

# “Wicket” Fun Croquet

## Bellingham Public Library

### Our Tips, Tricks and Recommendations

#### Before the event

1. Have a **fundraising committee chair** in charge of the event
2. First year – **borrow whatever equipment you can** (we’d be happy to loan ours out to you when we are not using it!)
3. **Select a date keeping in mind other events in your community.** You don’t want a date like our first year, opening day of youth baseball, which maybe we should have known, combined with 80+ degree weather in April, which we could not have foreseen!
4. Begin **soliciting sponsors** months before the event; we’re happy to share our solicitation letter. But we have found that the solicitations must be followed up with an in person appeal. One reason we chose not to hire the company to do it was we wanted to keep control over the solicitation message. We have a very good reputation in town, and not to say the company that runs the program is not professional, but we thought keeping the solicitation local would be better for our community.
5. We found a local sign company to **create sponsor signs** at a discount and gave him a free wicket sponsorship for doing so.
6. **Promote, promote, promote.** Both years we have spent money on an advertisement in our monthly local newspaper. Not sure we’d do it again. Ask sponsors to display a flyer in their place of business – heck, ask those who say they can’t sponsor to do so!
7. **Create scorecard** – we’re happy to share our scorecard with you too!
8. Make sure you have **lots of used books ready** to use as the course guide. They make it easy for people to know where they are going. The reason we do ours right after the book sale is we have plenty of unsold books that are perfect for this purpose.
9. **Plan the layout of the course,** and be creative with incorporating library furniture and books into the course. People often commented about how fun the course was.

## On the day of the event

1. After two years' experience, we can now **set up the course** in a little more than an hour, but I'd allow more until you know how you are going to lay it out.
2. Make sure you have **volunteers to man the croquet registration desk**, as well as to escort players to the course.
3. We **handed out balls and mallets (or clubs) to players at registration**. We unfortunately never hit the point that we had more people playing than we had balls (40) or mallets and clubs (30). The first year we purchased 2 croquet sets to make sure we had enough mallets, but when we had enough with our borrowed ones, we returned them. This year, since we had more balls than mallets and clubs, our plan was that if we had more people than mallets on the course at one time, we'd ask people to share the mallets.

## Things we're considering for future

1. Have another **children's event or performer** in the library that day to drive traffic to the event.
2. **Pre-sell tickets at a discount**. This will encourage people to come as they have prepaid, and give a better idea of what kind of crowd to expect and help us know how much more promotion we need to do!