



# “The Patient Malleteer”

September 2019

To all NSCC’s very patient Malleteers ( not muleteer, a person who drives mules OR a Polo Malleteer, someone who plays croquet while riding a mule), with SPRING on the way and buds bursting into life everywhere, we thought a brief, pictorial reflection on the saga that has been ‘THE LAWNS’ was in order.

**The past 18 months** has certainly been a frustrating, and testing time for us all. BUT, with Spring comes hope as – at last – the welcome sight of four GREEN lawns taking shape is evident.

And yes, it does seem an age ago when the tractors moved in on lawns A, B and C.



The grass was completely taken up, and then, once this was completed, new topsoil was laid, and laser-levelling carried out.



Levelling was followed by re-sowing – so far, so good, and those brown expanses promised much. Then, winter saw dark clouds gathering 😞



And ... down came the rain ... more rain ... and even more rain!



These months of unprecedented rainfall created havoc with the newly sewn lawns and, in spite of efforts including the laying of covers, they were a major setback to our plans to have all three lawns back in playing order by the end of 2018.

However, as the weather warmed up the efforts of John Sutton and others began to take hold.

The summer also saw the local Girls Brigade take advantage of lawns B and D to provide as many as 17 girls with the opportunity to earn another important badge. And as these pictures show, lawns C and A in the background – while still rather brown, were at last starting to ‘green up’.



And the ‘greening up’ has continued, as this shot (taken earlier this month) looking across from lawn C to the Clubhouse and Lawn A shows. Still plenty of work required, but there is no doubt things are looking up.



**And so here we are now**, on the way to a croquet laden 2019/20 season of fun and friendship.

As well as Lawns B and D, we are now eagerly looking forward to playing once again on Lawns A & C as well by December. What a relief that will be! There is no doubt that the setting of the NSCC lawns is second to none in Auckland – the tranquility of the surrounding parklands and the absence of ‘big city hussle and bussle’ make it quite unique, and a real pleasure to experience.

Your Committee would love to see you join in the play and enjoy this marvelous facility, and of course the equally marvelous company of fellow members!

And don’t forget to encourage your family and friends down to enjoy a game. At a time when we would love to see our membership grow, you – as a Club Member – can really help.

**Club Days.** Just a reminder that the ‘official’ Club Days currently are:

Monday – from 1pm  
Wednesday – from 1pm  
Thursday – from 9.30am  
Saturday – from 9.30am

These club days are a great opportunity to assuage your competitive instincts and have fun in a wonderful social context. Pick a day or days and put it in your diary. We hope you are available to play on at least one of these club days. Each club day there will be a committee member on hand to assist with running the session, and on the morning club days, members are encouraged to bring their lunch along

At this stage no particular time-slot has been allocated to AC, however any Members who would like this considered are encouraged to contact the Committee.

### **Twilight Croquet**

We have an enthusiastic core of players for whom the Twilight option provides an opportunity to socialize and play once per fortnight during the warmer months.

This year Twilight Croquet will kick off on Wednesday, 23 October, from 6.00pm through 8.30pm (or thereabouts).

As in previous years, Twilights will enjoy a shortened period of play followed by a shared meal. Those attending will be asked to contribute a plate and \$10.00 (other than full members) on the night.

The Committee would love to see greater integration between ‘Members’ and ‘Twilights’ going forward, and we would love to see this group enjoy the camaraderie of summer evening croquet as well as feeling part of the North Shore Croquet Club (NSCC ) and all that it has to offer.

It is hoped that the Wednesday afternoon club day may flow into a Twilight game for some members.

## The Neighbours Trophy

This annual tournament took place between NSCC and Takapuna on Sunday, 25 August. NSCC was represented on the day by President Murray Henshall, Co-Club Captain Grant Alexander, Lynne Knott, Liz McMaster, Patrick Keane and Ross Jewell.

Our representatives battled bravely throughout the



day, with some success, albeit not quite enough

success to bring the trophy back to Devonport. This was just the second time the event has taken place. NSCC's previous Club Captain Rod Templeman was the driving force behind its introduction, and the handsome trophy itself was very kindly donated by Rod.

Playing on Takapuna's pristine lawns was most enjoyable, as was the Takapuna team's wonderful hospitality. As the photo shows, a good time was had by all.

## Friendship Cup

This is another great event, with the Mt Albert Club this time. The tentative date at this stage is Sunday 2 February, and in all likelihood it will take place on the excellent Mt Albert lawns again this time. The date is some way off as most clubs need to keep December free for corporate hires and to avoid clashes with other tournament dates.

## Interclub

NSCC has again entered a team for the upcoming season, beginning Tuesday 1 October. Each club is expected to host at least one day's play, and at this stage we are indeed hopeful that our refurbished lawns may be able to cope – if not before Christmas, then certainly shortly thereafter. We will be liaising with Auckland Croquet in this regard.

## The Lawns (THE LAWNS!)

Greg Hall, Murray Henshall, John Sutton and specialist Lawns Contractor Glenn Ibbett continue to work tirelessly on the rehabilitation of all lawns. The Committee have identified this as our Number One Priority for the club.

In that regard, there is a significant Spring programme which will get under way as soon as this cold blustery and wet weather allows. A and C will be mown down to playing level and bare spots will be reseeded. There is a more significant remedial plan for corner 3 on Lawn B which will extend down the west boundary of A requiring scarifying, reseeding and covering which will disrupt play on B. However, we hope we might have C in play before this (fingers crossed). All lawns will be fertilised and topdressed and we hope the natural grass growth when it does get underway will also improve the playing surfaces. It is our sincere hope that all lawns will be in play by the end of this year although the quality will be variable but improving. In the meantime we will continue to have play on B and D when conditions permit. D is very soft at the moment and will probably need a good few days of drying conditions to make it playable.

## New Members (and final thought) ...

We are very pleased to welcome Peter Burt, Paul Burge and Martin Bailey as full members for the coming season. It looks like we have three new natural players with loads of potential! And in conclusion, some sound advice for Peter, Paul and Mary (sorry, Martin) from Lewis Carroll:

*“The chief difficulty Alice found, at first, was in managing her Flamingo”*