

## Club promotions

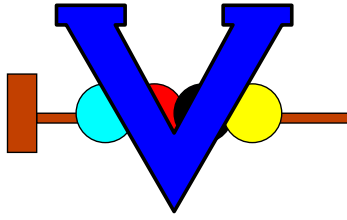
To promote your club you need to be positive, upbeat and grasp every opportunity you can to keep up your profile in the community. Holding events for charities can be a great way to raise the profile of your club in the community.

- You can hold a morning tea for Pink Ribbon Day - remember most local media outlets will help promote events for charity for free.
- A Croquet and Crèche morning for Red Nose Day or the Royal Children's Hospital Good Friday Appeal is another way of getting young mothers in the community involved.
- One off events for Opening of the Season or Social Days can also be open to the community (see tips later in this document).

Your event could incorporate a sausage sizzle or afternoon tea. Think about what attracts people to other functions held in your community. How were these promoted?

Decide who are trying to attract to your club and then focus your event to suit the demographic in that area. Get to know your local media. Invite your local newspaper to do an article about your event. Most local papers are looking for community events to report on. Some radio stations allow free advertising for community events so check if that is available.

Is there someone in your club who could keep your web page updated, or feed your news through into a club Facebook page? Twin City Croquet Club has made a brief promotional video – see <https://youtu.be/Vcpuojt3seM>. You might like to include a link to this on your web page, or make your own...



## **Liaising with the press**

The media have the power to shape people's attitudes towards your croquet club. This means your publicity officer has a crucial role in helping the media see croquet in a positive light. It's helpful to have the same person in the role over a period of time.

There is no ideal club publicity officer. Everyone will have their own style. However, it is useful to

- be enthusiastic about croquet
- be willing to learn
- be able to communicate both orally and on paper
- have a good understanding of croquet and know who to contact if you have questions
- have imagination
- be persistent

Believe in your sport.  
You have a story to tell.  
Keep trying, don't give up.  
Always ring and thank the reporter for the coverage.  
Be clear and concise in your communication.

## **BEING A PUBLICITY OFFICER**

### **Do your research**

Check what kinds of stories are usually published in your local media – newspapers, TV and radio stations.

### **Initial contact**

Make yourself known to the sports journalists and their editors, program directors, or producers. Ask for an appointment to visit or phone them. Tell them who you represent.

In this first contact, ask how you can gain the best coverage. Would it be helpful for you to provide stories and pictures, or do they prefer to take their own photographs?

Check if a particular reporter can be assigned to croquet. If so, ask for their direct phone number and their email address.

Ask if there is a specific photographer you should contact. If so, get details.

### **Maintaining contact**

Keep contact with journalists brief and to the point.

Stick to deadlines.

Provide regular newsworthy stories.

Document everything: dates, key people and how to contact them, records and record holders, team selections, history.

Maintain a press cutting file.

Include media contacts on your newsletter mailing list.

Think of possible feature stories and sell the ideas for them to the media

Make sure photographers / camera operators are aware of the preferred image of croquet, eg a technically correct action shot.

### **Maintaining goodwill**

Accept that coverage will include any aspect of the organisation.

Email or phone thanks for good coverage to the Sports Editor and Chief of Staff as well as the journalist involved.

If you're unhappy about some aspect of coverage, check your facts carefully and then contact the journalist to find out what went wrong. Be calm and rational.

### **Hints for effective communications**

Before you phone the media, write down the points you want to discuss.

If you are phoning, spell out difficult words and names.

If a press release is meant to be read out on radio or TV, include the phonetic pronunciation of names.

If a journalist is unavailable, use their phone answering service. Leave a clear message saying what day and time you will call back.

## **INTERVIEWS**

### *Beforehand*

If you are going to be interviewed, check beforehand

- how long the interview will take
- what the interviewer would like to focus on

Have a good knowledge of the facts. Take notes and relevant material with you. Think about what awkward questions you might be asked, so you can handle them calmly.

Practise being interviewed – maybe in a role play with other members or family.

Check with the interviewer when you arrive if it will be okay to restart the interview if you need to.

### *During the interview*

Be relaxed and speak normally.

In a TV interview, look at the interviewer, not the camera.

Keep calm. eg don't say "That's not a fair question." Answer briefly, then go to "Anyway, the important thing I want to emphasise is..."

If a question seems to trivialise you or croquet, you can say you're not going to answer it, and explain why.

Ask for a re-start if you have to.

### *Useful background about croquet*

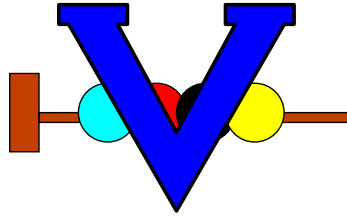
Croquet is egalitarian: young, old, male, female, rich, poor, fit and infirm can all play. Differences in ability are accommodated within a handicap system.

Croquet is an all-weather, all-season sport, in an outdoor setting and a friendly social environment. There are 90 clubs in Victoria: 20 in Melbourne and 70 in country Victoria.

There are almost three thousand registered players in Victoria, and an unknown number who play in their own gardens and non-Association venues.

Australia competes in international competitions involving teams from Egypt, Ireland, the USA, Sweden, New Zealand, England, South Africa, Wales, Germany, Czech Republic, Switzerland, Spain, Latvia, Belgium, Scotland, Norway, Portugal, and Russia.

There is a similarity between tactics in billiards and Association Croquet.



## Writing a press release


### Tips from the Public Relations Institute of Australia

- 1. Put on a journalist's hat:** The press releases that will get the most traction from journalists are written in classic, journalistic style. Start the release with a strong (non-sales-y) lead that answers some of the basic questions of your message such as who, what, when, where and how, and go from there.
- 2. Lose the superlatives:** Using lofty terms—"leading" being one of the main culprits—is still a chronic problem in press releases. "Solution" is another term that's used frequently and gives reporters and editors pause; better to use vernacular that doesn't draw attention to itself and/or cause the ire of media reps, but, rather, demonstrates that you're familiar with the intricacies of the market.
- 3. Include some salient quotes:** Not just comments from your CEO or CFO on the benefits of the product and/or service that you are writing about but quotes from partners, suppliers and customers who can testify on how the product and/or service can help consumers or, if it's a B2B company, how the information in the release can help someone do his or her job better.
- 4. Keep it short:** Reporters and editors are notoriously time-poor, so when writing press releases choose your words very carefully. Be somewhat surgical with quotes. Ditto for any statistics and/or metrics that you may want to put into the release to help substantiate your message.
- 5. Put your contact information in a prominent place:** It's a no-brainer to put your name and contact information in a prominent place on the news release, such as the upper left hand-corner, but we're often amazed at how many press releases lack this basic information. Without it, you're not only telling the reporter to lose the release but it also suggests you may be hiding from something.

See next page for a sample press release.

Source: <http://www.pria.com.au/priablog/5-tips-to-follow-when-writing-press-releases>

## Annotated sample press release

Press release content	Notes
	Organisation logo.
<p><b>PRESS RELEASE</b> 19 April 2015 For immediate release</p>	<p>Standard heading</p> <p>Release date and details (embargo date if any)</p>
<p><b>Croquet regionals down to the wire</b> Victorian Croquet Centre, Cairnlea, Victoria</p>	<p>A heading aimed at capturing attention</p> <p>Location</p>
<p>It was neck and neck in the weekend's competition between eleven Victorian regional croquet associations for the Lefel Shield. In the end Geelong, with a total of 192 hoops, pipped four other associations. Runners up were Gippsland. Western Metropolitan, Ballarat, and Goulburn Valley were close behind.</p>	Who what where why when
<p>Tournament manager Lorraine Gutcher, who hails from Gippsland, says, "People travelled to Melbourne from as far apart as Portland, Wangaratta, Albury, Sale, Boort and Horsham – many of them came a long way to represent their regions. A lot of friendships are fostered over this weekend between people who just see each other once a year on this one occasion."</p>	Quote. Role of person quoted identified.
<p>Eleven three-member teams at all levels of the game competed for individual success in three sections, with the Lefel Shield awarded to the region with the most hoops at the end of the competition.</p>	Detail
<p>The successful Geelong team members all came from one club, Geelong Eastern Park, including the winner of section 1, Bob Roycroft. Bob is also an accomplished Association Croquet player.</p> <p>Bob says, "Four years ago we only had two active members of this club. We've managed to recruit twenty odd keen players and the results are there. That's been good. It's a rags to riches story for us. We were quite chuffed about it all."</p>	Point of interest. Quote. Person quoted is identified.
<p>The Victorian Croquet Association is the peak body for croquet in Victoria, with 13 member regional associations, 91 clubs and a membership of over 2600 players.</p>	Standard para about the organisation providing the information.
<p>Further information: Kate Patrick, Director, Victorian Croquet Association croquetvic.asn.au 0403 108 215 (m) katepatrickoz@gmail.com</p>	Contact details for further information