday to determine the winner.

Wellington's Keelan Macfadyen ensured the trophy would return to Wellington after qualifying top of block 2 and then finishing top of the super section with 4 wins from 5 games.

Full results can be found [here](#).

## Gateball

Over the past couple of months, CNZ has been keeping the members informed of any developments around gateball which was first discussed at the 2020 AGM. If you have missed this, you can go back and check old Croquet Matters [here](#).

Since the last edition of Croquet Matters, Gateball New Zealand (GNZ) have advised that they wish to discontinue discussions about GNZ and CNZ working together at this time.

Although this will bring an end to the discussions for now, CNZ has advised GNZ that we would be happy to re-initiate the discussion when they are ready.

## Player responsibility to declare faults against themselves

Players (in both codes) are reminded that having a referee declare a shot clean does **not** remove the requirement for players to declare a fault against themselves.

This is **not** dissent and is in fact required by Rule 15.1.2 in GC and Law 55.2.1 (7<sup>th</sup> Edition) in AC. Tournament Regulation 25.1 reiterates this for both codes: "The presence of a referee does not relieve a player in a game of the duty to draw attention to an irregularity that the player thinks the referee may have overlooked.". This regulation makes it very explicit that the requirements of GC Rule 11.3.1 and AC Law 29.6 (7<sup>th</sup> Edition) apply to the striker as well as a referee called to observe the stroke.

So, if you believe that it is more likely than not that you have committed a fault (for example double tap or prolonged contact) and the referee doesn't call it you must declare it yourself.

## No More Cheques

In February 2020, Kiwibank discontinued cheques. Thankfully, CNZ still maintained an account with ANZ which has enabled members, clubs and Associations to continue to pay by cheque.

However, ANZ are now discontinuing their cheque services from 31 May 2021.

This means that CNZ will no longer be able to accept cheques as a form of payment. All payments will need to be made via internet banking.