

Subject: **Half-Court Golf Croquet Handicaps**

To: State Handiappers

From: Stephen Meatheringham (ACA National Handicapper)

Date: 9 September 2010

Dear State Handicapper

In May 2010 a question was raised with me by the Victorian Golf Croquet (GC) Handicapper. It related to the initial setting of GC handicaps for players using a half court. It was noted that quite a few clubs in Victoria only play on half courts. The question asked was whether the standard method as currently in use in Australia for setting an initial GC handicap could be extended to half courts.

At that time I saw two possible problems with half court play:

1. A person's ability to hit accurately to a given place will be increased by hitting shorter distances.
2. Tactics will be quite different. For example, running a hoop from 3.5 yards on the border will be very easy for good players.

I believed those two factors made it likely that a half court handicap would not equate to a full court one. Better players would be advantaged relative to higher handicappers which would skew the handicap range.

I asked the ACA to pass the query on to the WCF GC Rules Committee. This was done and I received a response through Tony Hall.

The essence of the WCF reply was that:

1. The WCF do not wish to have involvement in any handicap setting issues.
2. They believe handicaps would be skewed by the use of half courts, and that a lower handicapped player would gain an advantage over a higher handicapped one.

The second point accords with my belief and leads to the conclusion that a half court handicap would only be valid on a half court. This excludes the use of half court play in the national handicapping system.

Since the initial query I have also been asked by the Victorian GC Handicapper if the results of games played on half courts can be included in the Australian Handicapping System.

I conclude that:

"Golf Croquet games played on courts significantly smaller than full-sized should use handicaps appropriate to those courts. Such handicaps will not necessarily be those used on full-sized courts. Games on these smaller courts are not eligible for inclusion in the Australian Handicapping System."

Regards

Stephen Meatheringham
ACA National Handicapper