

2018 Association Croquet Pennant- Pennant Managers Report

The 2018 AC pennant Season has now concluded.

Pennant winners were New Town (div 1), Eastern Shore (div 2) Eastern Shore A-Wombats (div 3)

Members of winning teams were:

New Town: I Bassett, L Herington, L Bassett (check with her whether she wants E or L on Pennant), G Fox, H Burbury

Eastern Shore: E Smith, D Jacobs, J Colquhoun, C Mackey, R Hamilton,

Eastern Shore A Wombats: C Murphy, E Anderson, J Hutchinson, N Davies, C Jackson,

Results were provided to The Mercury and published by them.

It was pleasing to see that New town were able to enter teams in all Divisions for the first time in many years. Sandy bay were unable to field a Division C team- also for the first time in many years. The format of Div C was changed to allow between 2 and 4 players (rather than a minimum of 4) to ensure that as many clubs as possible were able to enter a team. This has been successful.

The season ran quite smoothly but on a couple of occasions matches were deferred by mutual agreement between clubs. This spirit of cooperation was very pleasing to note- and was completed without pennant manager being involved.

The future:

Last year we made the following observation:

'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 Competitions 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).'

This observation remains relevant.

If the modified format is again necessary in Division C then consideration could be given to replacing the doubles with another 2 singles games. This would mean 4 singles altogether. The advantage of this is that it allows more play for those new players. If a club has only 2 players they would play 2 singles games each per day; if a club has 4 players each would play a singles match. This was a suggestion from one of the players involved in this format- he felt he would gain more by playing more singles games. It is difficult to argue with this view.

Rob McAdam & Peter Tracey
Pennant Managers 2018 (on behalf of Kingston Croquet Club)

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