

2017 Association Croquet Pennant- Pennant Managers Report

The 2017 AC pennant Season has now concluded.

Pennant winners were Sandy Bay (div 1), Kingston (div 2) Eastern Shore (div 3)

Members of winning teams were:

Sandy Bay: C Hyland, B Bye, G Keating, P McCulloch

Kingston: L Hamilton, T Parker, Gw Denehey, T Hocking, C Allison, P Tracey, H Lovell

Eastern Shore: C Murphy, R Hamilton, J Colquhuon, E Anderson, C Jones

Results were provided to The Mercury and were generally published by them.

The season ran quite smoothly until the last couple of weeks when unusually warm weather affected B Grade in particular. One week a player was taken by ambulance after experiencing heat related issues and Croquet Tasmania responded quickly with a revised heat policy which was put in place for the last week.

With temperatures forecast to reach 33 and matches planned for both Launceston and Hobart the clubs involved mutually agreed to defer the last round of matches for one week. This was a sensible decision by all parties. In particular it would have been silly for one team to travel 200km only to find that conditions were too hot.

The future:

While this season was quite successful we are not sure that the current handicap split for Divisions is conducive to the future of top level croquet in Tasmania.

Most southern clubs now have a well established group of players in Div 1 and the players in those teams generally only change due to illness or holidays. It is only due to unavailability that players in the range 6 to 10 generally play.

Division 3, as it is for handicaps 16-20, seems to adequately cater for newer players- some who do move up through the divisions but there are also some who stay around this level for some years.

Div 2 (8-20) has a wide range of players and handicaps. There are those that are moving up through the handicap ranges quite quickly, those that perhaps through age, illness or lack of regular competition are going backwards in their play, those who have just come out of 16+ handicaps and those who have plateaued at around 12-14.

Most particularly, the current Div 2 does not provide a significant challenge for those who are running up through the ranks and aspire and have the potential for Div 1 and perhaps future state representation.

We contend that there is both an opportunity and a need for an additional pennant range. We would suggest a realignment as follows:

Div 1: -3 to 20 unchanged (play Wednesdays)

Div 2: 5 or 6 to 20 new (play Tuesdays at opposite venues to Div 4)

Div 3: 10 to 20 new (play Thursdays- old Div 2 day)

Div 4: 16 to 20 unchanged (play Tuesday-opposite venue to Div 2)

We have nominated Tuesday as a possible new Div 2 day along with Div 4. That still leaves those players available to play up in Div 1 on Wednesdays, or down in Div 3 on Thursdays if they meet handicap requirements. Also players in Div 3 can play up to Div 2.

Should the Tournament Committee consider that this suggestion has merit Handicap data could be made available to it to show the numbers of players who could be available in each team. We recognise that it may not be possible for all clubs to have teams in each division (but that happens now). Additionally the Shield rules do provide that to be eligible clubs should have at least 3 teams in the 4 divisions (this was a mid 1980's amendment).

Rob McAdam & Peter Tracey
Pennant Managers 2017 (on behalf of Kingston Croquet Club)

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