

OK croquet — sporting Brits take up mallets

Shingi Mararike

Unable to play football, rugby or cricket, a rising number of Britons are turning to croquet as their game of choice, as they prepare for a summer of socially distanced sport.

John Lewis said it had seen “unprecedented demand” for croquet sets, with sales 600% higher than in the same period last year.

The Croquet Association (CA) has had a 110% rise in equipment sales and a surge in inquiries from people who want to join its clubs, though safety concerns mean no new members are being accepted.

Ellen Gee, 67, secretary of the Nottingham Croquet

Club, said it had been “nice to go somewhere other than Sainsbury’s and to see familiar, happy faces”.

The post-match handshake has been banned, mallets cannot be shared and the balls are cleaned in buckets of soapy water after each match.

The CA has begun a #LockdownCroquet campaign to encourage people to play at home using household objects and share videos of themselves. One woman played in her living room, using a broomstick to hit a ball at a target made from a mug and salt shaker.
@ShingiMararike

Leader, page 18

