



# TRAINING MANUAL

## 2011

### Credits:

[Oxford Croquet](#)

[United States Croquet Association](#)

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### Training Schedule

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Thursday	May 12, 2011	5-7 PM	101	Golf Croquet
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Thursday	Jun 9, 2011	5-6 PM	105	Rules and Etiquette

# 101 Golf Croquet

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**Course Title:** Golf Croquet

**Terms:** Golf Croquet, Mallet, Ball, Wicket, Hoop,

**Description:** A very simple, easy to learn croquet game that will quickly give a basic sense of the game, including hitting the ball and making hoops. This class is for the brand new player who has never swung a mallet before.

**Schedule:** 15 min. demonstrations // 15 min. skill development // 90 min. playing a game of golf croquet

1. Define wicket or hoop.
2. Demonstrate basic mallet grips and stance
3. Let students practice swinging and hitting a ball across the court several times. Correct any obvious problems to them.
4. Explain the basic rules of golf croquet (starting point, hoop running sequence, first to make 7 hoops wins)
5. Play a game. Play with them if there is less than four students.

## An Outline of Golf Croquet

Golf Croquet is played between two sides — the blue and black balls versus the red and yellow balls. In singles each player plays two balls; in doubles each player plays the same ball throughout the game.

The object is to be the first side to score seven points. A side scores a point when one of its balls is the first to pass through the next hoop in sequence, as shown by the yellow lines in Figure 2, below. Note that each hoop is scored by only one ball, so that both sides are always contesting the same hoop.

If after scoring twelve points the game is tied at six all, hoop #3 is contested again to break the tie.

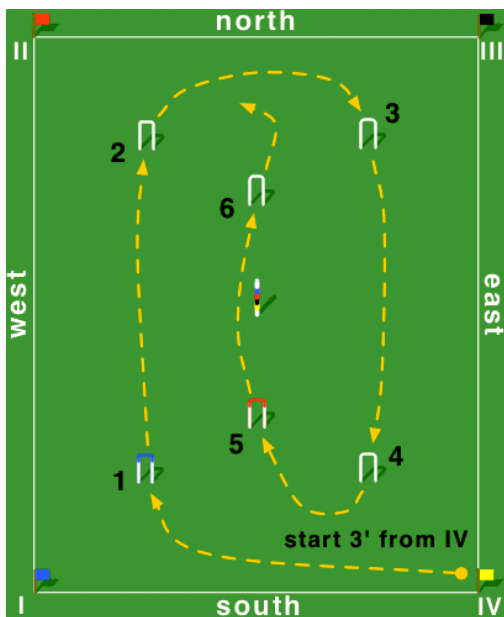


Figure 2a: First Six Points

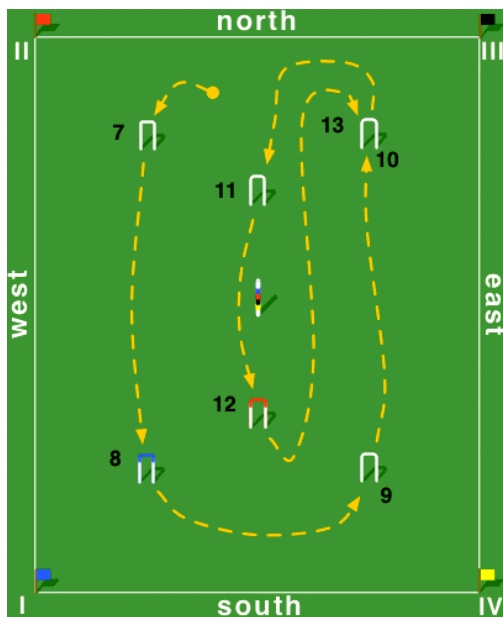


Figure 2b: Last Seven Points

Play is made by striking a ball with a mallet. The player who is playing a turn is called the striker, and the ball in play for that turn is the striker's ball. Turns are played in the sequence blue, red, black, yellow. This sequence of colors is painted on the peg. Each turn consists of one, and only one, stroke.

The striker's ball may cause other balls to move and score points. However, the striker must never strike any ball other than the striker's ball. The striker must play using the mallet only, and must not play a stroke while touching any ball. The striker must strike the ball with one of the mallet's two striking faces, never with a side face or the shaft. The striker must strike the ball cleanly and only once during the stroke.

### Starting the Game

The side that wins a coin toss chooses balls. The blue ball plays first. Each ball is played into the game from any point on the court within a yard from corner IV.

### Scoring Points

A ball scores a point for its side by passing through the next hoop in sequence (see Figure 2, above). If the striker's ball causes another ball to run the hoop, the point is counted for the side whose ball ran the hoop. If two balls pass through the hoop on the same stroke, the point is scored by the ball that was closest to the hoop at the start of the stroke.

### Keeping Score

Each time a point is scored, the side scoring the point announces the score.

### Boundaries

A ball goes out of bounds as soon as its center lies directly over a boundary. When a ball goes out it is placed just inside the boundary nearest to where it went out.

### **The Halfway Rule**

At the end of a turn in which a point is scored, any ball more than halfway to the next hoop is an offside ball, unless it reached its position on the stroke just played, or through contact with an opponent's ball, or was moved to a penalty spot.

When you have an offside ball, your opponent has the option of making you place that ball on one of the two penalty spots before you play it again, the opponent choosing which penalty spot. The penalty spots are on the East and West boundaries, even with the peg.

# 102 Basics

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**Course Title:** Beginners I – Basics.

**Terms:** Striker's ball, roquet-croquet-continuation sequence, deadness, rover ball.

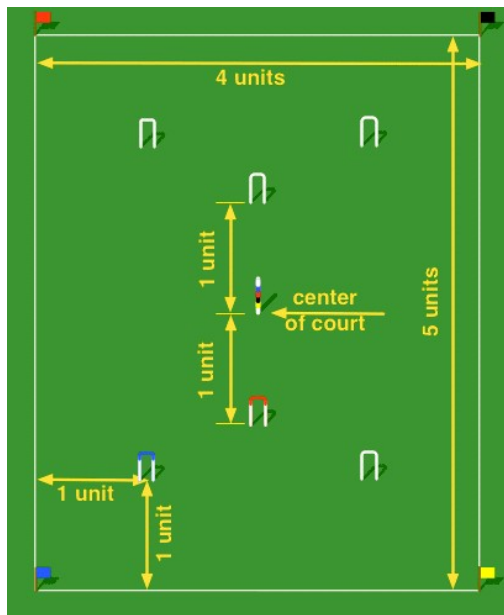
**Description:** American rules vs International (Association) rules. Court layout and basic order of play. Describe the roquet-croquet-continuation sequence.

**Schedule:** 15 min lecture and demonstration // 15 min. practice hitting the ball, hitting other balls, making hoops // 90 min. playing a game of Croquet.

## The Basic Idea of the Game

Synopsis of American Croquet

### The Court and Equipment



**Figure 1: Court Setup**

The standard court is 105' by 84' (35 yards by 28 yards). Unless short grass is available (1/4" or less), the court should be scaled down, keeping the proportions from the standard court. On ordinary grass, such as a sports field or residential lawn, 50' by 40' is a good size. There are six wickets, one stake, and four balls. Each player needs a mallet, although these can be shared.

It is possible to play on an ordinary lawn and with an inexpensive croquet set such as can be found at department stores. However the game is much more satisfying when played with higher-quality equipment and on the flattest and smoothest lawn with the shortest grass that you can find. Look for a set that has sturdy wickets, mallets sized for adults (about three feet high), and heavy, solid plastic balls. Or, better still, find a nearby [USCA croquet club](#).

### An Outline of the Game

American Croquet is played between two sides - the blue and black balls versus the red and yellow balls. In singles each player plays two balls; in doubles each player plays the same ball throughout the game.

The object of the game is to maneuver the balls through the course of wickets and into the stake, as shown in Figure 2. The side which first does so with both its balls wins the game.

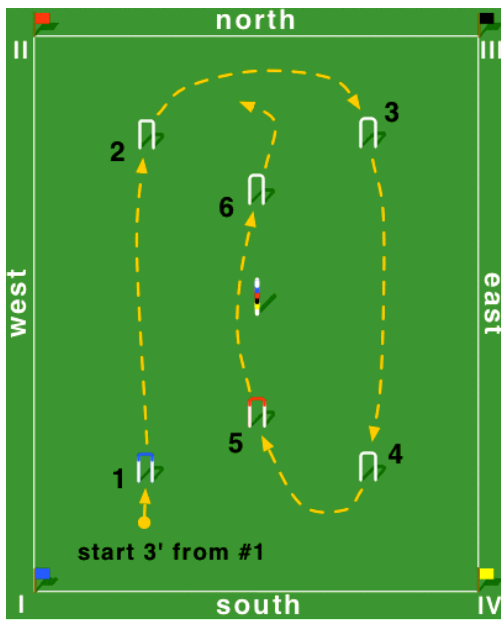


Figure 2a: First Six Points

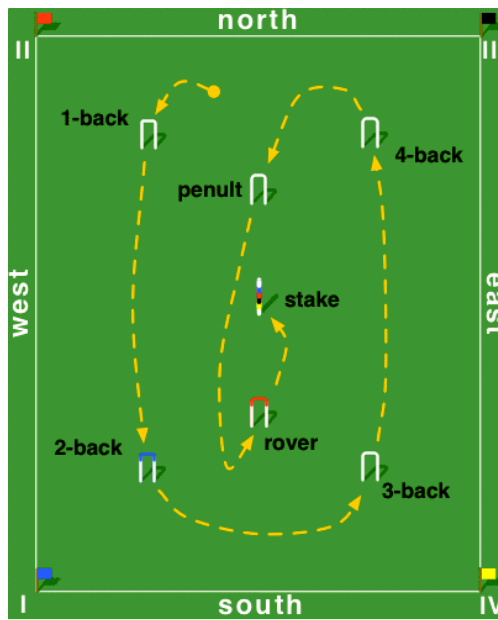


Figure 2b: Last Seven Points

Play is made by striking a ball with a mallet. The player who is playing a turn is called the striker, and the ball in play for that turn is the striker ball. Turns are played in the sequence blue, red, black, yellow, and so on throughout the game. This sequence of colors is usually painted on the stake. Each turn is initially one stroke, but extra strokes are earned when the striker ball hits another ball or scores a wicket point. By making good use of these extra strokes it is possible to score many points in one turn.

The striker ball may cause other balls to move and score points. However, the striker must never strike any ball other than the striker ball. The striker must play using the mallet only, and must not play a stroke while touching any ball with hand or foot. The striker must strike the ball with one of the mallet's two striking faces, never with a side face or the shaft. The striker must strike the ball cleanly and only once during the stroke.

### Starting the Game

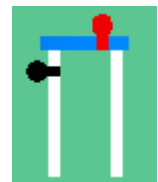
The winner of a coin toss chooses whether to play first with blue and black or second with red and yellow. Each ball is played into the game from the starting tee (see Figure 2, above), starting with blue.

### Scoring a Wicket

A ball scores a wicket point by passing through a wicket in the correct direction and sequence, as shown in Figure 2.

### Clips

Each ball has a corresponding clip, used to show which wicket the ball needs to score next. For wickets #1 through #6, the clip is placed on top of the wicket. For the remaining wicket points, the clip is placed on the side of the wicket. At the start of a game, all four clips are placed on the top of wicket #1.



### Hitting Other Balls

If the striker ball hits another ball we say it has made a roquet, and the striker becomes entitled to play a croquet stroke. The croquet stroke is played by picking up the striker ball, placing it in contact with the roqueted ball, then striking the striker ball in such a way as to make both balls move. The striker ball is now dead on the other ball, and remains so until it scores its next wicket point.

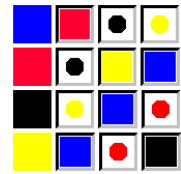
A hit is not a roquet if either ball has not yet scored the first wicket, the striker ball was dead on the hit ball, or any ball other than the striker ball goes out of bounds.

### Boundaries

A ball goes out of bounds as soon as its center lies directly over a boundary. When a ball goes out it is placed nine inches in from where it crossed the boundary. A ball less than nine inches from the boundary is also moved in, unless it is the striker ball and is entitled to play an extra stroke.

## Keeping Track of Deadness

A deadness board is strongly recommended for keeping track of deadness. However, most lower-cost sets do not include one. You can buy one, make your own, or keep track on paper. There are also small hand-held deadness boards.



## Wicket and Hit

The striker ball cannot both score a wicket and make a roquet on the same stroke. Whichever happens first takes precedence.

## Continuation Stroke

The striker earns an extra stroke (called a continuation stroke) by scoring a wicket for the striker ball or by playing a croquet stroke, so long as no ball went out of bounds during that stroke. The continuation stroke is played as the balls lie.

If the striker ball scores two wickets on one stroke, or scores a wicket during a croquet stroke, only one continuation stroke is earned.

No continuation stroke is earned if the striker's ball makes a roquet during a croquet stroke, the roquet requiring that the striker immediately play a croquet stroke.

## Rover Balls and Scoring the Stake

A ball that has scored all twelve wicket points is called a rover ball. If the striker ball is a rover ball and any rover ball hits the stake, that ball has scored the stake point and is removed from the game. Play continues in the usual sequence, skipping over the missing ball. The game ends when both balls of a side have scored the stake.

A rover ball that is dead on two or three balls is cleared of deadness when it passes through any wicket in any direction. If it is the striker ball and no ball has gone out of bounds, the striker earns a continuation stroke.

A rover ball may roquet each other ball no more than once per turn.

## Stake and Hit

The striker ball cannot both score the stake and make a roquet on the same stroke. Whichever happens first takes precedence.

# 103 Techniques

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**Course Title:** Beginners II – Techniques

**Terms:** Stalking, Rushes, Hoop Running, USCA, Rules

**Description:** Discuss the various mallet grips and swing techniques, stance. Discuss rushes and hoop running. Briefly discuss USCA rules and etiquette.

**Schedule:** 15 min. lecture and demonstration // 15 min. practice hitting with various swing techniques and practice rushing and hoop running // 30 min. playing a timed game of Croquet.

## GRIPS



**Standard Grip:** The shaft is grasped near its top with the knuckles of the hand pointing forward and the thumb up. The lower hand supports the back of the shaft with the knuckles pointing backwards and the thumb down. The spacing between the top and lower hand varies with the type of stroke being played.



**Solomon Grip:** Both the upper and lower hands grasp the top of the shaft of the mallet with the knuckles forward and the thumbs uppermost. The hands are nearly always very close together. This grip is suitable for shorter players and provides a big back swing.



**Irish Grip:** The knuckles of both hands point back with both thumbs pointing down. The hands are held close together. The grip is generally lower down the shaft than with the other styles

## STANCES



**Center Style:** The feet are placed across the direction of the stroke with the feet level or the left foot forward - whichever is most comfortable. The mallet is then swung between the legs. This is the most popular playing stance.



**Side Style:** The mallet lies down the outside of the right leg pointing ahead. Either foot can be forward with the weight on the forward foot. This is now a rare style.



**Golf Style:** Impractical for playing accurate croquet.

## Stalking

**Stalking** is the act of walking up to the ball to be struck along the line in which you wish to hit it. Stalking is **ESSENTIAL**. Its purpose is to get the feet correctly positioned and the body aligned with the direction of the stroke every single time. The shoulders and hips should be perpendicular to the direction of the aim. The only way to hit consistently is to always start a stroke with your body in the same position.

Stalking should commence about six foot behind the ball giving a few paces so that you can arrange to come to position with the ball approximately 1/2"-1" in front of your mallet and your nose approximately above the back of the ball.

Once you have adopted the stance you can lift your head to check the line of the shot, check that the mallet head is precisely aligned along the direction of aim and then the head is lowered and you concentrate on the swing and hitting the ball right in its centre.

## Swing

During the swing you must keep your head down and not lift it until after the ball has been struck. It is one of the most frequent reasons for missing a roquet - the head comes up too early, moving the shoulders and spoiling the shot.

The mallet is swung mainly from the **shoulders**, not the wrists, giving you a long pendulum. This is important. It maximises the energy which can be put into a stroke and means that the wrists do not move excessively. Since the wrists are solely supporting the mallet the mallet can be held gently, preventing it from being twisted. The mallet should not be swung using the lower hand to waft the mallet forwards, or worse, swung by pushing one hand forward and the other back. Keep the body almost still and draw the mallet back. The body should be relaxed with the legs not locked - the body needs to move to keep your balance. Keeping your eye on the back of the ball allow the mallet to come forward mainly at its own speed but gently accelerating it to get the strength of the shot. If you attempt to force the mallet forward or jerk it, your grip will tighten and the shot will be spoilt.

Your intent is to swing the mallet through the back of the ball, hitting it at the lowest part of the swing, and then follow through with the mallet. After the instant of hitting and during the follow through, the mallet no longer wants to swing in an arc but should travel parallel to the ground for a foot or so. Think of it as following the ball.

The whole swing should be smooth and graceful.

**Demonstration:** Hold a mallet with one hand and demonstrate that a ball can be hit (very) hard if the mallet is swung from the shoulder. The energy of the stroke is due to the length of the pendulum.

**Practice:** Partners knocking balls at each other's mallets. Identify and assist those with co-ordination problems. Watch out for people who hold the top of the mallet in one stationary hand and waft the head using the lower hand - they will not get enough power on a heavy lawn. Also discourage people from lunging or jerking their bodies at the moment of impact.

## Rushes

A **rush** is a roquet where the striker's ball hits another ball with the intention of driving that ball a distance. In a game a rush is used to move the 'scene of the action' from where the roquet takes place to a more useful position where the subsequent croquet stroke is played. This could well be at the other end of the lawn following a good rush. (Remember the sequence is roquet - croquet - continuation stroke).

For a rush the target ball should be not more than a couple of feet from the striker's ball for any accuracy.

**Demonstration:** Rush from the boundary in front of hoop 1 and indicate that the striker's ball would be picked up and a croquet stroke played at the destination.

**Demonstration:** Demonstrate a good and a bad straight rush. In a bad straight rush the back ball continues to move once it has hit the forward one, stealing energy from the stroke. (To force a bad rush hit down on the back ball).

To achieve a good rush the striker's ball must be hit sharply, or 'stunned'. The recipe is the same as for the croquet stop shot discussed later:

The mallet is held near the top of the shaft, the striker stands a little further back than normal (1"-2") but still presents the mallet 1/2"-1" from the back of the ball. This causes the toe of the mallet to be slightly lifted and the heel resting on the ground.



The stroke is a stun - the mallet is brought smartly to the striker's ball and arrested in its motion as soon as the ball is struck. There is no follow through. Some people ground the mallet after the hit, others stop the mallet with their wrists. The idea is to give a punch to the striker's ball causing it to skid, not roll, over the grass and hit the target ball. You do not want the back ball to pick up any top spin before it hits the target ball. In a good stop shot the back ball comes to a halt as soon as it hits the forward ball rather like those in a Newton's Cradle.

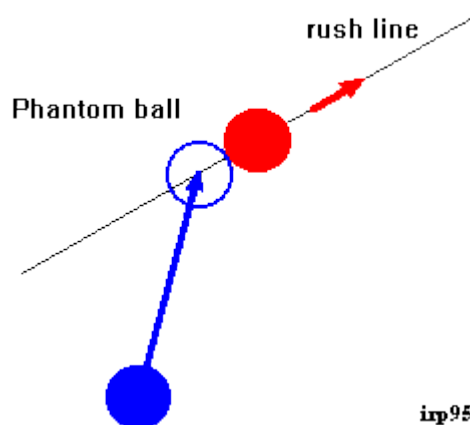
**Practice:** Partners rush ball to each others mallets standing 6 foot apart. Encourage them to play soft stop shots or time will be wasted collecting balls. If people have problems with the balls jumping on collision this is normally caused by the person hitting down on the striker's ball. They either stand too far forward or rock forward during the stroke.

The **cut rush** is where the target ball is struck deliberately off centre to drive it to the left or right. To get the correct aiming line use a third (phantom) croquet ball in contact with the target ball with both their centres lying along the desired rush line. The striker's ball must be aimed at the centre of the phantom ball to get the correct direction.

**Demonstration:** Line up a cut rush with a phantom ball in place, remove the phantom ball and play the stroke. Point out that only practice will let them discover the strength needed for different cut angles and distances.

**Practice:** Partners playing cut rushes in the direction of some fixed item such as a hoop.

**Contest:** Starting with a ball on the corner one spot see who can use the least number of consecutive rushes to drive a target ball into contact with hoop one (takes about 10-15 minutes with four people).



**The Cut Rush.** To make red move along the rush line blue must be aimed at the centre of a phantom ball which lies in contact with red and has its centre on the rush line.

# Hoop Running

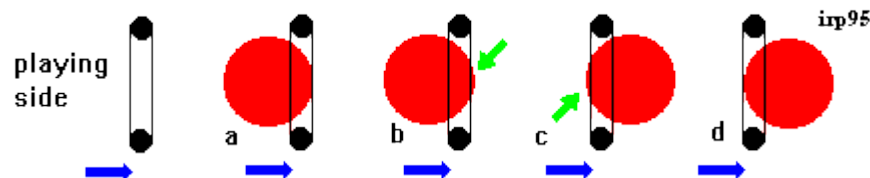
The hoops in croquet are 1/8" wider than the balls, that is 1/16" clearance on either side of the ball. Consequently a hoop stroke needs to be accurate. Stalking is **ESSENTIAL** for a hoop stroke. There is only a very narrow cone of acceptance (~13°) in which a ball can approach a hoop and pass through it without colliding with the uprights of the hoop. The secret to running hoops from all angles is to give the striker's ball plenty of top spin and not hit it too hard. Even if the ball encounters an upright and is briefly arrested its spin will pull the ball through the hoop.

From the discussion on rushing above we do NOT want to stun or punch the ball at a hoop, this will make it skid rather than roll. It needs to be played with a smooth stroke where the mallet keeps a constant velocity throughout the hitting and 'licks' the ball through the hoop. Follow-through is essential and it is useful to continue swinging the mallet through to almost hit the crown of the hoop - this gives plenty of top spin.



A smooth steady stroke with plenty of follow through is needed for successful hoop running.

A hoop is run when the front of the ball can be touched by a straight edge raised vertically against the non-playing side of the hoop. A ball completes the running of a hoop where the back of the ball cannot be touched by a straight edge raised vertically against the playing side of the hoop. The diagram below illustrates this.



When a hoop is run. a) the ball has not started running the hoop. b) the ball has started running the hoop. c) the ball has not completed running the hoop, and d) the ball has finished running the hoop.

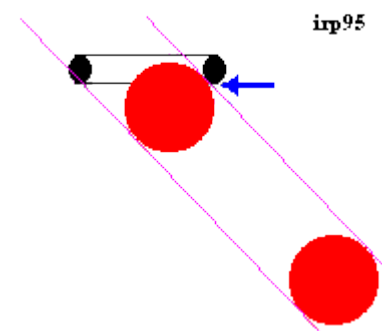
The **playing side** of a hoop is the side that the ball enters the hoop. To have run a hoop no part of the ball must project outside the plane defined by the uprights on the playing side of the hoop.

**Demonstration:** Running hoops from angles. Show that a hard shot will fail whilst a gentle shot will work more often.

**Practice:** Pairs either side of a hoop, running it straight on.

Discourage people from playing the stroke from more than 2 foot away from the hoop. Avoid them practising on hoop one - everyone chooses this hoop and it suffers. Do not breath a word about jump shots at this stage! If some people find hoop running very easy, challenge them to run the hoop to the same distance behind the hoop as they started the stroke from, whilst you sort out people with problems.

Running a hoop from an angle requires lots to top spin and very careful aiming. You must aim such that the outside edge of the ball just misses the inside edge of the first hoop upright it encounters. Consider a ball lying to the right of a hoop it wants to run. The right hand edge of the ball must just miss the inside edge of the right hand upright.



Running an Angled Hoop. The right hand edge of the ball must be aimed just inside the right hand hoop upright.

**Practice:** Arrange balls in a clock face around a hoop between 1-2 feet from the hoop. Players try to run the hoop from different angles and distances.

## Croquet Strokes

In a **croquet stroke** the striker's ball is placed in contact with the roqueted ball, then the striker's ball is struck again. The roqueted ball, now known as the **croqueted ball**, must at least move or shake during the croquet stroke.

The relative distances that the striker's and croqueted balls move are determined by the type of croquet stroke. This is controlled by holding the mallet at different positions down the shaft, the amount of follow through and the angle at which the mallet hits the ball relative to the ground.

## 5.1 The Standard Drive

The mallet is held as for a single ball shot. The balls are placed in contact in line and the rear ball is struck along the lines of the centres. The balls will generally travel in a distance ratio of 3:1 to 5:1.

**Practice:** Gentle croquet strokes are tried and the ratio noted. Hard strokes waste time as the balls have to be recovered.

# 104 Shots

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**Course Title:** Intermediate Croquet I – Croquet shots

**Terms:** Stop shot, Roll shot, Take-off

**Description:** Discuss The basic croquet shots, when to use them, and how to execute them.

**Schedule:** 15 min. lecture and demonstration // 15 min. practice the basic croquet shots // 30 min. playing a timed game of Croquet.

## The Stop Shot

In the **stop shot** the croqueted ball travels a relatively long way and the striker's ball a short distance. Ratios of 7:1 to 10:1 can be achieved. The stop shot gives a great deal of control over the position of the back ball. Note that you are NOT allowed to put your foot on a ball in croquet stroke.

The recipe for a stop shot is the same as for a rush: Stand back - mallet face elevated - no follow through:

- i. The mallet is held near the top of the shaft.
- ii. The striker stands a little further back than normal (1"-2") but still presents the mallet 1/2"-1" from the back of the striker's ball. This causes the toe of the mallet to be slightly lifted and the heel resting on the ground.
- iii. The stroke is a stun shot with no follow through.



**Demonstration:** A short stop shop

**Practice:** Pairs standing 6 foot apart stop a ball to each other's mallet. Discourage long stop shots as they waste time and are more difficult to play.

## The Roll Shot

The **roll shot** is where both balls in the croquet stroke travel approximately the same distance. Indeed it is possible to make the back ball travel farther than the front, a **pass roll**, provided that they are travelling along different paths! There are three actions which cause the back ball to catch up with the forward ball:

- i. The stroke is played with plenty of follow through - a sweeping action.
- ii. The mallet face is brought down at an angle of ~45° into the striker's ball and finally
- iii. The mallet is held very close to the head.

By implementing all of these you will get a pass roll, by relaxing one or two you will get a full roll.

The recipe for a roll shot is the complete inverse of that for a stop shot. Holding the mallet can pose a problem - the following is a suggestion. (The description is for right handed people. People who have difficulty crouching can play the stroke in other ways).



You hold the mallet shaft very close to the head in your right hand with your thumb towards the mallet head. The other end of the shaft is held loosely in the left hand (thumb towards the top of the shaft) and the shaft can be tilted to almost horizontal, whatever is comfortable. *The shaft does not have to be vertical!* The left hand just stops the shaft knocking your spectacles off, all of the work in the shot is done with the lower hand.

You stand or crouch **over** the balls, hit down on the striker's ball at an angle of around 45° and follow through strongly. The stroke can be played centre style or side style as is comfortable.

**Demonstration:** Show a one-handed pass roll where the mallet is held right by the head and the striker's ball is punched sharply at an angle of 45° into the ground. (Lean the shaft on the elbow of the left arm). State that this is only a demonstration as this (punch) method of doing a roll shot gives no control. Demonstrate a roll and pass roll. Emphasise a crisp clean stroke without pushing or pulling.

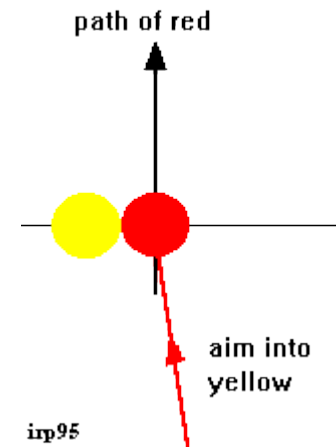
**Practice:** Pairs roll balls to each other - again only over short distances. Many people need individual tuition for this stroke. They normally need encouraging to stand well forward over the balls for the stroke.

## The Take Off

In the **take off** the croqueted ball barely moves and the striker's ball travels a large distance. The balls are placed in contact with the lines of their centres perpendicular to the direction in which the striker's ball is required to travel. The striker's ball is hit nearly along the required direction by aiming about 5° - 10° into the croqueted ball. This ball must move otherwise a fault is committed. The take off is one of the simplest croquet strokes to play accurately since only one ball is being moved and gauging the strength of the shot is straightforward.

**Demonstration:** A thick and a thin take off. Hitting between 5° to 10° makes little difference in the trajectory of the striker's ball.

**Practice:** A few take offs towards a target are tried. Players should be encouraged to do thick take offs such that there is no dispute that the croqueted ball has moved.



The Take Off. The centres of the balls lie perpendicular to the direction that the striker's ball is required to go.

## Aiming in Croquet Strokes

In a croquet stroke the croqueted ball (front ball) will always travel along the line defined by the line passing through the centres of the striker's and croqueted ball.

**Demonstration:** Accurately line up two balls in contact say 3 foot from a hoop so that the forward ball will run the hoop. One handed casually, but sharply, tap the striker's ball.

Set up two aiming targets about 6-8 feet apart. These can be balls, handkerchiefs, etc. Place two balls for a roll shot at a position which is 6-8 feet from both aiming targets and ask how the shot would be set up to get the balls in the croquet stroke to travel to the separate targets?

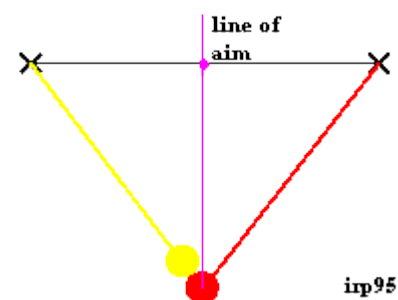
The answer is that the croqueted ball's track is set solely by the placing of the croqueted ball and striker's ball so that their centres lie on a line passing through one of the targets - the same as in the previous demonstration. The path followed by the striker's ball is determined by the angle at which the striker's ball is hit. The aiming line for the mallet is towards the point which lies exactly halfway between the aiming targets (final positions of the balls in the croquet stroke).

**Demonstration:** Place a marker (coin) at the midway point indicating the aiming line and play the roll stroke.

Emphasise that you do **NOT** halve the angle between the ball directions. Leave the targets and marker in place and set up for a stop shot croquet stroke about 2 foot from one target and 7 foot from the other (as in diagram below). The half angle aiming line is now clearly different from the aiming line to the marker.

**Demonstration:** Play the stop shot to send balls to the targets using the aiming mark.

The aiming mark does NOT change irrespective of where the croquet stroke is played from. You do not halve the angle.



Aiming in the croquet stroke. The purple marker is midway between the two destinations marked with X's.

To get the correct result in a croquet stroke two things have to work together. You must aim at the point midway between where you want the balls to end up *and* play the correct croquet stroke to send the balls those correct distances. If you do not get the croquet stroke correct then the aiming mark cannot be the correct one. This needs plenty of practice.

**Practice:** Players practice sending balls to targets in various croquet strokes. Set up a clock face of balls around a hoop and get the players to play the appropriate croquet strokes from each ball to get the striker's ball in front of the hoop and the other behind it.

[See [Aiming in Croquet Strokes - Not Half the Angle!](#) for a fuller description]

## Roquet - Croquet - Continuation

The basic mechanism in croquet is to *roquet* a ball, take *croquet* to move the balls to your advantage then achieve either a hoop run or a further roquet with the *continuation* stroke.

**Demonstration:** Set up a straight rush to hoop one from the boundary. Rush close to the hoop and *pick up* the striker's ball and carry it to the roqueted ball - this prevents confusion. Point out that an easy croquet shot will now allow you to place the striker's ball in front of the hoop. If you had not used the rush but had gently roqueted the ball initially you would have a difficult croquet stroke to get your ball in front of the hoop. Play the croquet stroke to get in hoop running position, ideally placing the croqueted ball beyond the hoop. Play the continuation stroke to run the hoop. Remind the players that although you are only allowed to roquet the other three balls once per turn, you can re-roquet them if you run your next hoop. Point out how advantageous this is now as you have earned a continuation stroke for running the hoop and have a ball waiting which you can roquet.

**Practice:** Players reproduce the exercise above.

# 105 Rules and Etiquette

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**Course Title:** Intermediate Croquet II – Rules and Etiquette

**Terms:** Deadness, Deadness board, Bisques

**Description:** Discuss the USCA rules, including handicapping and bisque play, mallet use, clearing a wicket, deadness., customs and etiquette.

**Schedule :** 30 min. lecture and demonstration // 30 min. playing a timed game using bisques.

1. The USCA rule book is available on the Meadows website.
2. Explain how Meadows deadness is different than USCA rules.
3. Explain handicapping point system

Defeat player with lower handicap difference of less than 5	+2 points
Defeat player with lower handicap difference of 5 or more	+1 point
Lose to player with higher handicap difference of less than 5	-2 points
Lose to player with higher handicap difference of 5 or more	-1 point

Trigger point is when a point is added or subtracted from you handicap.

4. Explain handicapping bisque play. You receive one bisque for the difference between your handicap and your opponent's *higher* handicap. A bisque can be used at any time as an additional turn.

## From the USCA rulebook:

### Mallet Use

- a) A striker shall strike the ball with either striking face of the mallet. If the striker strikes the ball with the adjacent edge, beveled edge or corner of the striking face, it shall not be deemed a fault unless the striker's swing is hampered (rule 11.5a(1)). If a fault does occur the penalty is end of turn and replace balls (rule 12.2a).
- b) A player may not change mallets during a turn except in the case of damage affecting its use.

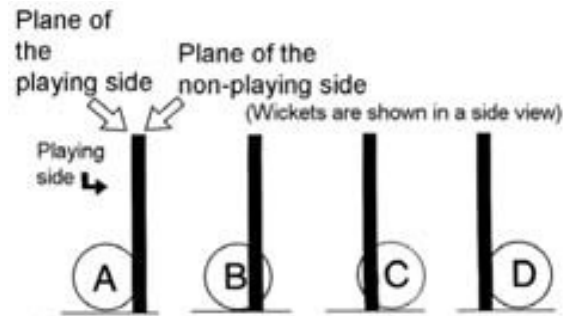
### Striking Period and Shot

- a) The "striking period" begins when a striker starts the backswing, with intent to strike the ball, and ends at the conclusion of the follow through. When the striker repeatedly swings or casts the mallet over the ball, the backswing starts when the mallet head has passed the ball on the final backswing the striker intends to make before striking the ball. If the striker deliberately interrupts the swing after the striking period has begun, and before the mallet reaches the ball or a fault is committed, the striker has not made a shot and may begin the striking period again.

**b)** A “shot” (stroke) begins when the striker’s mallet contacts the ball and ends when all balls set in motion by the striker have stopped rolling or have crossed a boundary.

A wicket is scored as shown in figure 4.

**a)** The front of a wicket as a ball about to score the wicket in the proper order and direction approaches it shall be called the “playing side” of the wicket and the opposite side shall be called the “non-playing side”.



**Figure 4: Scoring a Wicket**

Ball B has started to score the wicket.

Ball C has not scored the wicket.

**Ball D has scored the wicket.**

**b)** A ball scores a wicket point when it passes through a wicket in the proper order and direction (figure 1) and comes to rest clear of the plane of the playing side unless the ball had made a legal roquet (rule 6.2) prior to making the wicket.

**c)** A ball about to score a wicket begins to score the wicket when it breaks the plane of the non-playing side of the wicket. It completes the scoring of the wicket if it comes to rest clear of the playing side.

### **Clearing Deadness by Running a Wicket**

When a ball (not a rover ball) scores a wicket, it is cleared of all deadness and is “alive” on all other balls that have scored the #1 wicket. If a rover ball is dead on two or three balls it may run any wicket in any direction to clear deadness and earn a continuation shot but will maintain last deadness on the last ball it hit (rule 10.3).

**NOTE:** The Meadows Croquet Club has modified deadness by declaring deadness being cleared after making a wicket, or at the beginning of the player's next turn. This eliminates the need for a deadness board.

### **Ball at Rest**

**a)** If a ball “at rest” moves, the ball is replaced and any effect after the movement is invalid.

**b)** A ball is at rest if it appears to be motionless and:

**1)** its position has been agreed upon by the striker and the opponent,

**2)** its position has been adjudicated by an official,

the striker has taken a stance for the next shot,  
4) the striker has indicated the turn has ended.

## **Croquet Customs and Court Etiquette**

The following customs and court etiquette, **while not warranting specific penalties, should be considered as helpful to the conduct and enjoyment of the game of croquet for everyone** and as important as the numbered rules of play. Should a conflict exist with the numbered rules, the numbered rules shall prevail. Remember, croquet is a sport and as such should be enjoyed by all players as a sport played by gracious losers and winners.

### **Sportsmanship**

**USCA croquet is a game that should be played with good sportsmanship as the foremost attitude of how a player approaches the game.** The paragraphs of this section help describe some of the ways which players should play the game and conduct themselves while playing the game. If a specific incident is not covered in the rules, then the spirit of good sportsmanship should be considered in addressing the situation. Players should strive to play by the rules of the game and not try to circumvent the ethics and the morality of the rules of the game.

### **Dress Code**

**Croquet players customarily wear all white apparel on court.** In all USCA titled events, such apparel is expected. The tournament director must approve any exceptions. **Even though Kiwanis Meadows does not have a dress code it does encourage players to wear light colored clothing.**

### **Courtesy to Players**

Courtesy should be extended to one's opponent(s) as well as to one's playing partner at all times. **Players should respect each other's playing abilities and opinions, and treat an opponent or partner in the same fashion that they would expect to be treated themselves.** The striker must plan and play shots throughout a game with reasonable dispatch.

### **Presence on Court**

In the interest of good sportsmanship, players should avoid any behavior that distracts a striker attempting a shot. This conduct applies to the opponent, and in a double-banked game to the players in the other game, especially when stepping onto the court to start a turn. **Only the striker shall be on the court; all other players shall remain outside the boundaries, except in doubles when a partner may come on the court momentarily to indicate a spot or help place a ball for a croquet shot. However, the partner must leave the court immediately after the task is finished.** Players should not be in the striker's

line of sight, cross through the line of aim, or make noises or sudden movements that break the striker's concentration. This conduct is even more important during double banked games so that interference with the other game is avoided. See Part 14 for further information concerning double banked games.

### **Interference with a Shot**

A player must not interfere with any ball while a shot is in progress. All balls are in play until the shot is over and must be allowed to completely cross the boundary or come to a complete stop before being touched by any player or equipment. The only exception to this situation occurs when a roquet is made and the roqueted ball is clearly not going to affect any other ball or go out of bounds. In this case, the striker ball may be stopped and given to the striker so that the croquet shot may be taken.

A player must not interfere with the boundary string during a shot. A player may move, stand on, or have a partner stand on the string so that the striking of the striker ball is not interfered with. The four corner flags should be at least 4 inches outside the boundary string and may be temporarily removed so as not to interfere with the striker's stance or swing.

### **Spectators**

Players should avoid listening to any audible comments from spectators about the game. A player may ask a spectator a question about a point of fact only if the opponent has given consent.

A player should not take advantage of any previously unnoticed error or omission to which his attention is drawn by the comments or attitude of the spectators.

**Spectators should avoid distracting or having conversations with deadness boardkeepers or shot clock keepers.**

Boardkeepers and clock keepers are an important part of the game and concentration on their task is important to the integrity of the game. Their concentration is especially important in the last minutes of a game as the pressures of the game in progress can be greatly intensified. If spectators see any errors (i.e., out of turn, clip placement, etc.), they may bring it to the attention of an official. Care should be taken that doing so does not constitute giving advice to a player.

### **Advice**

No player is entitled to advice from anyone other than one's partner when playing doubles. It must be a matter of conscience how a player acts after receiving unsolicited information or advice. Warning a player who is about to run a wrong wicket or play the wrong ball constitutes advice.

### **Replacing Balls and Placing Clips**

All players should ensure that all balls are, as required, correctly:

- a)** placed in bounds where they went out of bounds,
- b)** placed on the nine inch line, and

c) replaced after a fault.

It is the responsibility of each player when scoring a point for any ball to remove the clip immediately and at the end of the turn to place all clips moved on the correct wicket.

### **Calling Faults**

The rules provide that a fault or misplay shall be called by any player as soon as it is observed (rule 12.1). This includes the striker calling any fault committed, regardless of adverse consequences to the striker's game.

During a game, the players are the referees unless a third party (preferably a currently certified referee) is called to watch a questionable shot, and therefore have an obligation to the game and the opponent to call any faults that they commit.

### **Questionable Shot**

If a striker is about to attempt a shot of which either the legality is in doubt, or the result may not be clearly apparent (i.e., a possible fault, when aiming at a ball in or near a wicket, or a long stakeout), the striker should call a referee to watch the shot. If the striker does not call the referee, the opponent may request the referee watch the shot. (See rule

13.6 for appeals.)

13.7

### **When Players' Opinions Differ**

When players' opinions differ about ball replacement after a ball has been moved, the player who caused the ball to move replaces the ball but defers to the opponent as to the exact position. When the question is whether a roquet was made on a ball, or whether the roqueted ball moved on the croquet shot, the opponent defers to the opinion of the striker. If there are any reliable witnesses, the players may consult them in order to resolve the differences, but only if both teams agree to do so.

### **Referees**

Players should avoid verbal confrontations with each other by expressing their legitimate concerns to the referee.

The USCA has a program to certify players as referees and a certified referee should be called to watch questionable shots or to resolve disputes over the rules (see Part 13). A referee is called by raising the mallet above the head or, if necessary, by calling out "referee".

If an opponent believes a striker is making repeated faults such as "pushing" or "double tapping" or failing to move the roqueted ball in a croquet shot, the referee may be summoned to watch subsequent shots (rule 13.2b).

Whatever the rules provide, it is a matter of conscience how a player uses the referee. It is not good sportsmanship to harass an opponent's concentration with an unnecessary call for the referee to watch a shot.

A striker should call a referee to watch the stake to confirm a rover's attempt to hit the stake if the distance of the shot

requires a referee.

### **Conclusion of the Game**

The winner of a game is responsible for removing the balls and clips (but not before the final score is agreed upon) from the court at the end of the game. This should be done expeditiously especially during a double banked game. When double banking, players should get off the court quickly so as not to interfere with the other game. All players should shake hands with the opponents and thank the time and boardkeepers.

### **Detrimental Behavior**

Courtesy and good sportsmanship are expected of all players and officials at all times. Players are under an obligation to avoid acts that may be considered detrimental to the game of croquet. For example, players should not:

- a) audibly swear at a player, official, or spectator,
- b) use obscene, abusive, or insulting language or gestures, or
- c) throw a mallet or hit a ball in protest or anger.

Any spectator or player who abuses an official or player, or interferes with the game will be warned and directed by the Tournament Director to desist. If the abuse or interference continues, the person may be directed to leave the tournament area. In a case of flagrant abuse, the directive to leave may be given without a warning. Any such instance should be reported to the USCA Grievance Committee.