



LETCHWORTH CROQUET CLUB



Golf Croquet Rules You Should Know

- **Sixth Edition, March 2022** – The updates rules have a **RED** cover
- **The Start** – A new change for 2022: Rule 5.1 now allows the winner of the toss to choose to go first or second. First still plays **Blue** (**Green, Turquoise**)
- **Scoring a Point** – Are you sure you know when a hoop is scored and when not? Rule 7 explains all
- **The Offside Rule** – Rule 8 is not a fault, though it incurs a penalty
- **Irregularities** – Part 3 of the Rules covers situations when play deviates from the norm. There are three main Rules of interest, which all players should know and understand:
 - **Interference** (Rule 9)
 - **Playing a wrong ball** (Rule 10: rewritten for 2022 to improve clarity and ease of use)
 - **Faults** (Rule 11)
- **Handicap Play** – Rule 20 explains about extra strokes, when you can use them, and the limitations on what you can do
- **Advantage Play** – Rule 21 explains the new alternative

Rule 5.1: The Start

- Rule 5.1 is new for 2022.
- Decide the order of play by tossing a coin. The winning side decides whether to play first or second.
- The side playing first starts with the **Blue** ball.
 - Note. This is not quite the same as in AC – you cannot choose colours – only which side goes first. And the side going first begins by playing the **Blue** ball (or the equivalent alternative colour).
- Think very carefully about choosing to go second.
 - The Rule was added because some people had argued that there are circumstances in *doubles* where choosing to go second may be an advantage. Winning the toss would thus be a disadvantage.
 - Even if there are potential advantages for some doubles players, be sure that for you any such advantage outweighs that of getting **Blue** in front of hoop 1.

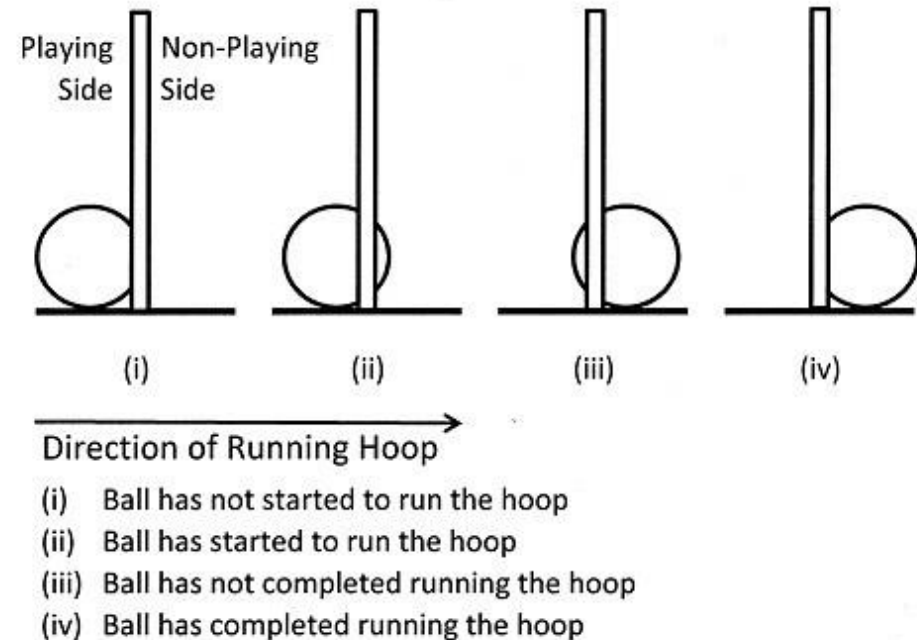
Rule 6.6: Replacing a Ball

- Rule 2.2 defines the boundary. Rule 6.6 deals with replacing a ball that has left the court.
- A ball leaves the court (and so becomes an outside agency) as soon as any part of it would touch a vertical plane rising from the **inner edge** of the white line:
 - Where several lines are visible, only the most recent counts.
 - If the line is not straight, the actual boundary is a straight line which best fits any deviation.
- A ball that leaves the court should be replaced so that it is **touching** the boundary (touching, not mid-way).
- It need not be replaced immediately. But it is important that you always mark a boundary ball if
 - Its position is, or may become, critical.
 - It is likely to be in the way.
 - Your opponent is about to play a stroke with the intention of blocking or hampering your next stroke.

Rule 7: Scoring a point

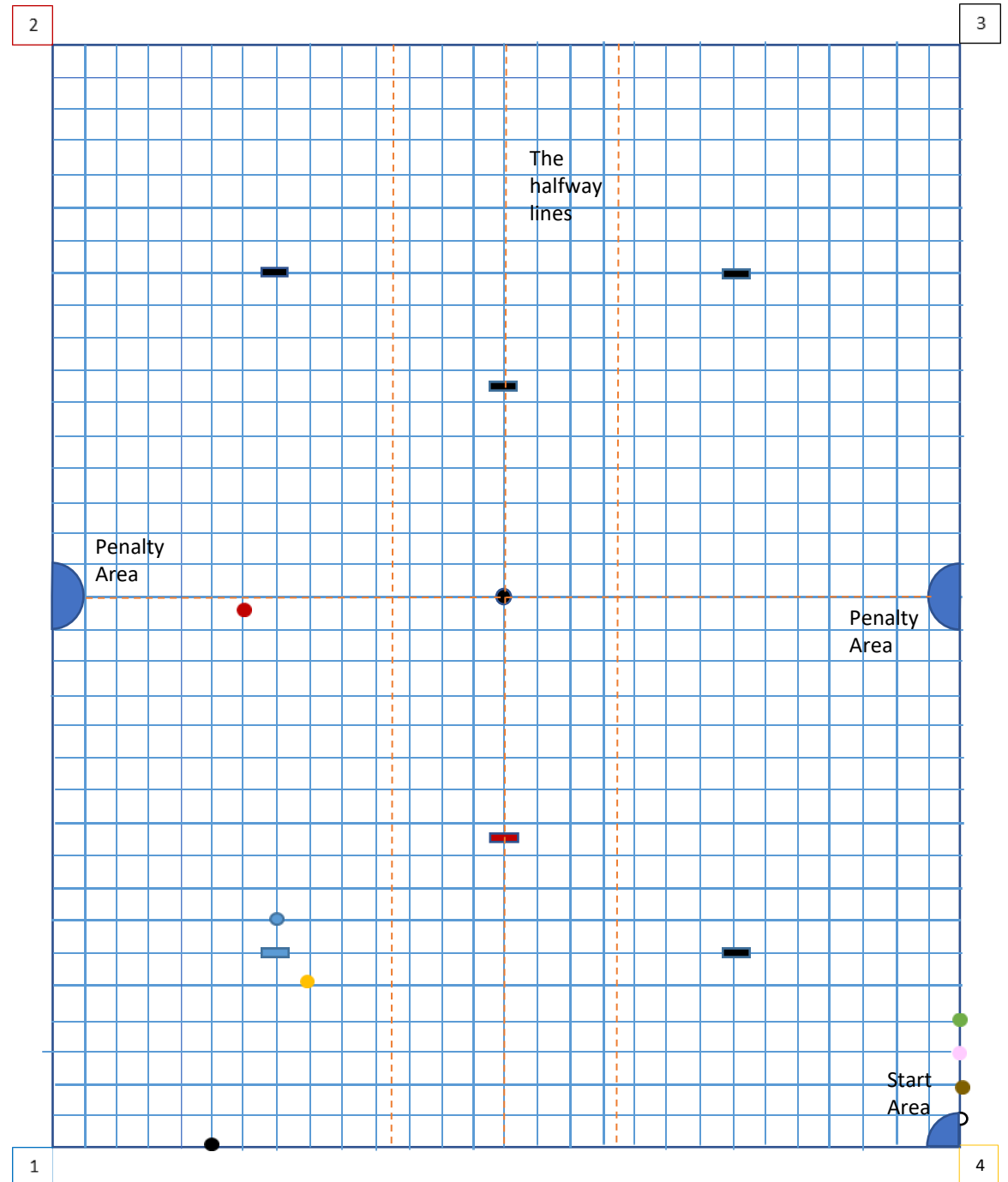
Key points to remember:

- A ball completes running a hoop and scores the point as soon as it **clears the plane of the playing side** even if partially within the jaws of the hoop – see **image iv**.
- A ball at positions *ii* and *iii* could only score on a subsequent turn if it got there from the playing side.
- But, importantly, a ball that comes to rest **clear of the non-playing side** even if partially within the jaws - see **image i** - **could subsequently score the hoop even if it got to that point from the non-playing side**.
- If more than one ball runs the same hoop as a result of a stroke, then the point is scored by the ball that was **nearest** the hoop before the stroke was played.
- In theory, more than one hoop can be scored – by one or more balls – as a result of a single stroke.



Rule 8: The off side rule

- The line between the hoop just scored and the next hoop in order is called the halfway line (note there are four such).
- A ball is offside if it is *'clearly beyond the halfway line'* at the end of a turn in which a point is scored.
- Before the opponent's next turn they are entitled to direct an offside ball to a penalty area of their choice.
- A ball is not offside if it reached its final position as a result of:
 - The stroke just played
 - A previous stroke played or interference committed by the opposing side
 - Contact with an opponent ball
 - Being directed to a penalty area (which subsequently became an offside position)



Rule 9: Interference

- Except during the striking period, if a player touches or moves a ball with their mallet or any part of their body or clothing, etc, etc, it is **interference**, not a **fault**. There is no penalty.
 - If **stationary**, the ball is replaced in its original position
 - If a **moving ball hits an outside agency** there is no replay, **the opposing side** chooses whether to leave the ball where it stopped or place it where they judge it would have stopped.
 - **Exception** is where a moving ball is interfered with by, for example, a moving ball from another game **and the outcome is in doubt** (that is, it was intended to run a hoop or clear a ball in a hoop running position), in which case **replace and replay**.
 - The Rules encourage players to save time and stop a ball that is about to leave the court. It is not interference! But only do so where the precise position of the ball has no tactical significance.
- Deliberate interference is covered by Rule 16: Behaviour.
- Interference also covers when a player is entitled to relief, for example, because of:
 - Damage in the immediate vicinity of a hoop
 - A fixed obstacle outside the court
 - Uneven ground outside the court





Rule 10: **Playing a wrong ball**

- Playing a **wrong Ball** is the most common irregularity, and also the one that is most frequently resolved incorrectly.
- Don't be disadvantaged by not knowing the Rules. Always carry a copy of the checklist (see below). If unsure, call for a referee if there is one (consider qualifying yourself!).
- The Rules require that any player who believes a wrong ball is about to be played to **forestall play**. **Always do so**. It saves a lot of time. In most cases the remedy is simply to replace the balls and for the striker to play the correct one.
- Also, it is **unacceptable behaviour** (Rule 16.2) to deliberately not forestall wrong ball play and you may be penalized for not doing so.
- In the 6th Edition, Rule 10 has been reorganized and shortened to make it clearer and easier to follow. It is now written so that the reader can operate it by first testing whether Rule 10.3 applies, then whether 10.4 applies and, finally, whether Rule 10.5 applies. Most cases are covered by 10.5.
- The Rules also provides a **one-page checklist**. So, all you have to do is work through the checklist steps 1 to 6 stopping at and applying the appropriate Rule...PTO

Wrong Ball Checklist

Wrong ball error		Rule	Remedy		Next Player
			Hoop points	Action	
1	Exchange of colours - first four turns played in colour sequence, but by opponent(s) of ball owner(s)	10.1.2	Retain any scored	Switch ball ownership - the ownership of the balls during the remainder of the match is as the first four turns	Striker
2	Side played stroke when not entitled - the ball played is not relevant - any strokes annulled are treated as if they had not taken place - all balls are replaced in their original positions	10.3	Cancel any scored	Annul stroke (Rule 6.3.6)	Side entitled to play
3	Previous stroke played by side A with a side B ball, and last stroke played by side B (with any ball) - a wrong ball has been played in both strokes - coin toss: losing side chooses the area (all 4 balls are played from same penalty area); winning side starts with either ball	10.4	Cancel any scored by either stroke	Penalty area continuation (17.2)	Winner of toss
4	Either player of correct side played one of its balls out of sequence - striker's side played partner ball - <u>opposition decide</u> ball swap or replace and replay	10.5.2	Retain any scored	Ball swap (10.5.6) - all balls are left where they stopped - the position of the ball played and its partner are swapped	Non-offending side - the non-offending side plays the ball in sequence after the partner ball of the ball that was actually played
			Cancel any scored	Replace and replay (10.5.5) - all balls moved as a result of the <i>last stroke</i> are replaced	Striker - the striker replays the stroke with the striker's ball
5	Either player of correct side played an opponent ball - striker's side played opposition ball	10.5.3	Cancel any scored	Replace and replay	Striker
6	Doubles partner of correct side played striker's ball - striker's partner played striker's ball - ball swap not an option	10.5.4	Cancel any scored	Replace and replay	Striker



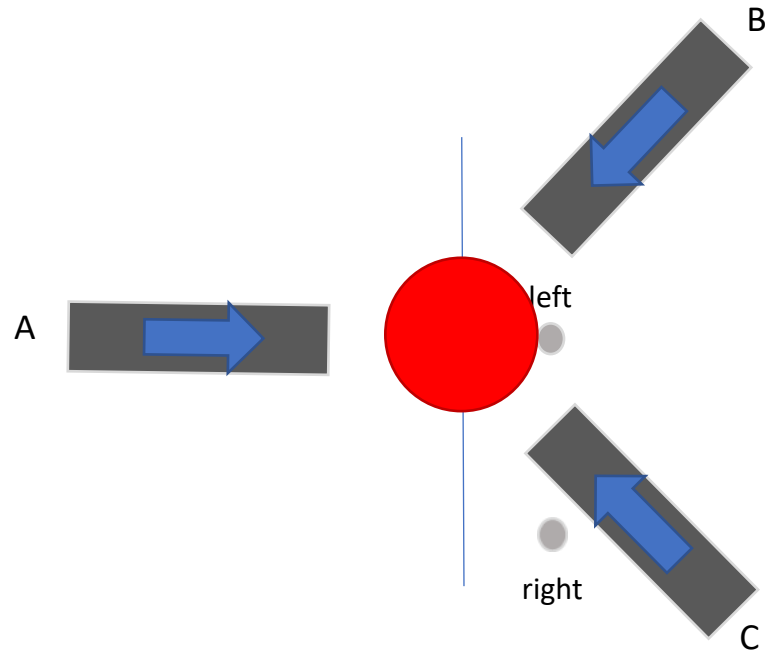
Rule 11: Faults

- A **Fault can only be committed by a player during the striking period**, which starts when they take a stance with apparent intent to play a stroke and ends when they quit their stance under control.
- There are ten types of fault. The four most common are:
 - **Bevel Edge**. Striking a ball with any part of the mallet other than the end face. See example later. But note this is only a fault with a stroke that requires special care because of the proximity of a hoop, peg or another ball. In other circumstances it is just a bad shot!
 - **Double Tap**. Striking a ball with the mallet more than once or allowing the ball to retouch the mallet
 - **Push**. Maintained contact between the mallet and ball
 - **Crush**. Causing the ball, while still in contact with the mallet, to touch a hoop, peg or another ball or by striking a ball when it lies in contact with a hoop or peg in any other direction than away from it

Other faults to be aware of...

- **Touching any ball with the mallet** other than the one they intended to strike, or **touching any ball with their body, clothing or personal property**
- **Moving or shaking a stationary ball** by hitting a hoop or the peg
- **Causing damage to the court surface** that, before repair, is capable of significantly affecting a subsequent stroke

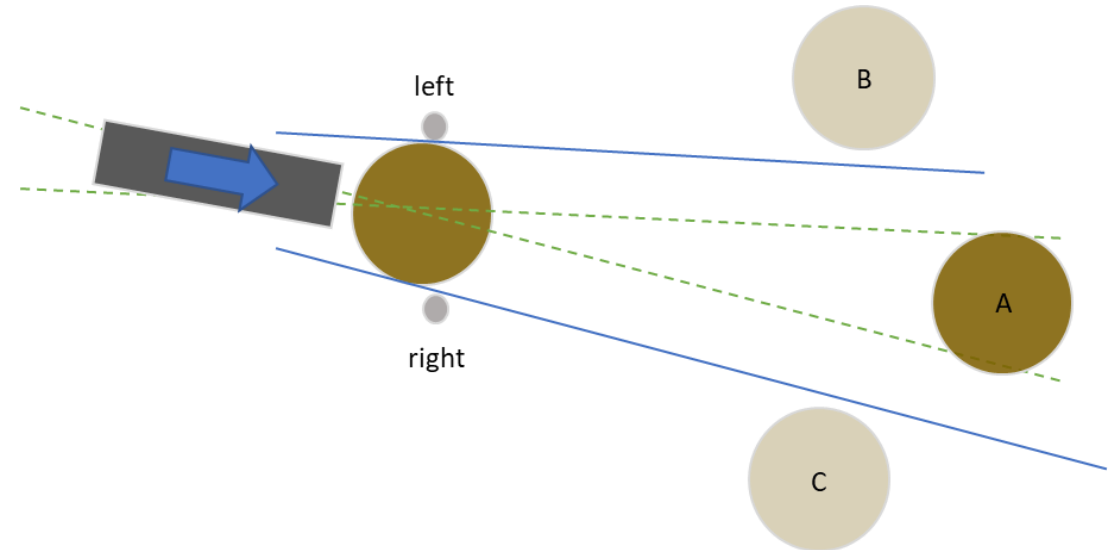
A ball close to, or in contact with, a hoop presents particular problems and is a common source of faults...

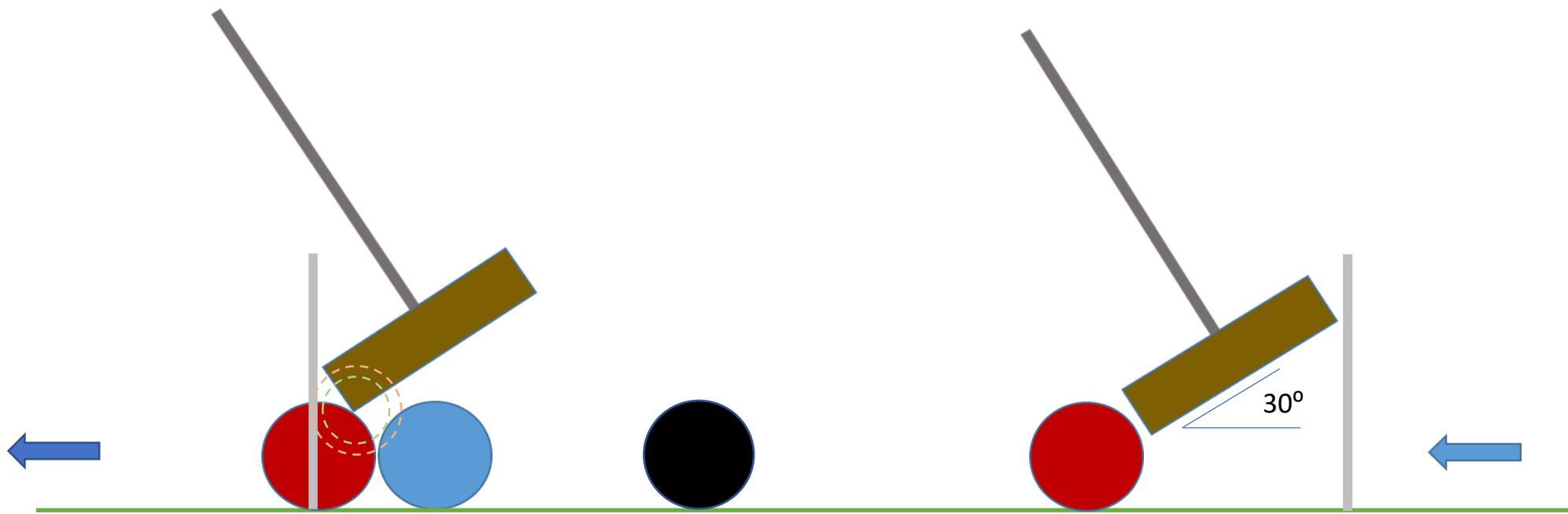


Example 1: the **RED** ball is tight up against the left wire and any attempt to hit the ball towards the hoop (from within 180° of the wire) must always be a **crush** fault. The ball could only be hit legally from the rear of the hoop 'B', or even from between the wires of the hoop 'C', though you will need to take care to strike with the face of the mallet and not the **bevel edge**, which would also be a fault

Example 2: the **BROWN** ball has started to run the hoop but is tight on the left wire with a (small) gap between it and the right wire. Take note of the two blue lines – these are the tangents drawn between the outside of the ball and the inside of the wires. The dotted green lines run through the centre of the ball parallel to these tangents and show the limits of where it is safe to strike the ball – away from the near (left) wire and not onto the further (right) wire.

- **BROWN** can only have ended up at 'B' by coming off the right wire – a referee would look for the ball being **crushed** and/or a **double tap** – the **gap between ball and wire** and the **strength and type of shot** are key factors.
- **BROWN** can only have ended up at 'C' by being **pushed** and/or being hit by the mallet a second time – a **double tap** – either way, a ball at 'C' is a **certain fault** and an easy refereeing decision.





Hampered shots also frequently give rise to faults, so think carefully about the whether it is necessary and look for an alternative.

Example 1. Bevel Edge Faults. If the ball is struck with any part of the mallet other than the flat of the end face it would not normally attract a penalty beyond the fact that it is a bad shot! However, in a stroke that requires special care because of the proximity of a hoop, peg or another ball, as in the Examples above, then it is a **fault**. Touching the **BLUE** ball with the mallet would also be a **fault** as would brushing **BLACK** with a trouser leg. Take care.

Example 2. Hammer shots. Guidance to Referees is clear: **a hammer stroke should always be declared a fault unless the angle of the mallet does not exceed 30°**. A **double-tap** occurs when the mallet head contacts the ball at a steeper angle. At a shallower angle it may still be a fault (such as a **push**, **bevel edge** or **double tap**). **The referee will look for the ball to bounce.**

Action after a **Fault**

- The **non-offending side chooses** whether the balls are **left where they stopped** or are **replaced** in the positions they occupied before the stroke was played.
- If the balls are left where they ended, only a point scored for the non-offending side is counted.
- If the balls are replaced, no point is scored for any ball.
- Play then continues by the non-offending side playing the next ball in sequence: that is, the striker's turn ends, except...
- In **handicap play** where an extra turn *may* be taken after a fault (in effect, the balls are replaced and you can have another go, which doesn't have to be the same shot).
- If an **extra turn** is taken **the balls must be replaced** and, once replaced, the player may not then change their mind and must take an extra turn.



Rule 20: Handicap Play

- In **singles**, **extra strokes** are received by the **higher handicapped player**, the number of extra strokes being the difference in handicaps.
- In **doubles**, **extra strokes** are received by the **two higher handicapped players**, who may be on the same or opposing sides.
 - The number of extra strokes received is the difference between the handicaps of the higher handicapped player in each side and the lower handicapped player in the opposing side.
 - In doubles the difference is **halved and rounded up** except when both players on one team have a partial extra stroke, in which case only one is rounded up. The two players must say before the game starts which will be affected by this adjustment (see worked example opposite).
 - If both players on one side have the same handicap and both receive extra strokes they must announce before the game starts which will receive extra strokes as the lowest handicap (see worked example opposite).
- **An extra stroke must be played with the same ball after any turn in which the striker plays a stroke.**
 - You must announce clearly and promptly if you are *considering* taking an extra stroke. Once you say 'no' you cannot change your mind.
 - The opposing side is entitled to ask if you are considering.
- **You may not score a point for your side as a result of an extra stroke**, though a point scored for the opposition will count. Putting a ball into the jaws of a hoop is a good tactic. But going too far through is a wasted extra stroke.
- After a **wrong ball**: you may only play an extra stroke after a wrong ball only if the last stroke is first replayed after Replace and Replay has been applied (see above).
- After a **fault**: you may play an extra stroke **after** a fault.
 - **but only** after the opposition has decided how to resolve the fault (see above). Bear this in mind if you are giving extra strokes to your opponent.
 - if you decide to take an extra stroke, the balls **must** be replaced in the positions before the fault was committed. You may then not change your mind and **must** play an extra stroke. But note, the stroke you play can be entirely different to the initial stroke in which the fault took place.

Calculating extra strokes in doubles:

The aim of handicapping in doubles is to provide a degree of balance across the players in each side as well as between the two opposing sides. Each of the four players should be in an equal position to influence the outcome of the game.

Example 1

- **4 & 6 v 8 & 8**

Compare high v low in each case:

So compare **4** with **8** or **8**

And **6** with **8** or **8**

Difference divided by half and rounded up

So one of **8** and **8** will have 2 extra strokes and the other 1

- In this situation **Red** and **Yellow** must choose which will receive the 2 extra strokes as the lowest handicap player, and which will receive only 1 extra stroke.

Example 2

- **7 & 8 v 9 & 10**

Compare high v low in each case:

So compare **7** with **10**

And **8** with **9**

Difference divided by half and rounded up

So **9** has ½ extra stroke and **10** has 1½ extra strokes

- In a situation like this where both players on one team have a partial extra stroke only one is rounded up, so **Pink** and **White** must choose whether to have 1 extra stroke each or for **White** to have 2 and **Pink** none.

Rule 21: Advantage Play

New for 2022! Advantage GC is a straightforward way for two players of differing abilities to play each other using GC level play rules.

- **Extra strokes are not used.** Instead, players will usually start the game with a score other than 0:0
- The **stronger player** will often start with a **negative score** (meaning they will need to score more than 7 hoops to win); and,
- The **weaker player** may start with a **positive score** (meaning they will need to score fewer than 7 hoops to win).
- **The game ends when one side reaches a score of 7**, just like normal. But to achieve a score of 7, the winner may have physically run more than 7 hoops (from a negative start) or fewer than 7 hoops (from a positive start). The winner will only have physically run exactly 7 hoops if their **starting score** is zero.
- **Hoops are played in the same order as usual for a 13-point game**, but with an occasional extension to hoop 14 (hoop 4) and exceptionally to hoop 15 (hoop 1). Advantage games can end at any hoop from 5 to 15. If the score reaches 6:6 play continues with the deciding hoop being the next hoop in order (which may well not be hoop 13).
- **Matches should be untimed.** Most forms of time-limited handicap games are intrinsically unfair and we are strongly advised not to put a time on Advantage games. This does mean, however, that **playing with dispatch is more important than ever.**

Step 1. Work out the **starting score** based on your handicap

- See next page for how to do this, including worked examples

Step 2. Play your game. But note...**KEEP SCORE !!!**

- It can be easy to get confused and distracted by scoring. Players should always adhere to Rule 7.8 by BOTH:
 - **announcing** the score after each hoop has been run; and,
 - **using scoring clips.** The number of clips that you will need can be worked out from the table on the next page

Your Starting Score	Number of hoops needed to win	Number of scoring clips you will need to carry
2	5	4
1	6	5
0	7	6
-1	8	7
-2	9	8
-3	10	9
-4	11	10

Find the starting score using the table opposite

- Read the starting score for a game at the intersection of the corresponding column (stronger player) and row (weaker player) which is listed as **Stronger : Weaker**.

- Example 1. Handicap 4 v Handicap 8

The table shows the starting score as -2:1. The h/c 4 player will start on -2, so needs to run 9 hoops to win; the h/c 8 player starts on 1, so needs to run only 6 hoops to win.

- Example 2. Handicap 0 v Handicap 8

The table shows the starting score is in the greyed area -4:2. The h/c 8 player will start on 2, so needs to run 5 hoops to win; the h/c 0 player starts on -4, so needs to run 11 hoops to win.

ADVANTAGE Golf Croquet
 Table of Starting Scores
 for first-to-7-points
Stronger : Weaker
 2022 Revision Roy Tillcock

		Stronger player																					
		HCP	-6	-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	14	
Weaker player	DGR	2650-	-6	0:0																			
	2500-2649	-5	0:1	0:0																			
	2350-2499	-4	-2:1	0:1	0:0																		
	2200-2349	-3	-2:2	-2:1	0:1	0:0																	
	2100-2199	-2	-3:2	-2:2	-2:1	0:1	0:0																
	2000-2099	-1	-3:2	-1:2	-1:1	-1:0	0:0																
	1900-1999	0	-2:2	-1:2	-2:0	-1:0	0:0																
	1800-1899	1	-3:2	-2:2	-2:1	-2:0	-1:0	0:0															
	1700-1799	2	-3:2	-1:2	-2:1	-2:0	-1:0	0:0															
	1600-1699	3	-2:2	-1:2	-2:1	-2:0	-1:0	0:0															
	1500-1599	4	-3:2	-2:2	-1:2	-2:1	-2:0	-1:0	0:0														
	1400-1499	5	-3:2	-3:2	-2:2	-1:2	-2:1	-2:0	-1:0	0:0													
	1350-1399	6	-3:2	-3:2	-2:2	-2:2	-1:2	-2:1	-2:0	-1:0	0:0												
	1300-1349	7	-3:2	-3:2	-2:2	-2:2	-1:2	-2:1	-2:0	-1:0	0:0												
1250-1299	8	-3:2	-3:2	-2:2	-2:2	-1:2	-2:1	-2:0	-1:0	0:0													
1200-1249	9	-3:2	-3:2	-2:2	-2:2	-1:2	-2:1	-2:0	-1:0	0:0													
1150-1199	10	-3:2	-3:2	-2:2	-2:2	-1:2	-2:1	-2:0	-1:0	0:0													
1100-1149	11	-3:2	-3:2	-2:2	-2:2	-1:2	-2:1	-2:0	-1:0	0:0													
1050-1099	12	-3:2	-3:2	-2:2	-2:2	-1:2	-2:1	-2:0	-1:0	0:0													
1000-1049	14	-3:2	-3:2	-2:2	-2:2	-1:2	-2:1	-2:0	-1:0	0:0													
		HCP	-6	-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	14	
		DGR	2649	2499	2349	2199	2099	1999	1899	1799	1699	1599	1499	1399	1349	1299	1249	1199	1149	1099	1049		
		RANGE	2650	2500	2350	2200	2100	2000	1900	1800	1700	1600	1500	1400	1350	1300	1250	1200	1150	1100	1050	1000	