



THE STICKY WICKET

NOVEMBER 2023



GC Club Doubles Tournament

The Club GC Doubles Tournament, October 20-22 provided some stiff competition. In beautiful weather and the with usual Club camaraderie, it was fun and games all the way. And please notice. Our fearless leaders **David McCoy** and **Tom Lindley** are also d--- good players! Thank you, Tournament Directors **Tim McCormick**, **Priscilla Flowers**, **Dave Spivey** and **Franck Meunier** for your expertise.



Winners Championships: David McCoy & Bob Van Tassel



Winners 1st flight: Tim Howatt & Tom Lindley



Tom Lindley, Mary Galasso, Caryl Firth, David McCoy, T. Howatt

This Tournament is for the Birds. Big Birds

This year's Snowbirds & Flamingos Tournament hosted by the NC Club for the benefit of the CFA was indeed a big success. The Snowbird's broke the tie by just a few points, so the challenge is set for next year. Most important, the goal of raising \$20,000 to have the Snowbirds & Flamingos placed on one of the signs under the new deadness boards has been reached. Thank you to all the sponsors, players and donors to the auction and the committee who made it all possible. Thank you, **Priscilla Flowers** and **Julia Johnston!**



Phil Robinson, Camille Catania



Jay Carey, David McCoy



Barbara Weltner



Steve Morgan, Sandy Knuth, Flamingos Winners!

*The Sticky Wicket is a publication of the National Croquet Club
700 Florida Mango Road, West Palm Beach, Fl
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Marianne Davidson, **Lenore Orlowska-Warren**.
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NCClub President's Column



Tom Lindley

"Welcome back," to those who have been away for the Summer! And congratulations to those who live here year 'round and just enjoyed another summer! It's been very busy here at your Club. While you were away, possibly to far flung places, your Board has been busy fine tuning the framework that makes a Club run smoothly. Let me emphasize the importance of volunteers.

One big challenge facing the Club this year is to facilitate the smooth running of corporate and private events, those events that allow for you to pay much lower dues. We attract these events by enticing the organizations with the novel idea of playing croquet (often with cocktails). Who can resist? To fulfill that promise, we need volunteers, this year more than ever.

The Club has worked out an agreement with the Croquet Foundation of America for them to provide a meal for each volunteer prior to an event. Volunteers meet upstairs and enjoy the same delicious Sandy James lunch or dinner that the event's guests do. Every Club member above the very beginner level should make it a point to volunteer. It is fun, you will meet new friends, and it takes only a few hours. Please contact **Lynn Foley** to sign up.

Apart from events' volunteers, there are also volunteers needed to help teach Saturday morning classes for visitors (non-members) and new members; this group is organized and led by **Caryl Firth**. She would love to hear from you.

Also, we are creating a small (2-3 member) Task Force to help us update the Club's website. Needed: one or two skilled members with tech and design experience! Please let me know if you are interested in helping us on this critical project.

In other business, the Membership Committee drafted and the Board approved a new membership application, and three Committees are working together to draft a member survey. Finally, I just appointed a new TF on Court Availability & Scheduling. This new TF is to report by November 12 on four matters, including whether court hours should be extended into the evenings on Wednesdays, Fridays, or Saturdays, which to be financially viable means the players must buy food and drinks at the bar! (Incidentally, courts are often available 12:30-3:30.)

So, as the Season begins, your Club's Committees, TFs, and Board are all busy working on your behalf. Please volunteer with them and, also, get onto the courts and have fun!

Tom Lindley, President, NC Club Board of Directors

Editor's Note



Mary Churchill

As the world around us becomes increasingly unhinged, the National Croquet Club offers an oasis of camaraderie, a place to check our sanity in a world seemingly gone mad. Here among the 10 acres of greenery, we come together in relative stability and peace.

Unlike the outside world where facts and non-facts seem to be interchangeable, truths are blurred, and infinite numbers of opinions contradict each other, here at NCC facts are facts, and these truths are immutable. For instance:

- The blue ball is blue, and the red ball is red, you know the rest.
- A ball through a hoop in the right direction is a score.
- The top score wins. A win is a win; a loss is a loss (but sometimes we call it a non-win.)
- A clearing shot is a miss or a hit.
- White is not pink or yellow. White is white.
- The Club is open 211 days a year; closed Mondays, Thanksgiving and Christmas.
- The veranda is a gem.
- Camaraderie is available to all.
- You will meet some of the nicest people you will ever meet.
- Sandy James food service is excellent.
- The Club house and bar are welcoming.
- The staff is hard working, and much appreciated.
- Volunteers are vital to help make the place run smoothly.
- Croquet is fun, challenging and a respite from a crazy world.



In this month of Kindness week and Thanksgiving, be kind and let us give thanks for what we have, and we are *fortunate* enough to have: this Club. Happy Thanksgiving to all!

Mary C. Churchill, Editor

SPOTLIGHTS

We are more than just men and women in white. We have lives.
Here are two backstories of interesting Club members.



Dick Brackett



Lou Tyrrell

From a student at the storied halls of Harvard to his induction into the USCA Hall of fame, **Dick Brackett** has led a remarkable life.

In 1987 when Dick was working for the Boston Company, the company sponsored the USCA's national croquet championship in Newport, RI and Dick became interested in the game. The following year, as a rookie, he played in a tournament with another novice, **Fred Jones**, and got hooked. "During the late 80's and throughout the 90's, I played in tournaments around the world in places like Milan, Bermuda and St. Miguel and even got an award at the Piping Rock Club for my participation in 10 tournaments."

He belonged to croquet clubs in New York and Palm Beach, and was honored to be elected the USCA president from 2001 thru 2005. When The NCC opened as a club in 2002 Dick joined. "Nearly all the members were snowbirds. When the snowbirds headed home, the loudest sound you could hear on the croquet lawns was the sound of crickets."

Dick's life is grounded in his very strong belief in God. "I believe Christianity is the personal relationship with God made possible for every human being."

In 2009, Dick had the idea to start a summer league, invite local people to join, learn and enjoy the game and help the infant club to flourish. "Sixteen teams participated the first year. In the third year we invited members to join. In the years since we began, we've had as many as 80 teams. My kudos to **Marie Sweetser** who converted Summer League participants into new members, and helped grow our Club's membership." Also many thanks to **Clint Fowlkes** for handling all the technical data.

In 2011 Richard Brackett was inducted into the Croquet Hall of Fame for his exceptional skill on the court and his role in the development and growth of the game plus a lifetime of service to the sport we love.

Sheila Peterson



Louis Tyrrell, an award-winning pioneer in Florida theatre since 1974, connects theater with croquet. "The path from theater to croquet is direct," he says. "It's all about collaboration. Some people focus on the competitive nature of the game, but I love the aspect of our playing together. That's probably why I'm not big on tournaments. In the theater a fight on the stage, or what we call stage combat, is not really combat; it's more of a dance where the violence is choreographed and you're fighting together as opposed to fighting against each other. I love the fight as dance. Something you are doing together."

In 1987, Lou founded Florida Stage in Palm Beach County where he later developed more than 150 new works, an important incubator for American theater. Most recently, Lou serves as Founding Director and Dorothy F. Schmidt Eminent Scholar in the Arts for Theatre Lab, the professional resident company of Florida Atlantic University. Its purpose is to galvanize the play-making process through the development and production of new work in American theater.

As an actor and director, Lou has received highly honored recognition. Awards include several acting and directing Carbonell Awards from the South Florida Critics Association, the Ubertalli Award for Artistic Excellence from the Cultural Council of Palm Beach, the Fallon Award for Excellence in Professional Theater and the FAU George Abbott Award. Kudos Lou!

Lou discovered croquet when he and his wife visited his sister-in-law in N. Carolina on July 4, 2021, played croquet and got hooked. **Bunny Jones** convinced them to join the NCC when he returned to Palm Beach.

"The thing I love about croquet that I love about the theater is, it's full of character," says Lou. "The most interesting cast of characters outside the stage, you can also find on a croquet court. Croquet is enjoying tremendous popularity, and in the theatre we call that a standing ovation. I'm happy to be part of it, and I'm thrilled to be a member of the cast."

Marianne Davidson

Heads or Tails. Do You Want Blue?

Like many other sports, from football to cricket the world over, the game of croquet begins with a coin toss. However, if you think that the coin toss is a fair 50/50 shot, think again. **Persi Diaconis**, the mathematician and statistician enlightens us. "The toss is about physics and how the 'toss' is flipping it. If a coin is heads up when it's flipped, and does not flip edge over edge, it will be heads up when it lands."

The proper way to toss the coin is to make a fist and tuck the tip of your thumb in so that the coin can balance in the gap between your thumb and index finger. Next vigorously flick the thumb up so that the coin flips and spins in the air and lands either heads or tails up. This small gesture, which starts the croquet game, has changed the history of the world. For instance.

In Super Bowls, the coin toss determines which team gets the ball first. 10,000 coins are specially minted for the bowl, one of which is used for the toss. The rest are sold and become collector's items.

Pioneers **Asa Lovejoy** of Boston and **Francis Pettygrove** of Portland, Maine vied with a coin toss to name a 640-acre site to which each had a claim in what was then known as The Clearing. Pettygrove triumphed and the site became Portland, Oregon.

In 1903 **Wilbur Wright** bested his brother Orville in a coin toss for the chance at the first crack of flying. In a twist of fate, Wilbur's flyer failed and landed in the sand but Wilbur, having won the toss, was immortalized in a photograph showing him running alongside his grounded plane.



In 1969 the owners of two prestigious stables flipped a coin for the pick of two foals sired by **Bold Ruler**. **Ogden Phipps** of Wheatly Stable, having won the toss, picked one of the foals leaving **Penny Chenery** of Meadow Stables with a yet unborn colt that would be named Secretariat. Secretariat would go on to win the triple crown and be 2nd on a list of the top 100 greatest individual sports performances ever.

As NCC's **Michael Todarovich** noted "The coin toss is a venerable croquet tradition. Over 150 years ago when the Brits started playing croquet, they used a coin toss to see who would go first. And the time-honored tradition continues."

So just flip the coin into the air and let the games begin.

Sheila Petersen

Women's International Friendship Cup Golf Croquet Tournament



Pam Groh, Gay Cinque, Suzanne Turner, Caryl Firth, Mary Galasso,

The Women's 2023 International Friendship Cup Golf Croquet Tournament in Hartfield, VA at the Chesapeake Bay Croquet Club was held on October 26-29, 2023. Five women from NCC attended: **Gay Cinque, Caryl Firth, Mary Galasso, Pam Groh and Suzanne Turner**. After playing in scramble blocks, Caryl and Mary made it to the Championship level and took third and sixth place. Pam won first place in Second Flight. Well done, NCClub players!

The weather was fabulous and the competition challenging. Many friendships are forming as the tournament is in its third year. The overall Champion, Cheryl Bromley, will be inducted into the Hall of Fame during the Steuber Classic at the NCC in March 2024.

Mary Galasso

OUR NEW MEMBERS

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

Marlene Bogart
Brad Douglas
Joanne Douglas
Robert Glass
Mark Grandusky
Melanie Harris
Stuart Katz
Nick Logothetis
Jennifer Loving
Bettina Mamone
Helen Mudrick
Christina Paterno
Diane Vought
Erica Williams
Larry Winnerman
Lorrie Winnerman

ATTENTION READERS! *The Sticky Wicket* is a publication of the NC Club for its members. We will be here for you seven months plus one summer issue to keep you posted on latest games, players and ideas that make things happen.

The Sticky Wicket would like to have money to print hard copies for those who don't have emails, for visitors and for prospective members. Cost: \$960 for the year or \$120 per issue. We welcome your thoughts, suggestions and/or donations.

We would also welcome anyone with writing, particularly journalistic writing, background. Contact **Mary Churchill**, mcchurchill@gmail.com or any committee member: **Marianne Davidson, Mary Galasso, Lenore Orlowska, Sheila Peterson, Yen Sullivan.**



Attention All Tigers!

Those of you indefatigable competitors looking to schedule for the fall/winter season, here are the 2023-24 tournaments at NCC and Sarasota. The more players from the NC Club the better!

- 11/8/23 USCA Seniors/Masters Championship 6W at NCC
- 11/14/23 US Open AC at Sarasota
- 12/1/24 GC Club Teams at Sarasota
- 12/8/24 6W National Club Doubles at NCC
- 1/4/24 USCA Florida Regional GC Championship Singles & Doubles, Sarasota
- 1/12/24 National Croquet 6W Singles at NCC
- 1/18/24 Women's GC Open at NCC
- 2/23/24 GC Shootout at Sarasota
- 2/28/24 Steuber Classic GC and 6W at NCC
- 3/8/24 USCA Club Teams GC Singles at NCC
- 3/14/24 6W Club Teams at NCC
- 4//5/24 National GC Singles at NCC
- 4/10/24 USCA GC 8's at Sarasota

ANNUAL ELECTION, DECEMBER 7, 7 PM, UPSTAIRS AT THE NCC

This year, following a bylaw change to stagger Board terms, election terms will be as follows:

- Tom Lindley** – President, 2 years
- Phil Robinson** – Vice President, 2 years
- Thomas Cooper** – Secretary, 1 year
- Bob Broadway** – Treasurer, 1 year
- Caryl Firth** – At Large, 2 years

This slate was proposed by the Nominating Committee. There are no challengers.

SAVE THE DATES!

- Tree lighting on November 30th
- Dine and Discover Luncheon, Yoga December 14th
- Holiday dinner on December 16th
- New Years Eve golf croquet tournament on December 31st



GC Club Doubles Tournament



Mary Galasso, Caryl Firth,
Jane Grandusky, Nancy Sansalone



Trudy Crowetz, Kat Robertson,
Cheryl Harders, Lois Clay



Cami Russack
Nancy Sansalone



Vicky Naranjo, Lin Irey



Tom Cooper, Priscilla Flowers, Brian Mitchell,
David Ekstrom



Suzanne Turner, Cami Russack,
Tate Russack, Pam Groh



Camille Catania, Neil Trimble,
Bruce Hindin, Lynn Foley

**“A community that is engaged and working together can be a powerful force”
-Idowu Koyenikan**

GC Club Doubles Tournament



Bob Broadway, Camille Catania,
Lynn Foley, Lin Irely



Jane Grandusky, Franck Meunier
Nancy Sansalone,
Caryl Firth, Phil Robinson



Priscilla Flowers
Brian Mitchell



David Spivey, Bill Trower



Nancy Sansalone, Jane Grandusky



Chris Morris, Bev Cardo



Watching the Finals on the veranda



Fei Fei Williams, Barbara Bielenberg,
David McCoy, Bob Van Tassel



Jay Carey, Barbara Bielenberg, Fei Fei Williams, Alex Galasso



Ready, aim and hit it straight!

USCA Seniors Masters Tournament



David Ekstrom , Grand Master Award presented by Dick Sullivan



Carla Rueck, Bob Van Tassell Senior Master Champion



Randy Cardo and Danny Huneycutt (not in picture) win Championship Doubles



Kat Robertson First Seniors Singles winner



Yen Sullivan First Master Singles winner



Bill Trower & David Spivey First Flight Doubles winners

Dine & Discover



The National Croquet Club is pleased to announce a new 'Dine & Discover' series for the 2023-2024 year. This program is for the benefit of members, guests and visitors and will be open to the public. Programs will feature speakers who are accomplished members of our community.

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They will be speaking on a wide range of topics. We anticipate the program will occur at lunchtime and the intent is to enlighten, educate, entertain and add value to the National Croquet Club.

Please join us!

Save the dates:

- November 14th - A Practical Guide to Happiness Author **Max. G. Ansbacher** will be on hand to share his journey to find his own happiness and define his tools that enable him to feel and hold on to happiness. There will be a book signing.
- December 14th - YES! YOGA Complements Croquet by **Sara Beth**.
- January 16th - Shells from Around the World - Our own **Bob Broadway** presents his very popular lecture on Florida shells and shells from around the world.
- February 20th - **Oliver Buckton**, author of The World is Not Enough: The Biography of Ian Fleming, presents "The Man Who Created James Bond: The Life, Work, and Loves of Ian Fleming."
- April 2024 - Charles Schwab Presents Your Financial Future