



# CROQUET MATTERS

# MARCH 2020

## Contents

President’s Corner.....1  
 Executive Director Update .....2  
 Tournament Results.....2  
 Don Reyland Stars Final.....2  
 CNZ AC Invitations.....3  
 Club News.....4  
     Wellington Municipal Croquet Club turns 100 .....4  
     First New Zealand Open Gateball Championship ...5

## President’s Corner

Life is what happens when you are busy making other plans. Covid-19 is making us plan for an unknown. Travel has been brought to a standstill. Operating schedules for hip replacements and other non-urgent surgery are being tossed out the window. My sympathy to all you croquet players who have now to wait to be relieved of pain.

Where does this leave CNZ? “NZ is the last bus stop on the planet.” (David Lange 1942-2005.) So, in the



scheme of things, with caution, we may come through this crisis relatively unscathed. My guess is that things will never return to how they were before. As people adapt to working from home, as electronic communication improves, life will permanently be changed.

The country is now in level 4 lockdown. “If you have any questions about what you can or can't do, and you're looking for answers, apply a single principle. Act like you have Covid-19. Every move you make could be a risk to someone else. That is how we must all collectively think now.” Jacinda Ardern.

If this still doesn’t answer your query, check with the local police if you want to engage in a certain activity. As reported in Stuff there are mixed messages being put forward to the public. The Police have the final say, as they enforce the rules.

Where does this leave our croquet lawns? Well, I doubt if the country sees mowing them is an essential service. Hopefully there will be some relaxation at the end of this block of quarantine. I know Zespri kiwifruit picking has come to a halt and other fruit picking is threatened. For many this is their annual income.

Take care, re-evaluate and use this time wisely.

Kathie Grant

## Executive Director Update

The last couple of weeks have been a whirlwind. From going about our business as usual to now facing four weeks in lockdown.

While I have endeavoured to maintain constant communication throughout this process with Associations, Croquet Matters provides me with an opportunity to let you all know what is happening.

Firstly, we are in a relatively lucky situation compared to many other sports. As this lockdown has begun in late March, many of our tournaments have already been completed and we were heading towards our off-season.

What this does mean though is that the final tournaments and programmes for this season have either been cancelled or postponed. You can see the status of these in our website [news article](#).

Throughout this month in lockdown, CNZ will continue to operate as normal. This means that we will continue to plan for the 2020-21 season with optimism that the decisive actions the Government has taken, will allow us to begin the 2020-21 season in September as planned.

CNZ cannot stress enough how important our members are to us and their health. That is why the Executive have decided that the 'green-light' for CNZ tournaments and programmes to resume will be when the Government Alert Level is Zero.

Finally, take care of yourself during this next month. Reach out to your friends and family to see how they are. It is a difficult, unprecedented time but together we will get through this!

See you all on the lawns shortly!

## Tournament Results

### Don Reyland Stars Final (GC)

1<sup>st</sup> Colin Menzies (Wellington)  
2<sup>nd</sup> Peter Burt (Marlborough)

### CA Silver Tray Invitation (AC)

1<sup>st</sup> Aaron Westerby (Auckland)

### Miss Edwina Thompson Silver Tray Invitation (AC)

1<sup>st</sup> John Christie (Thames Valley)

### Roger Murfitt Trophy Invitation (AC)

1<sup>st</sup> Ali'i Posimani (Wellington)

### Mrs R. A. Clarke Copper Tray Invitation (AC)

1<sup>st</sup> Graeme Simpson (South Canterbury)

## Don Reyland Stars Final

The Don Reyland Stars Trophy is going to Wellington meaning that both CNZ Handicap Tournament Trophies will now reside in Wellington for the coming year.



*Don Reyland and the Don Reyland Stars Trophy  
Photo by Clem Apted*

16 Associations entered a player in the Don Reyland Stars Final played at Rose Gardens Croquet Club in Palmerston North on the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> of March. The largest field for some years.

Played in two blocks of 8 to begin, the field then moved to super sections with the top 4 advancing to the top 8 while the bottom 4 went into the consolation section. With previous results carrying forward, each person played everyone from the other section before the field was then split again into 4s.

In the first semi-final, Colin Menzies (Wellington) beat Brian Goodwin (South Canterbury) in a tight match 7-6. While in the other semi-final, Peter Burt (Marlborough) emerged victorious against Arthur von Sturmer (Auckland) in another tight game, 7-6.

Burt and Menzies had met earlier in the tournament during the initial Section play where Burt was victorious 7-6. However, in the final it was Menzies who would claim the 2019-20 Don Reyland Stars Title with a 7-5 victory.

Full Scores here: [Don Reyland Stars Final](#)

## CNZ AC Invitations

Four events and four Associations represented at the top of the podium for the 2019-20 AC Invitations.

In what transpired to be the final events of this 2019-20 season, the CNZ AC Invitation events concluded in an atmosphere of caution and uncertainty.



*Copper Tray Winner:  
Graeme Simpson*



*Roger Murfitt Trophy  
Winner: Ali'i Posimani*

The Roger Murfitt Invitation field of 7 was dominated by two rising young stars from the Wellington Municipal Croquet Club, Robbie Spooner and Ali'i Posimani. While they both carded one win against each other in this Double Round Robin format, it was Posimani's only other loss to 3rd placed Marion McInnes that saw him

through to 10 wins and his first AC Invitation title. Graeme Fisher's 26-9 win over Spooner in the 2nd round proved the difference in the race for the title, Spooner finishing as runner-up with 9 wins from a possible 12. On course to their impressive finishes, both Posimani and Spooner completed their first competition Triple-Peels.

The Mrs R.A. Clarke AC Invitation, a single Round Robin of 8 players was a tightly contested event with 4 players finishing within a single game of each other. South Canterbury's Graeme Simpson dropped just one of his 7 games to edge out Brigitte Westaway (Otago),



*Edwina Thompson  
Silver Tray Winner:  
John Christie*

Baubre Murray (Wellington), and Jonathan Hart (Canterbury), all finishing on 5/7 wins.

John Christie and Jarrod Coutts, both with 3/3 wins on day 1 led The Edwina Thompson Invitation early on, Coutts carding the event's only TP in the 1st round. However, it was a one-horse race from that point onward, with Thames Valley's Christie progressing though the event undefeated to successfully defend his title.

A quality field of 6 players for the C.A. Silver Tray convened for a Double Round Robyn on testing Wellington lawns and hoops with just one TP completed in the event by Aiken Hakes early on. The field was reduced to 5 for the 2nd series with an injury withdrawal from Harps Taurangi.

Auckland's Aaron Westerby maintained his 1-game advantage over Open Champion Aiken Hakes through the 2nd series to claim his 4th C.A. Silver Tray Invitation, a title he first won in 2006.



*CA Silver Tray Winner:  
Aaron Westerby*

Full Scores below:

[CA Silver Tray Invitation](#)  
[Miss Edwina Thompson Silver Tray Invitation](#)  
[Roger Murfitt Trophy Invitation](#)  
[Mrs R. A. Clarke Copper Tray Invitation](#)

## Club News

### Wellington Municipal Croquet Club turns 100

Wellington Municipal Croquet Club (WMCC) celebrated a hundred years of successful social and competitive croquet at their formal centenary in March.

Months of planning came together on the weekend of 14 & 15 March, with events enjoyed by 80 past and current members and guests. Celebrations included a rapid-fire golf croquet tournament, cocktail party, plaque-unveiling and casual Sunday lunch. Even the weather came to the party with brilliant sunshine.



*Members and guests celebrate 100 years*

The weekend began with twenty-four pairs playing a 'hurry hoops' fun competition over four 15-minute rounds. Normal golf croquet rules were suspended so players could run as many hoops as possible. Pairs played a different team each round, and with fours double-banked on three lawns, hoops could be played out of order to keep up the pace. Competition was fierce but games were played in great spirit. Only one team - Judy Kerr and Robbie Spooner - won all four rounds, running 20 hoops in total. Runners-up Nancy McDonald (WCA Life Member) and Linda Strand won 3.5 rounds with 16 hoops. One pair achieved 7 hoops in an early game.

Many players managed a quick change after croquet and emerged in 'garden party' dress for the centenary cocktail party. WMCC Patrons, MP Paul Eagle and Deputy Mayor Sarah Day (deputising for Andy Foster) joined past and present members from around New Zealand for drinks, canapes and formal speeches.

WMCC President Susan Leuchars welcomed guests, celebrated the Club's growth and successes and thanked all contributors. Life Member and Club Captain Paul Skinley, a vital contributor for more than 30 years, reminisced on the Club's colourful history, and Sarah Free planted the centenary kowhai tree. Finally, Paul Eagle unveiled the commemorative plaque.



*Unveiling of the WMCC 100th Year Plaque*

On Sunday, visitors returned for a barbeque lunch, more talk, laughter and games.

Pavilion decor including sunflowers reflected the Club's gold and black Wellington colours from the original opening. A centenary brochure for all guests marked key historic events of the past 100 years, and two new Honours boards highlight the 21 members who've represented New Zealand in AC and GC, and members in CNZ's Hall of Fame.

WMCC opened in October 1919 on town belt land and still occupies the same, renovated pavilion. The Club marks its centenary throughout 2019-2020 and in January introduced an AC invitation tournament for under-21 players, which will be an annual event. WMCC has 79 members playing both golf and association croquet.

## First New Zealand Open Gateball Championship



*Dennis Bulloch in play at the Gateball Open Championships*

Rose Gardens Croquet Club recently hosted the first New Zealand Open Gateball Championships on their lawns in the Esplanade. Introduced in Japan in 1947 for

orphaned children, Gateball rapidly spread through Asia and South America and is now played by 10 million people world-wide. Loosely based on traditional croquet, but with smaller courts, balls and mallets, and with players having 10 seconds to get on the court and play their ball, it has not, until recently, been played in New Zealand, although it has been played in Australia for a number of years.

A third of the players in this tournament were from Rose Gardens and the balance from Australian Clubs; Rockhampton (Qld), Southport (Qld) Canberra, Mount Gambier (SA), Kew (Vic), and Eildon (Vic). Some New Zealanders were guest players for Australian clubs and Croquet New Zealand President, Kathie Grant played for Southport as she is also a member of that club.

The Mayor Grant Smith, having opened the tournament, and run the first hoop, Saturday saw teams of five competing. Here, the tactics of the experienced Australian players told, with the eventual winners, Southport Red, being unbeaten in their five games. The Mount Gambier team were runners up. The better performing of the two Rose Gardens teams was Red Sparks, in fourth place with two wins.

Sunday was occupied with Doubles play, and was notable for the play of the five participating Rose Gardens teenage members against their more experienced Australian opposition. Logan McKinnon and Jacob Mildenhall were unbeaten in section play, and in the final, lost a close game 16-12 to Philip Brown (Kew) and Leah O'Neill (Mount Gambier) to be runners up. Callum McKinnon and Bradley Forsyth, were second placed in their section and lost narrowly 16-12 to Kathie Grant and Barbara Northcott (Southport) in the playoff for third place.



*P Brown (Kew) sparking an opponent's ball*

At Rose Gardens, gateball is offered to members as a code additional to Association and Golf Croquet, and a dozen members turned out for this tournament. We look for bigger numbers for this Tournament, next year, as interest in the game is being shown in other parts of New Zealand, and we would expect more overseas players to participate.