

Nailsea & District Croquet Club Competitions Handbook

Updated February 2024

General principles

All games in internal competitions should be played according to the Croquet England Laws (AC) or Rules (GC). With the exception of Speed Croquet Doubles, **“ties” are not valid results – the Laws and Rules for timed endings must be observed so that there is always a winner.**

This Handbook is intended to describe the details that are peculiar to individual competitions and act as a quick reference tool for players who find the Laws and Rules books difficult to access. It also brings together information that has previously been scattered about on various notice-boards or in the heads of a couple of managers. The first section gives advice on arrangement of matches and practice/warm-up before them.

Arrangement of matches, and practice before matches

When a player enters a competition, he takes on responsibility for getting the corresponding matches played. Failure to do so results in inconvenience and unfairness to others. This is particularly true in “blocks”. If a player cannot complete his block games, he must withdraw from that competition. The results of matches involving him in that block are void although the handicap card records remain intact.

Players arrange a mutually convenient time to play the match and one of them books a lawn. They will usually both have a short “warm-up” (a few minutes) which is really designed for them to get used to the prevailing conditions. It is etiquette to wait until both players are there so that they have the same amount of time. If one player is significantly late, this privilege may be forfeited by the late player. If a player arranges two matches for the same day, he must tell the opponent in the second match and give him the chance to have an extended warm-up.

Handicap changes

If a handicap changes for any reason, during the season, the new Handicap should be used immediately. The exception to this rule is that a handicap does not change during the day of a League Match, or during a tournament. The weekend of NDCC Finals is regarded as a tournament. Semi-finals weekend is not regarded as a tournament because some semi-finals are played outside that weekend.

Lawn Maintenance

The mowers are Club members and are volunteers. They try very hard to avoid interrupting play. However, with the constraints of weather and domestic life, they occasionally have to do so. All members are asked to co-operate fully with their requests, even if they are playing competitive matches. The same applies to all aspects of lawn maintenance, such as Darrel-rolling, spraying, irrigation, application of granular fertiliser and hoop setting. The maintenance teams plan carefully to contain tournament preparation into one half day and sometimes work quite late in the evening to achieve this. We should be thanking them, not moaning!

Association Croquet

Time-limits

For all 26-point AC games, the default time limit is 3.5h but players may choose any time between 3 and 4 hours if they agree on this. See individual entries for 18-point games, Short Croquet, one-ball, Speed Croquet and Alternate Stroke Doubles

Open Handicap Singles standard 26 points on large lawn

Ladies Handicap Singles standard 26 points on large lawn

Open Advanced Singles standard 26 points on large lawn

B Class Advanced Play standard 26 points on large lawn

Enginuity Plate standard 26 points on large lawn

Level Play (9-15) standard 26 points on large lawn

Unequal Bisques (base 14)

Games are 26 point games, played on full-size lawns. To determine the bisque allocation, subtract 14 from the handicap of each player. Eg if a player with handicap 18 plays a player with handicap 24, the 18 will have 4 bisques and the 24 will have 10 bisques. An individual player will always have the same number of bisques, regardless of the handicap of his opponent (unless his own handicap changes).

Open 18 point Handicap Singles

These games are played on full-size lawns. The initial positioning of the clips has two possibilities:

- All clips start on Hoop 5 so both balls score 8 hoops and the peg
- All clips start on hoop1 **but** when a ball runs hoop 1, the partner clip moves to hoop 3-back. This way, one ball scores 12 hoops and the peg and the other ball scores 4 hoops and the peg

If players wish, they may each choose a different option from each other.

To calculate the bisque allocation for 18 point games, subtract the lower handicap from the higher handicap, as usual. This gives the bisque allocation for a 26point game. You then need to refer to the table below to convert to the bisque allocation for an 18 point game.

26 pts	18pts	26 pts	18pts	26 pts	18pts	26 pts	18pts	26 pts	18pts
0.5	0	5.5	4	10.5	7.5	16.5	11	21.5	15
1	0.5	6	4	11	8	17	12	22	15
1.5	1	6.5	4.5	12	8.5	17.5	12	22.5	15.5
2	1.5	7	5	13	9	18	12.5	23	16
2.5	1.5	7.5	5	13.5	9.5	18.5	13	23.5	16.5
3	2	8	5.5	14	9.5	19	13	24	17
3.5	2.5	8.5	6	14.5	10	19.5	13.5	24.5	17
4	3	9	6	15	10.5	20	14	25	17.5
4.5	3	9.5	6.5	15.5	10.5	20.5	14	26	18
5	3.5	10	7	16	11	21	14.5		

The default time limit for this competition is 2h15mins but may be between 2h and 2.5 h by agreement.

Open Advanced Handicap Play Singles

This game is played to Advanced Rules but as a Handicap Play game. The bisque entitlement is as for Handicap Play. **There are no extra rules governing when bisques may or may not be taken. The rules for pegging out are as for normal Handicap Play.**

Short Croquet

Short Croquet has its own handicap system and is a “full-bisque” game. This means that a player whose Short Croquet handicap is 5, for example, will have 5 bisques, regardless of the handicap of the opponent. Each game is 14 points, on a small lawn, with a time-limit of 1h 15mins. Short Croquet is played to Association Croquet Laws with one exception. This is that: with all the usual caveats about wiring, a player may claim a wiring lift if either of his balls is wired from its partner ball before he starts his turn.

Results of Short Croquet games should be recorded on Short Croquet handicap cards.

If an AC handicap comes down, for any reason at all, the SC handicap should be manually adjusted accordingly.

If an AC handicap goes up, the SC handicap should NOT be adjusted.

Movement of an SC handicap either way has no impact on a player's AC handicap.

Initial Short Croquet handicaps should be based upon a player's Association Croquet handicap, according to the table:

Association	-3 to -1	-0.5 to 0.5	1 to 1.5	2 to 2.5	3-3.5	4 to 4.5	5	6	7
Short	3 peels	2 peels	1 peel	0	0.5	1	1.5	2	2.5

Association	8-9	10 to 11	12	14	16	18	20	22	24
Short	3	3.5	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

One-ball

One-ball is played to AC Laws but each player has just one ball. It is a 13pt game : 12 hoops and the peg.

Handicaps for one-ball

A player's One Ball handicap is the lowest of:

- a. their AC handicap (*but see below for AC handicaps that are less than 2*)
- b. 2.5 x their GC handicap (*but see below for GC handicaps that are less than 0*)
- c. 20

The bisque allocation is then 1/3 of the difference between the one-ball handicaps of the two players, rounded to the nearest half-bisque.

AC handicaps that are less than 2 are adjusted as follows:

1.5 becomes 1	1 becomes 0	0.5 becomes -1	0 becomes -2	-0.5 becomes -3
-1 becomes -4	-1.5 becomes -5	-2 becomes -6	-2.5 becomes -7	-3 becomes -8

GC players with minus handicaps

Players should **not** multiply minus GC handicaps by 2.5 (so -2 should not become -5); Instead simply enter the usual minus handicap in "b" above.

Level Play and Advanced Rules One-ball are played exactly to Level play/Advanced AC rules, including the 1-back and 4-back lifts and contact in the Advanced version.

The time limit for a one-ball game is usually 40mins but may be 45mins for double banked games.

If "best of three" is played, the winner of the toss is deemed to be the winner of the toss for the first and third games but the loser of the toss is deemed to be the winner of the toss for the second game. I.e. the players take it in turns to have the choice of going first or second

Alternate Strokes Doubles

The players of each side play strokes alternately, within their turn. If a player of a side takes the last stroke of a turn, the other player takes the first stroke of the next turn. Bisque allocations are calculated in the usual way and bisques may be taken by either player. If a player plays out of order, all the balls are replaced and there is no penalty. Hence it is advisable to pre-empt.

Speed Croquet Doubles

Speed Croquet is played using chess clocks. Each side has a 25 minutes time allocation. The games are 14 points on a small lawn. At Nailsea, Speed Croquet is **not** Short Croquet so the extra wiring rule does not apply. In 2024, Speed Croquet will be played as Alternate Stroke Doubles

Handicaps. Each side is entitled to a number of bisques, or is required to make a number of mandatory peels as given in the schedule of Bisques and Mandatory Peels below. If both sides are entitled to bisques they receive the appropriate number as in full bisque handicap play. No bisques may be used by a side once they have run out of time. In addition, each side containing a -2 or better handicap player shall have 10% (2½ minutes for a 25 minute game) deducted from its time allowance for each such player in the side. Similarly, a side without a -2 or better handicap player, but with a total AC handicap of -2 or below will forfeit 10% of its time. In addition to the above, for each -2½ or better handicap player in a side 10% of the time allowance will be added to the opponents' time allowance.

Peels. A player may not peel the partner's ball through more than two hoops.

Either ball of a side may be peeled by its partner ball to count as a mandatory peel. When the number of mandatory peels outstanding is equal to the number of hoop points remaining to be scored by the side, no point can be scored by running a hoop. If an opponent's ball is peeled and the number of that side's mandatory peels is equal to the number of points remaining to be scored, then the number of that side's outstanding mandatory peels is reduced by one for each peel made on his ball.

Pegging Out. Law 38 applies. If an adversary's rover ball is pegged out when that side has mandatory peels outstanding, all those peels are cancelled.

Timing The clock for the team in play will be stopped when the striker and partner have quit the lawn at the end of the turn, having replaced all balls and clips in their legal positions and all balls having come to rest. The opponents' clock will be switched on at the same time. If an opponent comes on to the lawn before the team has left the lawn, then the opponents' clock will be started and the strikers' will be stopped. Each side may call two **"time-outs"** of a minute each.

When Time is called the striker has, in that turn, one more shot, which may be croquet, but with no continuation stroke. This condition applies to the second side as well as the first. For all subsequent turns of the first side to run out of time, only single ball shots are allowed (no roquets, no croquets). Hoop and peg points may be scored and lifts claimed. The striker's ball may score a hoop or peg point after ricocheting off another ball (since the striking of the other ball is not a roquet). A time limit of 10 seconds is placed on these single ball shots.

Score. If the score is level when both sides have run out of time the result is a tie

Stopping the Clocks. Timekeepers should stop the clocks only at the striker's request if the striker has to wait for a double-banked game, if a referee is called on, until he has adjudicated, or is ready for the stroke to be played. Whilst clocks are stopped, players must not discuss tactics with a partner or adjust the position of balls. If this occurs, clocks may be started.

Handicap arrangements To arrive at your Bisque entitlement/Mandatory Peel requirement, add your AC Handicaps together, find the total in the Total AC Handicap column below and read off the number of bisques you are entitled to, or peels you are required to complete. Note that for the purposes of arriving at a Speed Croquet Handicap only, a maximum AC Handicap of 18 shall be used even if the player has a higher handicap.

When a bisque is taken, the alternating pattern continues – ie a player never has two shots in succession

Speed Croquet Doubles

Total AC Handicap	Bisques	Peels
-2 and below		3 (also see time deductions)
-1.5 - -0.5		3
0 – 1.5		2
2 – 3.5		1
4 - 5.5	0	0
6 -7.5	0.5	
8 – 9.5	1	
10 – 11.5	1.5	
12 – 13.5	2	
14 – 16.5	2.5	
17 – 19.5	3	
20 - 23	3.5	
23.5 -27	4	
27.5 – 30.5	5	
31 - 33	6	
34 -36	7	

Wild Wednesday

Three 18point games, against different opponents, are played with all clips starting on Hoop 5. The time limit is 1h45min. The bisque allocation is given by a special Wild Wednesday table. This table is based on the AC handicap of each player. However, if a player wins the competition on a particular day, then for future occasions, his or handicap is reduced by one step before the table is used. There is no limit to the number of times this rule will be applied during a season. At the beginning of the next season, the handicaps revert to their true value.

The order of play is arranged by the manager according to an algorithm. If there are more than 16 players, some doubles games will be played and, possibly, one game with two against one. The bisques in doubles games are individual bisques. The bisques will be half of those allocated in a Singles game. If rounding to the nearest half is necessary, the higher handicap player of the side rounds up and the lower handicap player rounds down so that the aggregate is correct.

For each game, points are awarded as follows:

The winner is awarded 20 points plus the difference between his hoop score and the loser's hoop score. If he pegs out, he gains an additional 5 points.

The loser is awarded just his hoop score.

Thus, if Jemima beats Fred 12-7, Jemima will score 25 points and Fred will score 7 points.

If Jemima beats Fred 18-7, Jemima will score 36 points and Fred will score 7 points.

Over the season, the best 4 Wild Wednesday scores are added for each player and the player with the highest aggregate is declared the annual Wild Wednesday winner.

Wild Wednesday dates are announced for the season and included on the Calendar. The lawns are pre-booked so the dates will also be visible in the CBS. The dates are generally the first Wednesdays of each month from April to October but there are exceptions and/or additions to this, depending on spread and the dates for Finals Weekend.

Brigit Clayton is the Manager of Wild Wednesday

The dates for 2024 are:

3 April

1 May

5 June

3 July

7 Aug

4 Sept

25 Sept

Golf Croquet

The matches in The Sergeant Cup Singles, the Buchanan Cup Doubles and the Level-play Class Singles are all played as “best of three”. With default time limits of 1 hour per game. The sides retain the same balls throughout the match and, in doubles matches, each player retains the same ball.

The losing side of one game starts the next game with either ball of their side.

For all NDCC internal competitions, in 2024, handicap GC will be played as the Extra Turns format.