

Croquet Diary for the 2012 Irish Croquet Open at Carrickmines CLTC, County Dublin



Simon Williams



Welcome to the 2012 review of The Irish Croquet Open at Carrickmines Croquet and Lawn Tennis Club. Did you know that the first Irish Croquet Championship is recorded as far back as 1871 and the first record on the present Carrickmines site was as early as 1898.

Committee Members

Joe Mc Gowan Captain
Ed Cunningham Croquet Director
Gerard Osborne Burke
Alan Looney
Simon Williams

This year Mr. Ed Cunningham our Croquet Director managed this tournament while also doing sterling work coaching and encouraging new croquet players. While a heavy rain shower came down just before 9 am on the opening day, the weather improved substantially turning into one of the best summer days this year.

This year the croquet players organized their own Marquee by lawn one which was a great success particularly for the barbecues every evening. Nathaniel and Orla did a great job with the barbecue the first evening while we had good lunches, morning coffees and afternoon teas etc. all week. Many thanks to all our sponsors who gave all their time and help with the organization of this great event including Geraldine O'Rourke who looked after all of the food for the week. Well what about the croquet?

A very nervous Nigel Werner played Gerard Osborne Burke in the Green Cup and while no one excelled I would say that Nigel lost it rather than Gerard winning it off their new handicaps of 7.

Gerard and Nigel played together in afternoon in the doubles against Nathaniel Healy and Alan Looney.

Martin and his son Matthew who played really well. Paul put in a good effort for one of his first games in croquet this year. Paul who is a good tennis player has great potential and ran several hoops before being defeated.



Bank Holiday Monday 6th August 2012 Geraldine and Patsy played Andrew Johnston and Piers White who won plus 23 given they had 2 bisques. Joe and Ed had another tight game against Evan Newell and Chris Martin. Ed triple-peeled Chris's ball out and later decided to let Evan and Joe play a two-ball contest, Joe on 3-b versus Evan (with a bisque remaining!) on hoop 4. Evan squandered several opportunities including missing a one-yard roquet and later running penultimate by just 2 inches with Joe lined-up at rover. He still got a further two shots, but I told Ed that Evan would miss both shots

before they were played which was indeed the case. The Sports Psychologist is not working Evan.

Gerard beat Tim Furlong eventually plus 3 with Tim using his only bisque near the end having forgotten he had it for a while.



Nigel was practically a non starter against Stephen Strong who continually plays above his 5 handicap, he's being that for years and won the Green Cup I don't know how many times?

The audience thought once Nigel got in with the blue ball that he might get round and upset Stephen. Great hoop at 1 though for Nigel from 3 meters. We thought Nigel was holding back to lull Stephen in a false sense of security hoping he would set up the break for him and fail somewhere along the line. But it was not to be this time Nigel?

Richard Lamb beat Piers in the Newell candlestick hoop by hoop.

Tuesday the 7th August

Gerard beat Frank Martin plus 22 while Richard Lamb beat Gerard in the handicap singles by two hoops in the afternoon. Anne-Marie had a good win in the morning having done her first peel in competition well done. Joe McGowan had a convincing win over John McAuley with John having 4 attempts with his green ball at hoop 3 and still failed to get in through.

Trying to save their reputation, I think all the Martins were beaten today with the last match depending on Matthew.



Fred Rogerson dressed in full suit and hat seemed to be sailing through all his matches today. Oscar was still flying through his hoops having stolen another match from Anne-Marie in the afternoon.

Wednesday

Mist descended all around Carrickmines but managed to hang there till the sun came out for a fine afternoon.

Frank Martin got his own back on Gerard Osborne Burke beating him plus 14. Chris Martin played Andrew Johnson with a basket full of 19 and half bisques, which is a timber forest in other words.

Michael & Catherine Altman, Denise Mason

Evan Newell and Rónán Rogerson hardly got started when the game was finished against Danny Johnston & Kieran Murphy.

Simon Williams went around with 3 balls and finished with his second ball 26 nil against Matthew Martin who only got 2 shots in the game.

Today we had Patsy's girls playing croquet at Carrickmines ages 2 to 5. Robin, Olwin and Darby. Well done girls.

Thursday the 9th August

Fiachra Carroll beat Padraig Thornton plus 10 with a peel in the end. At one stage I asked Padraig why he did not aim for the blue ball in the hoop. He said he was wired from all Fiachra's balls. But I said I can see them but Padraig replied I can't that why I am wired.



Stephen Strong using his defensive tactics of splitting up the balls beat Frank Martin.

Danny beat Ed who managed to break down in game one after doing three peels. Well we are not all-perfect Ed? Patsy FitzGerald played Fred Rogerson who unfortunately had a little fan club who called Daddy every time poor Patsy tried to go through a hoop. Fred played a steady well-structured game as only Fred can do and was not distracted by anything off the lawn.



A barbecue evening was held in the marquee on a balmy evening with about eighty people served food. Many thanks to Nathaniel Healy and Frank Martin who kept the cooking going while Geraldine O'Rourke ran the kitchen and everybody else who helped. Anne-Marie McGowan, her daughter Christine and World Champion bodhran player Aimee Farrell Courtney, held an evening of traditional Irish music. Many people came along and were introduced to golf croquet aided and sometimes given the right advice by seasoned croquet players.

This week turned out to be a most successful week and everybody enjoyed themselves. We are grateful to everybody that helped us including all our sponsors and we are pleased that quite a few tennis players got involved and enjoyed their introduction to golf croquet.

Our incoming president Cathal Muckion came along and joined in the fun and promised more support for croquet. In writing this piece one invariably forgets to mention and to thank everybody and for that I apologize.



Nikki Wong

Saturday Evening 11th August

Our vice president Cathal Muckion and Gemma Byrne one of our trustee wives kindly gave out all the prizes at a dinner attended by about 40 people.

Joe Mc Gowan thanked everybody for the week, the sponsors and the helpers, just like the old Carrickmines and judged to be one of the best tournaments in years.

Evan did his usual handicap reductions to name but a few

Anne-Marie McGowan cut to 19

Joe Mc Gowan cut to 9

Ronan Rogerson to 0

Fred Rogerson cut 0

Andrew Johnson cut to -2

Jack Clingan cut to 2

Stephen Strong cut to 4,

Richard Lamb cut to 13 and of course the handicapper himself cutting his handicap in half from zero to zero.

I expect to see you all playing during the year and we will have an even better tournament for you next year.9

Gerard Osborne Burke

Marquee Sponsors

Gerard Osborne Burke

Joe McGowan

Padraig Thornton

John McAuley

Frank Martin

Andy Johnston

Tim Furlong

Nathaniel Healy

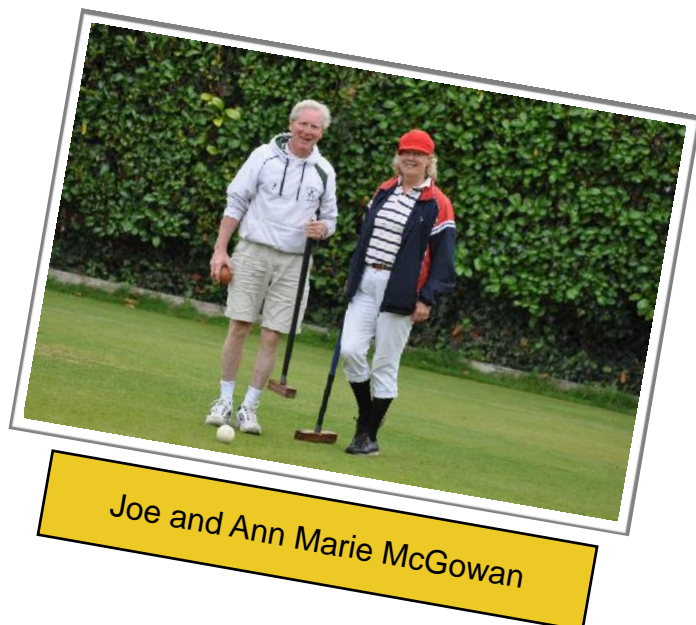


Other Sponsors:

Mr. Alan Looney

Mr. Evan Newell

Mr. Nigel Werner and Tindal Wine Merchants



Results for Irish Open Croquet Championships

Championship Singles:

Winner: Andy Johnston
Runner Up: Simon Williams

Championship Doubles:

Winners: Danny Johnston & Kieran Murphy
Runners-up: Ed Cunningham & Andy Johnston

Founders Cup:

Winner: Jack Clingan
Runner-up: Richard Lamb

Stonebrook Cups:

Winers: Andy Johnston & Piers White
Runners-up: Ed Cunningham & Joe McGowan

Green Cup:

Winner: Stephen Strong
Joint Runners-up: Gerard Osborne Burke & Frank Martin

USCA Salver:

Winner: Joe McGowan
Runner-up: Osgur Long

Newell Candlestick:

Winner: Matthew Martin
Runner-up: Piers White

Steel Cup:

Winner: Kieran Murphy
Runner-up: Fiachra Carroll

Advanced Plate:

Winne: Rónán Rogerson
Runner-up: Fiachra Carroll

Golf Croquet Pro-Am:

Winners: Kieran Murphy & Nikki Wong