

World Croquet Championship 2009 Final Commentary

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| <p>Good morning, afternoon or evening!</p> | <p>08:37:55 AM</p> |
| <p>Finals day at the National Croquet Centre. We have a new lawn for the final. Spread across lawns 6 and 7, and at ninety degrees to the normal orientation. South boundary is on the left as you look from the verandam which is where I've based myself. The new lawn avoids the old hoop holes and the sand used to fill the damage which was the cause of all the gardening breaks over the last few days. The damaged patches most likely to cause issue are about a yard long, starting just off the yard line, affecting long straight approaches to hoops 1, 3, 1-back and 3-back. You could also land in one after running 2, 4, 2-back or 4-back. The ball stop between lawn 6 and 7 has created a darker green stripe of lawn across the middle (E-W, through the peg), but on inspection I think this is just a darker colour and I don't think it will affect strokes played across it. (although it would be interesting to see about shots played directly down it).</p> | <p>Good Morning All</p> |
| <p>Dave will be joining the commentary later, so you'll get parallel streams of commentary on the match.</p> | <p>The players have just been announced, to a riple of applause from the small crowd, and they are about to start practicing</p> |
| <p>Both players have arrived, and have had a look at the lawn. Ben has been stretching under the shelter between lawns 5 and 6. No balls hit yet. And Reg seems to have disappeared. The veranda has been set up with tables court side, so I assume a big crowd is expected, and there are around 35 people here already.</p> | <p>The final lawn has been rotated 90 degrees and put across lawns 6 and 7, so hopefully there won't be anywhere near the problems with the old hoop holes that we had yesterday.</p> |
| <p>There is some cloud in the sky, but it doesn't look to threaten rain. We fortunately missed a small band of rain which passed through to the south and west of the club overnight.</p> | <p>Samir is looking out over corner III and I am near corner IV, so you should get slightly different perspectives on the game (as opposed to Chch where Ian and I were basically in the same spot).</p> |
| <p>Johnny Mitchell is now introducing the players.</p> | <p>Reg is currently 2-balling round with his practice, and Ben is shooting at a small plastic ball attached to the ground on the EB</p> |
| <p>Reg warming up with black and red; Ben with yellow and blue. Ben is playing a 2-ball break; Reg is testing the boundaries, clockwise from corner I. Reg's shot down E boundary was perfect for a lawn speed test - 12 sec200onds.</p> | <p>He's just hit one at the perfect pace to take it 35 yards, and I timed the lawn at 12 seconds</p> |
| <p>A coin has been tossed, so we'll be underway soon.</p> | <p>There's a bit of cloud about, and it doesn't feel anywhere near as hot as in previous days</p> |
| <p>2009 World Championship Final Reg Bamford (SA) v Ben Rothman (USA)</p> | <p>Ok, and they're off...</p> |
| <p>Game 1 - Reg RY, Ben UK</p> | <p>Rothman UK going in.</p> |
| <p>Ben has played first with black, so we assume he's won the toss. Supershot ball, approx peg high.</p> | <p>K peg high SS Y peg high on the EB U shooting from 3 yds out of III Hits it at a pace that only goes off the lawn by 3 yards, and misses. Goes off level with 4</p> |
| <p>Reg peg high on E boundary with Y, posssibly even wired from black.</p> | <p>Reg shooting from a yard out of the corner. Probably a double, probably misses into IV</p> |
| <p>Ben shoots from corner III, misses on his right and goes off about 8 yards past yellow.</p> | <p>... and indeed misses both of them by vey little into IV</p> |
| <p>Reg shooting from corner III, presumably at the double. Misses everything on the right and into corner IV.</p> | <p>Rotthman lining up his 6-7 yarder at R</p> |
| <p>Ben is taking the 7 yarder at Red in corner IV. Giving himself a pressure shot early on. The 8 yarder at yellow is favourite with the crowd.</p> | <p>...and misses. Final nerves? He certainly needed his shooting boots on today if he's going to make a showing in this match, but he's not shown his ability yet.</p> |
| <p>Missed! Easy start for Reg.</p> | <p>Reg puts U to a couple of yards E of 2 and is about to make the first roquest of the match...</p> |
| <p>Reg didn't get a good rush on black to hoop 1; rushes to middle of South boundary. Approaches to 1 yard straight, and runs the hoop. Blue is waiting at hoop 2, so he's away.</p> | <p>It was a big 4 footer, and he deals with it easily...</p> |
| <p>There's thicker string marking the boundaries for the final. It's also yellow. Much easier to see than the thinner white string we've had all week.</p> | <p>He has to take off from the EB to the ball by the peg, and goes a little long, can only cut K to the end of a-baulk</p> |
| <p>Reg has got 6 inches straight in front of hoop 2.</p> | <p>Approaches the hoop to about 2ft at a slight angle.</p> |
| <p>Still going, at hoop 4 under nice control.</p> | <p>Runs it and gets a forward rush</p> |
| <p>Blue has gone a little too far past 1-back, but shouldn't be a problem on a simple break.</p> | <p>Doesn't hit it very far, and splits it perfectly to 3 getting a rush to 2</p> |
| | <p>Makes 2 from 6" with a rush pointing back towards Y</p> |
| | <p>Needed to cut it a little, but has hit it straight, so I guess U is going to be the pivot and Y will be rushed to III before being put back to 4</p> |
| | <p>And that is exactly what he does.</p> |
| | <p>Looks like my network connection has just dropped. Apologies from me, when it returns...</p> |
| | <p>Makes 3 from 6", although no forward rush this time, Y is 4 ft in front of 4</p> |
| | <p>K goes to 5, but it's a bit long. Actually *quite* a bit long, it's gone nearly 4 yards past.</p> |
| | <p>I've had to move, hopefully I'll get a better signal here.</p> |
| | <p>Reg put U as a better hoop 5 pioneer, and then made both 4 and 5 easily</p> |
| | <p>He now making 6 off K with U about 4ft in front of 1, b and Y level with 6 a couple of yards W of it</p> |

Yes, dealt with that, under complete control at 2-back.
Looks like we're having a spread with blue as the peg ball.

He's sent partner (yellow) very close to the peg, will need a little care to avoid embarrassing himself at the peg.

He has sent black over to near the boundary by 2, but is about 3 yards from blue. Needs a gentle roquet, but clubs it about a yard past the peg. Plays a little pass roll to place the peg ball, and get a rush back to E boundary. Doesn't look happy with it. Blue and black are not wired, but he'll have to be careful not to rush yellow into blue, or for red to cannon into it anyway. No angle for a promotion. Reg has joined with a rush about 9 yards north of corner IV. Challenging Ben to hit the non-wired spread.

09:21 17/05/2009

Ben has a 12 yarder with the peg ball at the ball near hoop 2.

Hits it

Takes off to with 2 yards of the boundary string, and has a 3 yarder at red, or 4 yarder at yellow on the yard line.

Hits yellow. A stop shot spitting yellow out getting his rush to 1. He'll have some work still to do if he gets this; black looks to still be on the yard line.

Rushes well to 2 yards in front of hoop 1. Approaches and runs firmly, has a rush back north. Plays a big cut rush to hoop 4 to get to yellow. Good rush to corner II. Gets a cut rush to hoop 2, but rushes about 4 yards past towards the peg. Needs a good approach, and gets a 1 yard hoop. Catches a lot of wire, but comes out the other side.

If he wants to be bold, he has Reg's 4-back ball at hoop 3.

Sends black to hoop 4, rushes yellow to north boundary and then stops. must be thinking about the TPO. Rolls yellow as an escape ball - TPO it is!

Rushes red to hoop 3, and then stops again, second thoughts?

Runs hoop 3 into the peelee, and sends it to hoop 6. So, just a break to 4-back. He's been having spreads all week, so I don't expect anything different. He just needs to decide on the parity.

Ben has got to 3-back without incident. Red (Reg's 4-back ball) is going out towards hoop 2. Looks to have control of the leave.

[There's been a question about what else is going on. Plate final is Duncan Dixon (NZ) v Danny Huneycutt (USA). Z final is Brian Cumming (Can) v Ian Lines (Eng).]

Ben Rothman is playing with a Solomon grip. I'm not sure what the mallet is called, but it looks like it's made from meccano.

Ben is joining about level with rover.

Chris Clarke says that "it's a bit like a really high quality B-class weekend"

09:47 17/05/2009

Reg is shooting from corner III with his hoop 1 ball (which was by the peg).

[Z: Ian Lines has got to 4-back, Brian has missed the lift]

Rushes to the ball by hoop 2, and then plays a good rush to hoop 1. About 2 feet straight.
Approaches, and then clubs through the hoop, so gets no rush.

The crowd haven't noticed that that puts the American a point up on Reg. No whooping.

Gets penalised for the lack of a rush. The roll to hoop 3 sends striker's ball about 4 yards past his hoop 2 pioneer. He doesn't want to hit it too far.

Tries a dribble and misses. Gasps from the crowd.

Reg shoots from hoop 3 at the hoop 2 pioneer. Misses by almost a foot. That 1 hoop lead might be important!

K goes to peg high a couple of yards E of the line of 1 & 2, and Y is rushed to the end of b-baulk

Another good croquet stroke puts Y a foot in front of 2-b, with an easy rush to 1-b

1-b is made, and U is rolled to just E of the peg, K is rushed to 3 yards NW of Y

K goes 6" from 3-b and R has a 6" roquet on Y

Makes 2-b, but catches a little too much wire, and can't rush back to U by the peg. Instead goes to the EB a couple of yards S of 3-b

Y goes very close to the peg, may be in the way of rushing U to the best spot.

Makes 3-b, but doesn't get a forward rush, so has to play a good croquet stroke now

K is good, R maybe a yard overhit.

Reg rushes U a yard too far, and Y is past the spot he wants to put it in as well.

Played it as a little pass roll, but U goes too far. U at K is wide open. K might not even be technically wired on K either.

rushes Y to level with 5 on the EB

stupid network signal... I've moved again

Laays up with a rush. It's a perfect B spread.

Ben fingers off his lift U at K.

Hits it to rapturous applause

Plays a thin take off leaving K near the boundary, going to RY.

Hits Y and gets a rush on R to 1

Makes 1 and has to play a good cut to get it back to near Y.

R goes to a yard from 3 and Ben cuts the Y to about three yards from K. It didn't quite go off the lawn, but I doubt that K is still exactly on the yardline, so it shouldn't be any trouble.

A touch short and he has to play another cut.

Doesn't play this one as well, and he's now approaching 2 from 3 yards at a slight angle.

Gets a 1 yd straight hoop.

Smooths it through, doesn't get past K, so has another big croquet stroke coming up.

It's a good one, K goes a yard in front of 4, and U rushes Y back to the end of b-baulk

Rolls Y to 3 yards behind 3, and goes a little long past R, but plays it at a good weight and has a lift approach

Not looking at the TPO at all. Odd.

R goes to a yard SSE of 6

Y to 4ft Se of 5, U running 4 from 8"

Makes 4 with no rush, rolls K to a yd E of 5.

Makes 5, partner goes 4ft in front of 2-b. Y goes a couple of feet E of 1-b

Makes 6, R goes 4 yds NW of the peg, approaches 1b from a couple of feet

Runs it past Y, knocks it back. Y goes to the peg

Rushes R to 7 yds N of 2-b, puts a couple of yards short of 3-b, and slightly past K

Approaches 2b from a yard to 1ft posn

Makes it by a couple of yards and rushes K back to just W of the peg

Ben shoots at the boundary ball. Hits. Applause. Maybe that hoop is not so important.

Now has his three ball break back. 3 errors so far; 2 from Ben, one from Reg.

[Z: Lines has stuck in hoop 3. Just found the plate final on lawn 8. I've not idea what's going on, but Duncan might be one some sort of peeling turn]

{I'm informed that West Indies are now 221-7}

Ben has rushed South after hoop 4, split to hoop 5 and has a 4 yarder at corner IV.

Ben has sent partner down to 4-back, and has approached 4 to a slight angle, but should be OK; he's close.

Runs the hoop, but no rush. Huge cut, gets 75% of the way to hoop 4-back. Setting up for a delayed TP.

Just checked the records. Ben's only ever done one TPO, and that was in the British Open Z. Perhaps he decided earlier that the Worlds final isn't the time to attempt your second!

He's not got that close to his hoop 5 pioneer, and has rushed it 3 yards south of the hoop. At least he should be able to get a forward rush.

Half roll? Red has gone 3 yards N of hoop 5. Has an angled, maybe 30 degrees, 2 foot. Complete rejection, the ball is now 2 yards SSW of hoop 5.

10:07 17/05/2009

Reg has a 4 foot roquet with his hoop 1 ball, with one ball 3 yards N of hoop 5, and another 2 yards SSW.

Someone's asked about the two commentaries. I'm on the veranda, so closest to E boundary, about 3 yards N of the line between hoops 3 and 4. Dave has been moving around to get a better signal, but I think is now on the same side of the court, about level with hoops 1 and 4.

Reg has picked up his break, and has just made hoop 1. Oppo ball at hoop 2. He's sent out a pivot to about 4 yards SE of hoop 6, partner 1 foot NW of 4-back, and has approached hoop 2 to 6 inches straight. A good few strokes.

He's jawed the 4-back peel and has a cut-rush up the lawn towards corner IV.

Rushes back to 4-back after hoop 4. His hoop 5 pioneer is a yard S of 5. Takes off from peelee back to it, travelling at pace, but saved by hitting hoop 5. Good approach to 1 foot, with reception ball SE of the peg. Consensus is that Reg's take-off was going 8-9 past the hoop 5 pioneer.

Has rushed after hoop 5 straight into 4-back. Stopped a foot S of 4-back. Can still send it to 1-back, but at the expense of a rush on peelee. He's rolled it about 3 yards N of penult and has a 2 foot approach to hoop 6.

Approached, sending the escape ball level with the peelee. Runs the hoop, but completely wired from peelee by the escape ball.

Sends the escape ball (blue) down to 2-back, returning to peelee. Might suffer now with the 1-back pioneer so far north.

Looks to be thinking about the peel, but wants to get close to the 1-back ball so may have to turn it down.

Puts red a foot in front of penult getting his rush to 1-back. Sends his 3-back pioneer about three yards past the hoop.

A tray of champagne glasses seems to have arrived. Empty though.

{West Indies 286-8}

Death roll goes through penult, striker's ball has a 1 yard rush to 1-back.

All under control, now approaching penult himself, with peelee a foot in front of rover and all the balls in front of him.

K goes east a couple of yards, Y rushed to near the spot and then croqueted to the spot with a take-off

Rushes R to 4ft in front of 3b

Makes it with a forward rush, probably won't need to fiddle with Y

Wants the leave to be more diagonal than it is at the moment, so moves y a few inches.

Rushes back to the EB about 2 yds N of 4, lays up there.

Reg lifts the hoop 1 ball from by the peg and goes up to b-baulk

Misses, going a few inches out of IV

Ben rushes U over, puts it about 4 ft in front of 2 and rushes to a couple of feet from 1.

Has a look at the ball near IV, but doesn't put R on the right side to rush to it after the hoop.

Makes the hoop by 3 yards so would never have had a rush anyway

Rolls R to 2ft SW of 3, going 3 yads past U

dribbles at it and misses!

Reg shoots R at U, but doesn't like it at all. Misses

Ben iss once again relying on his shooting, taking on the 7 yarder at R

Hits it in the middle

R goes back to a yard W of 3, K hits U this time...

Makes 2 and puts U 4 yds W of 4

Makes 3 with a rush to level with 5 on the EB

Puts R to a yd E of 5 going to the ball in the corner

Y goes to 5 ft S of 4-b

Makes 4 with a cut rush back up the lawn

Rolls U to peeleeing position, Y now just past level with the hoop about 4 ft W

Short on the take-off, and has to approach 5 from 2 yds

Doesn't get the line right (or gets a bit of hill) and now has an angled hoop.

Bounces off it.

Reg has a i yarder with the hoop 1 ball near 4-b.

Reg has an utterly standard TP to play.

making 3 off partner with K a yard away and U 3 ft from 4. Yawn

Plays the peel as a little stop shot and it predictably sticks in the jaws.

makes 4 and rushes back up, rush peels by 3 yards, and spansks the take-off. Lucky waster hits the hoop though, that was going a good 3-4 yards past.

Approaches 5 to a foot and makes it with a forward rush.

Ha justice.

Rushes it into hoop 3!

Prefers to put it to 1-b and not have a rush.

not a great 1-b pioneer, truth be told.

Rolls R to 3 yds behind the hoop

Puts U slightly past R, and runs the hoop so that it is in the way of roqueting R

I think I've got a bit of an optical illusion, because U

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| <p>Peel goes through cleanly, but only by 4 yards, rather than the 9 he was peeling by yesterday.</p> <p>Reg Bamford +13tp</p> <p>Game 2; Reg UK, Ben RY</p> <p>10:46 17/05/2009</p> <p>Reg supershot with blue, about 15 yards.</p> <p>Ben is lining up to shoot at the supershot ball. Dribble. Misses (just).</p> <p>Reg has a 12 yards shot from B baulk at it. Takes the single ball, rather than the longer double. Another dribble. Lots of "Oooohs" from the cloud, but an immediate finger to claim the roquet from Reg.</p> <p>[Duncan has taken the first game in the plate final]</p> <p>Gets his rush to 1.</p> <p>There's another WCF committee meeting going on under the shelter between laws 9 and 10.</p> <p>Reg has got to hoop 4.</p> <p>Still a tidy three ball break from Reg. Now at 1-back.</p> <p>It's clouded over, so much cooler than it has been. He's sent a bal l to 3-back, so he is going to 4-back.</p> <p>(Statto reports Dulwich have beaten Medway 5-2 in the Mary Rose)</p> <p>Reg has made 3-back, and is creating a defensive leave. Blue is about level with rover and has a one-yard rush on yellow, and is lagging black to near maximum length position, but about 2 yards from the boundary.</p> <p>11:03 17/05/2009</p> <p>Ben is warming up on the side lines.</p> <p>Takes the long shot from corner III. Hits. Rushes it S of hoop 4. Great take off to get a rush on yellow to black.</p> <p>Get a good position from the roll with red, but has sent black almost to the N boundary, about 3 yards from the corner. Rushes after 2 to S boundary. Good croquet stroke to get a rush on U up to black, while loading hoop 4. Should get his break under control from here.</p> <p>Had an 18 inch hoop 3, which grabbed a lot of wire, but ran by a yard.</p> <p>Sticks in hoop 5 from about a foot straight.</p> <p>11:17 17/05/2009</p> <p>Reg has a choice of 1 yard roquets with his hoop 1 ball, another ball near hoop 5 and a ball near hoop 6.</p> <p>He hits the ball in the hoop, and opts to rush the other ball to partner by hoop 6, but rushes into partner. Will need to be careful to not get the hoop in play after his take off for a rush.</p> <p>Good shot, but over rushes, has a 4 yard approach to hoop 1.</p> <p>Very loud and low helicopter has just flown right overhead. Stirring up the air somewhat. Reg seems oblivious to it, and has approached to 2 feet, about 20 degrees.</p> <p>Good shot, runs the hoop and has a forward rush on partner. He'll send this to 4-back, and has a choice of routes to hoop 2 with two balls about 10 yards from the hoop (and each other).</p> <p>Good rush to 2, and has it all in front of him. Should be a standard TP.</p> <p>Just over 100 spectators.</p> | <p>just looks like it's a yard W of the line of 6, and R is on it, but it must be the other way around...</p> <p>Cuts U a bit N, and puts is 3 yds NE of 2-b</p> <p>Finds a spot where he can have a big splitty effort at the peel, going to the 1-b ball</p> <p>Just leaves it 6" in front, probably for the death roll</p> <p>Makes 1-b with some vigour, and has a 3 yarder back</p> <p>K goes a couple of yards SSE of 3-b, and Y hits r to a couple fo feet in front of penult</p> <p>Peels it to the peg, and gets a good rush on U</p> <p>Once again doesn't get much wire and has a slightly longer rush than he would have preferred</p> <p>Hits it a little far, gone about 2yds WSW of the peg</p> <p>No, had a good angle to put it to 4b getting a rush to peeling posn</p> <p>But hits is to level with the hoop</p> <p>Takes off past K</p> <p>Makes it with a rush pointing at the end of a-baulk. hits it a yard</p> <p>K to penult, rushes R to 1ft peeling position</p> <p>Makes 4-b, U to 4ft S of the peg</p> <p>Makes penult, no forward rush</p> <p>K goes 5ft past rover. Y rushes U to a yard short of Rs</p> <p>Peeling from 6" straight.</p> <p>Peels by 4 yards, Y into the jaws</p> <p>Makes it, hits U, rushes K to R</p> <p>Rushes R to a yard E of the peg</p> <p>Reg Bamford +13tp</p> <p>10:46:18 AM</p> <p>Reg UK going in</p> <p>U 2yd short of the peg Y dribbles and misses going 3yds SE of 6 K dribbles and phantoms the roquet</p> <p>Y to 3yds W of 6, rushes U to 2yd in front of 1</p> <p>Approaches to 6"</p> <p>Makes it with a 3yd forward rush</p> <p>U to 2ft from 3, rushes Y to 4ft in front of 2</p> <p>Runs it to the boundary</p> <p>Puts to a couple of yds Nw of 4.</p> <p>Makes 3 but just creeps past, so no forward rush</p> <p>Good roll, U 1 ft SE of 5, rushes to a ft from 4</p> <p>All pretty easy now. running 5 from a foot, pioneer a foot from 6</p> <p>Makes 6 with a rush NE</p> <p>Puts Y to 4ft in front of 2-b rushes a little too close to 1-b</p> <p>Makes it but with no forward rush</p> <p>Rolls U to a couple of ft from 3b getting a 1ft rush on Y to 2-b</p> <p>Makes 3-b and rushes to level with 5 on the EB, Y already there.</p> <p>I'm a little surprised that Reg feels that he has to go to</p> |
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Peels 4-back after 3. Slightly hampered roquet on the escape ball, but easy enough. Hits it gently and rolls to his hoop 4 pioneer. The hoop 5 ball has gone about 4 foot south of the hoop.

Grabs a lot of wire at hoop 4, and has no rush. Big cut to peg high on east boundary.

The wind is picking up and judging by the flags possibly beginning to swirl around a bit as well. Downwind has generally been worth an extra plummer on the lawn speed for most of the week.

Reg has rolled the ball to six, going to partner, but has got a 6 yarder at it.

Rushes peelee into hoop 3. Only has space to take off back to hoo p5. This one is travelling as well, and doesn't have the good fortune of hitting hoop 5. Has a 4 yarder at yellow.

Hits his shot, but seems to have mis-approached 5. Seems to be claiming hill. He's off on a walk around the lawn, so we have to assume that the hoop is unrunnable. It seems about 50 degrees, so it might be worth a thrash.

Red and black are open (4-back is in play), so there's nothing really defensive on offer. Reg plays to middle of north boundary, guarding yellow (between 5 and peg) and red (at hoop 6), but Ben's likely to want to play red anyway, particularly with yellow as a plausible hoop 5 pioneer.

11:40 17/05/2009

Ben's taking a 10 yarder at blue on N boundary. Gives Reg everything back if he misses it. This seems nuts. Should be red at yellow, or red at black.

Reg misses blue. Gives Reg his break back.

{ West Indies 310 all out; 20-0 following on. England first innings 569-6 dec }

Reg has made 5, but has peelee several yards N of penult. Gets a rush down to it though, so shouldn't be a problem.

Penult peel rejected after 6, but he played a good death roll in the last game. 1-back is under control.

Death roll to 2-back rejects, but gets to a good position for his 2-back ball.

Another death roll before 3-back. This isn't normally recommended.

The peel goes through by 10 yards, but he's landed wired from his 3-back ball.

He may have a small sliver of yellow to shoot at. Misses. It may have been through the hoop.

The penult clip has been left on penult and is now misplaced.

11:56 17/05/2009

Ben has a 4 yarder at blue with his hoop 1 ball.

Misses!

Reg rolls te balls down to 4-back; and now notices the misplaced clip. Brief conversation with Ben, and then moves the clip.

Tries a speculative wylie peel after 2-back, but only gets it onto the wire.

Bad approach to his 4-back pioneer. He's about 2 yards from where he wanted to me. Will have to approach from 3 yards. Will run this hard. The ball stop will probably save him from the alligator.

He's run it into the bunker. Rather than getting the sand wedge, he opts to get Tony Hall to do some gardening. First need for the referee to act.

[Z: Ian Lines wins the Z final +3]

[Z: Woo Hoo!]

He's made penult, sent out a deep ball.

4-b on these lawns, I doubt that a quad is beyond his talents, and he's usually too scared of the TPO to go to 4-b in normal events.

Leaves the balls level with 5, and goes a foot off the WB

Ben's making a mistake in my view, taking the EB shot, which is at least 6 yards longer than the shot from a-baulk.

Hits it centre ball

Takes off to Y, rushes it to K, puts it a ft from 2

Rushes a couple of yds NE of 1, takes off, and scrapes through, getting a forward-ish rush

Doesn't rush it very far, and almost puts K into the yardline in front of 3

Makes 2 with a longish rush back to the SB

Rushes it to the end of a-baulk

Needs to play a good shot, since U is only a yard off the yard-line

Does it. Has a 1ft rush up to K

Puts U out near 3 and rushes K to a yard to the side of the hoop

He still really doesn't want this TPO, just plays a take-off.

K to a yard in front of 6, U rushed to level with hoop 4 on the EB

U a couple of yards short, makes 4 with a rush

Rushes U to a couple of ft in front of 5

Sticks in an easy hoop 5. Off the hoop 1 ball again...

Reg hits the ball in the hoop, stops it up the lawn, and rushes Y to K

R is aout 6 yards in front of 1, but Reg has put Y towards 3

then rushes K well past 1, by about 4 yards

Approaches to a foot in front though

Makes it with a forward rush, K goes to 3, Y is rushed past R

Easy rush to 2, and all the balls are there for him...

Makes 3, peeling from a yard. My guess is another straight stop shot.

Manages to not jaws it this time...

But is slightly hampered, doesn't call a referee and knocks Y down the lawn 3 yards

Makes 4, but not very far and has a big cut to get R level with the peg on the EB

Overhits the roll, and has a 3yd rush pointing more or less directly S

Rushes it into the back of the hoop, looks like he's still got a take-off down to 5 though

Clubs it a bit, and not down the best line. Has a 3 yarder that he doesn't want to move more than a yard

hits it about half ball, and approaches from a yard straight

Has approached to 6", and is going and having a look at all the other balls

Might be a bit angled, I'm not sure what he's thinking about though. K has bounced well off hoop 3

He must have mis-approached. It doesn't look like it from here, but I am perpendicular to the line...

Goes off on the end of b-baulk

Ben windmills the mallet with both arms and does some twisting...

12:07 17/05/2009

He seems now to have rushed yellow into black, and it's between black and the jaws. Much looking at the balls, and the hat's now come off.

12:10 17/05/2009

It looks like he has space to get yellow between black and the hoop, while getting his rush, but now is deciding against that. He may have to just get a rush on black and rush it into yellow and hold for position.

Correction - there's no space, this is trying to peel yellow to get it out of the way and maintain the rush.

12:17 17/05/2009

It's beginning to look like a hoop and a leave might be the right play here.

12:19 17/05/2009

Has played a stroke!

Has peeled yellow, going on the other side of the hoop to black. Might be wired.

Has an edge; hits it.

Looks to have a position to jaws and then play a jump, but may not want that line with these hoops.

12:21 17/05/2009

12:22 17/05/2009

12:23 17/05/2009

12:24 17/05/2009

He's put black in front of rover, and now runs the hoop. Perhaps a bombard, or rush-peel attempt?

Ben is still engrossed in High Deryni, by Katherine Kurtz. (Based on a long lens, binoculars and some guesswork...)

Reg has roqueted yellow, and used it to promote red north. Tries a rush peel, misses the hoop.

12:27 17/05/2009

Plays a good croquet stroke to send black to the yard line (a foot inside) near corner four.

Rushing red to near hoop 2 Stops it to the yard line, about a yard south of level with 6. Shoots into corner II.

One person thought that turn worthy of applause.

12:30 17/05/2009

Ben is limbering up to shoot yellow (his hoop 1 ball) from where it lies at Reg's rover ball (black). Crowd view is red (hoop 5 ball) at blue in corner II, leaving yellow as the hoop 5 pioneer.

Hits black, but now has his 40 yard take off. Lands short, leaving an 8 yarder.

Which he misses.

12:34 17/05/2009

Reg takes off from yellow (he's playing his peg ball, so there's a leave coming) and has a rush on red towards the middle of south boundary.

Cut rushes it into corner I.

{ West Indies 75-1 }

Chris Clarke has returned from the buffet with a slice of chocolate cake. Actually, "slice of" was entirely superfluous in that sentence.

Reg has taken off to partner in corner IV and is rolling to level with 3-back to lay his rush.

lining up R at U

Misses. Gives it all back to Reg

Reg splits R to 3yds in front of 6 getting a southward rush on K

Knocks it down peg high, and puts it back miles* past 6 getting a rush on Y

(* about 3 yards...)

Approaches 5 again, but can't believe that he's had some hill again. Doesn't look difficult though (didn't try to approach to 6" this time)

Y to a yd E of 1-b, R rushed past K

Puts R a yard behind 6, I'd guess to the east, but I can't tell.

Nope. Well he's put K east of R and christed it off running the hoop

Got a straight 5 ft peel

Not a good stroke. Hits the left hand wire and bounces off a foot to the W

R rushed N and croqueted to 3yds N of 2-b

Makes 1-b with an eastward pointing rush

Puts Y about 4 ft past 3-b, and rushes K a couple of feet in front of penult

Fails the peel again, bounces back a foot in front. It'll be interesting to see if he wants to peel to Y

Spanks through 2-b and rushes back up to K

R goes about 3 yds E of penult, and U rushes K a little way E. There's a bit of an angle on this peel for it to be nice.

Peel goes through...

...but I think Reg is dead cross wired from Y

Not sure what he's looking at now, maybe has a sliver.

No, was trying to hit it by running the hoop.

Missed it though.

Ben taking his 4 yarder with Y

... and misses it. Looks like a bit of twigletting going on.

Chops Y up a bit and then rolls it to about 3yds short of 4-b

Rushes R to K and rushes K to 4ft SSW of 3-b

Makes it and has a rush over to rover, not quite far enough for an easy peel

Puts it about 6" to the E of the hoop, a couple of inches N

Overhits U slightly and doesn't have a rush to 4-b. Approaches from a couple of yards to 18". Runs it to the boundary

Reg has managed to find an old hoop hole

Just goes to R, Y by the peg

Makes the hoop, but then rushes Y into the front of rover...

He's looking at playing it from inside the hoop, now looking at peeling Y.

Ron Lloyd came up with a good solution, take off leaving Y where it is, then rush K into it.

He's played it by peeling Y and going to the wrong side of the hoop.

Hits his short mostly wired ball, cutting it back into angled peeling position.

He's got no deep ball, both R & Y are about 2 yards S of the

Stephen Mulliner has returned from the buffet with what he describes as "a bowl of chocolate". I think that's a +17 win for Chris in the pudding competition.

Ben shoots red at the partially wired target of black and blue. Doesn't like it and misses by about a foot or so.

Reg ignores red, and takes his rush to rover. Approaches the hoop, runs by a few yards, hits his 3 yard return roquet/rush and it's all over.

Reg +22

12:44 17/05/2009

Reg clears the lawn and the referee heads off. I assume that means it's lunch time.

13:02 17/05/2009

[Duncan Dixon wins the Plate 2-0]

Chris has failed to finish his chocolate cake, which must be the pudding

competition equivalent of sticking in penult. James Death is now attempting a +3qp(*) finish.

(*) qp = quadruple pudding: chocolate cake, chocolate gateaux, cheesecake and some pastry.

13:14 17/05/2009

The players are back

Game 3 - Reg RY, Ben UK

Ben plays black to peg high on E boundary

Reg plays red into corner II (not just out of it)

Ben is lining up from B baulk to shoot at red in corner II. Shoots and misses into the corner. Replaced on N boundary.

Reg shoots from corner III down the E boundary. Misses yellow on the right and ends up just out of corner IV.

Ben is playing a big roll from corner II. Puts red south of hoop 1 (by about 4 yards) and give himself a 7 yarder at black which he hits. Thick take off to yellow in corner IV. Puts black in court by 2 yards. Hits yellow and sends it to hoop and rejoins. Yellow has only gone about 6 yards NW of the peg. Joins with a rush for blue into lawn.

13:23 17/05/2009

Looks like Reg may have a target with yellow. He did, but went through the middle.

Ben hits yellow, and stops it up to hoop 2 and gets a rush south on partner.

Sends black to reception position, but hits red in the approach rather than getting a rush.

Takes off (why not stop shot approach?) to hoop 1.

Runs the hoop, rushes back to South boundary, and has a three ball break.

Rushes back to S boundary after hoop 2 - good rush - and how has a four ball break for hoop 3.

Chris Clarke has just won a croquet strategy board in the raffle.

Ben has made hoop 5 and still has his break under nice control.

James Death has been defeated by the chocolate cake in the pudding competition. Ian Lines is attempting to complete the break. Looks like a +1 on time win to Ian.

Ben has got to 2-back. Looks like another spread with red as the peg ball, but misses his return rush (about 4 yards)

hoop

Just takes off to the hoop

Makes it by a foot...

Hits Y, moving it a couple of yards.

Plays some sort of odd cannon on R. Don't know what that was supposed to achieve.

Y is now 4ft in front of 4

Hits K a couple of yds behind rover, stops it to inside the yard line, 2 yds N of IV

Rushes R to near 2, stops it to the WB 3 yds N of the peg.

U goes into II

Y fingers the lift, and hits K

Taking off to U - misses the peg...

6 yards short...

Missed it.

U takes off to R, gets a rush pointing at I

Rushes it there and takes off to K. no rush.

Rolls K up the boundary, and gets it more or less wired. Reg has a good look.

Farthing reckons R can see full ball at K, and the same on U the other side of the hoop.

Ben taking it on.

Nowhere near.

Reg rushes U to a yard on front of rover, ignoring R

Made it with a long rush back.

Hits his 3 yarder knocking it to a couple of yards from the peg.

Bamford wins +22

Looks like lunch.

12:46:56 PM

I really can't see Rothman pulling any kind of upset here, his good shooting form has clearly left him today, and without that, his break play is just not good enough to threaten Reg at all

In other news, Dixon won the first in the plate final +17, and has just been riggalled by Danny in the second, penult & peg vs 4-b alone

Linesy won the Z +3 over Cumming

Looks like Duncan is making penult

...and has rushed to about 3yds W of rover

takes off in front.

Makes it, and is taking off to the peg

I guess that's +5 in the second.

Dixon wins +17 +5

01:14:26 PM

Players are back.

Rothman UK playing first

K peg high EB

R hits the corner peg in II

U shooting at R

Misses into the corner

after the hoop...

13:43 17/05/2009 13:48 17/05/2009

Reg has his lift at black by hoop 1. Blue is a yard NW of hoop 6 and red about 3 yards N of hoop 5. Hits.

Reg has dealt with that, he's now approaching hoop 2 from 1 foot with a ball at 3.

The break continues under good control. Blue is close to the peg (SW by a few inches), but he should deal with it without any real problem.

He's still going, just made hoop 6.

Black for 2-back is the most wayward of any pioneer in this break. It's 2 yards NNW of the hoop.

He's now made 3-back; we're having a spread.

Blue is out by W boundary, black by the peg, and Reg is joining by E boundary. It looks quite horizontal, with blue quite close to maximum length position, a couple of yards in. Reg has joined about level with hoop 5.

14:06 17/05/2009

Ben has lifted his hoop 1 ball and is taking the long lift from corner III.

Misses badly on the left, goes out about 4 yards from the corner.

Rushes to the ball near hoop 2, back to the ball near corner 4, takes off for a rush to hoop 1 and is approaching from 3 yards straight.

Gets a forward rush out of hoop 1, so it will be a delayed TP.

Rushes after hoop 2 into IV.

Had a speculative standard TP option to stop partner down to 4-back and then either take off from blue to black, or rush blue to N boundary and stop it back to hoop 4 while approaching black.

Instead, he puts yellow to hoop 4, rushes blue to black, and black to hoop 3. Gets the break under control instead and has a delayed TP to win the championship.

If this rush is good, he can have a go at peeling immediately after hoop 3. The rush just goes a few inches past the hoop, but now has control over placement for the delayed 4-back peel.

Takes off to the ball at five, and this time gets the pace right (the last two attempts - in games 1 and 2 - were hit far too hard). But, the hoop 5 pioneer is very tight to the hoop, so he'll have to do well to get a forward rush.

As predicted, no rush. Has to roll to 1-back and peelee. Over hits it. Blue has gone 3 yards N of 1-back, and he has a rush pointing west on peelee.

{WI: 115 - 3}

Hits is gently and has a 4 foot angled peel attempt.

Goes through nicely and rushes to 2 feet SSE of hoop 6.

14:24 17/05/2009

Reg will set up for another death roll attempt to 2-back. The 1-back pioneer is too far north for anything else.

He has a 2 yard penult peel attempt available, but he's got a good 3-back pioneer if he needs another go.

Declines the peel attempt and just takes off to 2-back.

Puts black out for a delayed double penult peel, but will have a go at the death roll to 3-back first.

Peels by 5 yards.

Runs 3-back with a lot of wire, but has a clear enough swing for the roquet.

Y shoot down the boundary at K. Misses

Ben rolls R to 3yds in front of 1, going to K. Hits his 3 yarder

Takes off from K knocking it in a couple of yards, hits Y

Putting Y well short, only about 4 yards past the peg, going back to partner

Reg shoots at K with Y. Misses

Stops Y to 2 yds E of 2

Rushes K into the right hand wire of 4, bouncing off to the end of a-baulk

Plays a rubbish croquet stroke and didn't get a rush on R, put K behind the hoop, and approaching with a take-off now

Gets a 1 foot hoop and runs it

Knocks K down a few yards, taking off behind R

R to a yard W of 3, rush Y too a yard n front of 2

Makes 2 and rushes Y back past K

Y to 2ft from 4, 4bb ahead.

Lets see if he can keep this one together

Makes 3, and puts K to 6 from 3 yds E of 3

Short by a couple of yards

Puts R to 4ft in front of 5, makes 4 from a foot

Rushes Y back up, and puts it 18" in front of 6

Leaves K a yard E of 5

takes off from Y leaving it behind 5.

Runs the hoop and rushes K aa yard or so SE

K goes a couple of yards NE of 2-b

R to a foot from 1-b

Makes 6 and knock Y back a couple of yards

Puts R to 3yds SE of the peg after 1-b, Y goes to a yard W of 3-b

Makes 2-b by 4 yards or so and misses the return roquet, ending up by 6

Reg lifts Y and hits his 6 yarder at K

Rolls it to 2, but is short of U

Rushes U to 3 yds S of 3 and takes off to get his rush on R to 1

Runs 1 from a foot, getting a forward rush

Puts R to a yd E of 3

Makes 2 and puts K to a ft E of 3-b rushing U behind R

U goes peg high

Makes 3 but no forward rush, R goes a yd E of 5

U back to the middle, approaching 4 from a foot

Makes 4, and puts K 5ft S and slightly W of 6

U goes to the peg (literally, it stops touching the peg)

Gone down the same hill again approaching 5, you'd think he'd learn after the first couple of times...

Makes it firmly by 4-5 yards or so.

R to 4ft ESE of 1-b

Makes 6, hits K, and stands around for a few seconds...

K to 4 ft N of 2-b, U 8 yds S of 1-b

| | |
|--|--|
| | <p>Makes 1-b christing off R, rolls it to 2yds SE of the peg.</p> <p>U to 4ft SW of 3-b, approaching from a foot.</p> <p>Rushes K back to about 1ft from R, stops it towards the peg, and rushes R a bit closer, and takes off to U</p> <p>Makes 3-b and manages to make his spread this time...</p> <p>It's not very imaginitive, though, is it?</p> <p>Missed badly on the left. He's 3 yards out of corner IV</p> <p>Y goes a yd in front of 2, R rushes U 2 yds N of K</p> <p>Uses the corner peg to keep the string out of his way whilst playing the rush, approaching from 5 ft</p> <p>Runs the hoop, but has left K very straight, doesn't hit it hard enough anyway to get a rush back to IV, so rushes up towards 2</p> <p>Makes 2 and rushes Y down to IV. I don't think he's got the stop shot to get it near peeling position. We'll see</p> <p>He's putting it to 4 and settling for a delayed TP (unless he rushes back after 4)</p> <p>Makes 3 and leaves K a yard SW of the hoop</p> <p>U to a foot in front of 5, makes 4 with a 4ft rush back</p> <p>Just overhits the rush, it's level with the hoop.</p> <p>Y to 2ft in front, and Reg chooses to tap K and play the take-off again. Lets see if he can do better than the last two games</p> <p>Well its the best one so far. didn't get a forward rush though</p> <p>U's gona couple of yards too far but R was close enough to tickle Y and should get it in the jaws here</p> <p>Managed to peel it.</p> <p>Makes 6 and has a rush to III</p> <p>K to 4yds NNE of 2-b, rush on Y to NB behind U</p> <p>Puts Y to peeling posn, and makes 1-b with a sideways rush</p> <p>U to 2ft SW of 3-b, R goes 4-5 feet past Y</p> |
| 14:40 17/05/2009 | |
| He's at 4-back now, with peelee 5 feet NNE of rover. | He rushes it back, and is waltering off the peel from 2 yards |
| About 140 people here now to watch the finale. | Takes off to 2-b, tries too run it to the boundary and gets the extra 2'6"... |
| Reg is running penult with peelee a foot in front of rover and pivot about 5 feet south of the peg. | Rushes K to level with 6 just off the WB |
| Run penult by 6 yards. Might be hampered on blue at penult, or maybe just prefers the 3 yard forward rush on black. | Puts K in the corner of the "box", 3yds N of 4-b |
| Rushes it to next to rover, and then chooses to take off back to blue and ends up almost on the wire of penul and has a hampered shot to hit. Hits it and now was to roll to peelee. Has a 2 yarder at the ball a foot in front of rover. | Has a slightly angled peel, but manages it OK, a little long with R |
| Tickles it; has a 6 inch rover peel; slight angle. All the balls there. | Hits U and has a little approach, go a slightly angled hoop |
| Irish peel, is through and striker's ball in the jaws. | Squeezes through, and roquets U up the lawn a few yards |
| Reg +18tp | Doesn't play a good shot, and U goes 3 yds NNW of penult |
| 14:52 17/05/2009 | Rushes Y down, but not in great position, will be about 3yds NE of the hoop after the take-off |
| Reg Bamford wins the World Championship for the third time, beating Ben Rothman +13tp +22 +18tp | Makes 4-b with a rush back |
| | Puts K 4 ft S of the peg, rushes Y to 1ft in front of rover |
| | Takes-off well, rushes U to 18" NE of penult |
| | approaches to a foot straight |
| | runs it with no wire, and has a 4 yarder back at U, or a 2 yarder forward at K |
| | rushes K to level with rover |
| | take-off misses peg, and misses U... |

| | |
|--|--|
| | <p>... but is hampered by penult at his shot at U</p> <p>Deals with it, but only moves it a couple of feet. Has to roll down reasonably accurately now</p> <p>On the mat a little, and has a 4 footer that he wants to hit dead weight</p> <p>Hits it a little hard, and is peeling from 4" at a slight angle</p> <p>Irish peels it, R into the jaws</p> <p>Runs the hoop, and it looks like we have our oldest ever world champion...</p> <p>Hits K and takes off into U, doesn't make getting the rush much more difficult though</p> <p>rushes to a yard from the peg.</p> <p>Reg wins the third +18tp</p> <p>Reg Bamford beats Ben Rothman +13tp +22 +18tp</p> |
|--|--|