

## Basic Courtesy-Golf Croquet Notes for Players

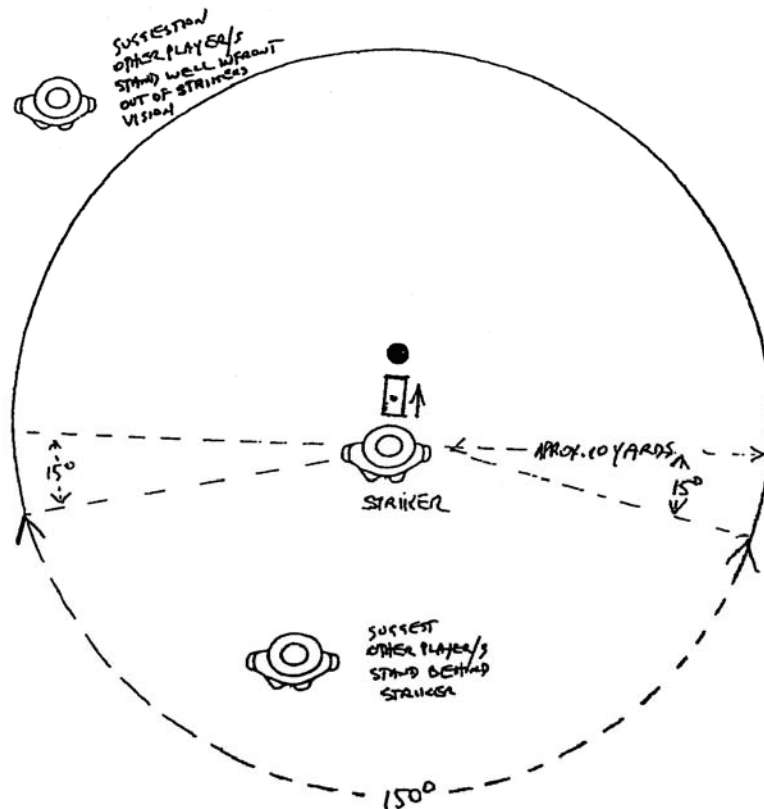
### Guidelines and suggestions

How players conduct themselves regarding reasonable behaviour.

Players ought to be aware of *Rule 14* (Etiquette) and the intent of the following guidelines. When necessary referees will draw players' attention to breaches of this Rule and impose penalties where the Rules require. Players' attention is drawn to **WCF Regulation 6 'Player's responsibilities'** (this is part of the Rules): "*A player is responsible at all times to act within the letter and spirit of the Rules and Regulations. Failure to do so may render the player liable to disqualification*"

**The intent and spirit of Golf Croquet is that it is intended to be played promptly with a minimum of delay between strokes, without time wasting.** A significant proportion of the rule changes since the initial WCF GC Rules were released allow for expedition of play. Golf Croquet is a significantly different game to Association Croquet (AC) and any conventions and practices traditional to AC ought to be generally disregarded and the new approach specified in the rules adopted, particularly *Rule 14(a)(8)*: "*Fails to play with reasonable dispatch. Players are not to waste time*". Prolonged discussions (particularly in doubles) common in AC are not to be tolerated in GC. Players can warn opponents about slow play under *Rule 14(c)*.

- 1 **While a striker is in their stance** (and perhaps casting) the **non-striker** is to be:
  - **Stationary:** "Please keep still, don't swing your mallet and don't move about."
  - **Silent:** "Please do not talk to your partner so loudly that you can be heard by the striker", if the striker can hear general comments it is distracting. referees ought to remind players about *Rule 14(a)(4)* the first time an inconsiderate and thoughtless person breaches these simple codes of good and logical behaviour, the referee may offer a very gentle warning as this is usually appropriate and effective.
  - **Out of sight (behind the striker)** - so as not to impinge on their **peripheral vision**. The non-striker is to be behind the peripheral vision of the striker (say at least 15 degrees behind, in other words in the 150 degree triangle behind the striker. Failure to observe this protocol could find the referee implementing *Rule 14(a)(4)* or the striker could apply *Rule 14(c)* against the opponent.
  - **Out of sight (in front or at the side of the striker):** That is; as far as possible away from the striker, within reason (say 10 yards minimum). Sometimes it is inconvenient for the non-striker to go behind the striker as there is insufficient time available if the striker is in a hurry to play the next shot, in this case the non-striker is to be as far away as possible (and stationary) and toward the side. *Rule 14 (a)(5)*: The striker is entitled to not have their concentration disturbed by an opponent. The opponent is to be out of sight when the striker's head is down addressing the ball, so they cannot see the non-striker.



- 2 **Time wasting (particularly in doubles): The major problem is thoughtlessness.**  
**Example:** If the striker's ball has missed hitting the target ball and the striker's ball has travelled some considerable distance, the balls owner **ought** to walk to that distant ball immediately and **not** engage in a lengthy conversation with the partner. Waiting until their turn is due and only then walking to their distant ball is: thoughtless, time wasting, inconsiderate and boring.  
The Referee may give a gentle warning?
- 3 **Don't walk across the line of play.** Sometimes when the striker has missed a shot, they need to walk to that ball (maybe to bring it onto the boundary line). They ought not trudge across the line that the opponent is about to shoot along or over. Sometimes heavy foot prints can leave impressions in a soft court that will alter the path of a soft delicate stroke.
- 4 **Unsolicited Advice:** Some players don't seem to realise what a predicament the adversary (usually when they are about to strike) is placed in, when the opponent, (often with the best of intentions) offers unsolicited advice ? Can the striker accept it? There is no provision in the 2007 Rules that prevents the striker acting on any unsolicited advice from an opponent or a spectator.  
Many players may feel unable to morally accept advice and play the shot. However the player ought **not** feel obliged to reject advice and so fail to take a course of action not to play a shot that they well might have discovered before playing that shot, otherwise the striker could be precluded from the opportunity of discovering the situation themselves.  
**Rule 8** specifies that a partner may offer advice to a partner.  
**Rule 14(a)(12)** forbids the giving of wrong information. *Rule 14 (b)* specifies a warning to apply on the first occasion but the referee ought not hesitate to apply the 'loss of turn' penalty for the second breach.  
**Rule 14(a)(2)** forbids the giving of advice to the opponent. Referees usually (perhaps too often) ignore this breach.. If the referee suspects that this is "gamesmanship", *Rule 14 (b)* needs to be applied. It is better for everybody, if good manners and thoughtfulness prevail.

- 5     **Unsolicited Advice in Teams Matches:** Team matches can be a cause for unintentional breaches. The Captain or another team player might intentionally or unintentionally advise the team (or player) on the court of the state of the other games; e.g. “You need to win at least 7 to 4, otherwise they will win the day (the rubber) on hoops” - this type of situation could cause a major row if it ever occurs. (*Note: the actual legal situation is currently unclear and may be a matter for the event conditions to specify*)
- 6     **Double banked games:** The first game to commence on a court generally has ‘right of way’. There may well be occasions where the referee will need to take control and ‘mark-down’ a slow double banked game that is preventing a faster game progressing.
- 7     **Marking Balls:** During double banked games players are to carry plastic markers and observe the practice specified in *Rule 1(g)*: “*The position of balls from the other game may be marked with permission from the participants of that game*”. Do **not** use coins as these could damage mower blades if left behind. Players are to obtain permission from the other game before marking and lifting a ball.
- 8     **Stopping the Clock in a time limited game:** When a slow double banked game is preventing a faster game progressing, players sometimes become agitated and constantly stop the clock. The provision to allow or not allow this is usually in the Tournament Conditions or is announced before the event starts.
- 9     **Call the score:**  
**Refereed games:** Immediately a hoop is run, the referee ought to call the score by first calling the colour of the ball that scored the hoop, e.g. ‘Red scores, 4-1’ - this means Red scored the hoop and leads four to one - *Rule 15(a)*.  
**Self Refereed Games.** The side that scored that hoop ought to call the score, e.g. Blue scores the hoop and is then leading 2 to 1, so Bab calls “2-1”. If Bab fails to call then Ray ought to call “1-2”. Always call the score for yourself first. *Rule 15(a)* “... *the striker or the referee announcing it after each point is scored*”.
- 10    **Handicaps: Extra Turns.** The number of extra turns available needs to be clearly understood before the game commences particularly in doubles. If the referee needs to become involved (before the game starts) because the players are confused this technique helps: each player should stand facing their opposite number when allocating the extra turns. Calculate the extra turns to be given by going through the calculation verbally, so there is no misunderstanding. Pegs or clips ought to be used to indicate the extra turns. These may be attached to the centre peg extension or a suitable stick at courtside or handed from the receiver to the giver. This technique keeps the audience informed of the state of the game.
- 11    **Fault - Jump Shot, etc.** When playing an unusual shot (jump shot, hammer shot, cricket/golf across the body shot), after breaking the ground it is not an acceptable form of behaviour to then stand on the divot. The referee, or an opponent, needs to see the divot to decide if is a fault (made by the mallet) or not a fault (made by the ball). If a player in a stealthy attempt to disguise a divot, stands on it, this is an admission of guilt. A referee ought not hesitate to award a fault.
- 12    **Calling a Referee (when there is no Referee in Charge).** Players are expected to signal, in the accepted fashion, by raising the mallet. If the striker (or the opponent) “stops play” and calls a referee, they are expected to wait until the referee has arrived. If a player plays a ball, ask them not to do so again and advise them that they have breached *Rule 14(a)(9)*. The striker is guilty of bad manners, because; having ‘stopped play’, by calling a referee, all play is to cease until the referee restarts the game by being in position and has had the opportunity to mark the ball. In extreme cases of truculent players repeatedly ‘playing’ a ball during the period when ‘play has been stopped’, the referee would be entitled to award a penalty under *Rule 14(a)(9)* and *14(b)*.
- 13    **Attempted ‘Condoning’?** If the striker calls a referee to watch a shot (e.g. a close run hoop) and the opponent calls (with the best of intentions) “*Play on, don’t bother calling the*

*referee- I trust you*", or similar, this creates a difficult situation. The referee may be halfway there. The striker is to ignore the non-striker as play has been stopped by the strikers signal for a referee. The striker is to wait until the referee has come and performed the duty for which they have been called. The (possibly unintentional) discourtesy of the non-striker is unfortunate as they have no authority to make such a suggestion. This is a thoughtless attempt to override the strikers request to stop play no matter how well intended. The Referee ought to gently remind the non-striker of the appropriate etiquette.

14 **Offside:** While it is not required by the Rules for a player to declare that they have a 'offside' ball, it is sometimes sensible to do so as the penalty for playing a partner/s striker ball of the side owning an offside ball can be severe and could lead to antagonism. Suggest careful reading of *Rule 10(2)*.

15 **Shaking Hands:** While it is common practice in Australia to shake hands with the other side before and after a game, don't be alarmed if an overseas visitor fails to do this before a game as it is not necessarily the practice in some overseas countries. Shaking hands between games of a "best of 3 or 5" ought not be done as a handshake signifies the end of a match not of a game. Shaking the hand of a referee at the end is appropriate.

16 **Drinks:** The UK have a delightful practice of the winner offering to buy a "drink" for the loser - this usually means alcoholic, as most UK clubs have a bar. If alcohol is not your thing during the day, be discreet how you choose an alternative as refusal of a 'drink' can easily offend.

17 **Self Refereeing:** The presence of a Referee does not relieve a player from the responsibility of admitting any fault that they cause.

**Rule 15:** "*The players in all matches are responsible for the fair and correct application of these Rules.*".

**Notes on the changes: No 11:** "*...is to place the first responsibility on the players*"

**Rule 14(b)(1):** "*If the fault is noticed before the opponent has played ...*" in a non-refereed game the only person who will be able on most occasions, to notice a fault, is the striker. Therefore it is expected that the striker will admit all faults

**Rule 15:** "*The presence or absence of a referee does not change the obligation on a player to follow fair and correct play*"

18 **Conclusion: Golf Croquet: The spirit - the intent - the expectation.**

Golf Croquet is intended to be played differently from the way Association Croquet is played. It is a different game, with different intentions, principles and history. Since the Egyptian influenced WCF GC Rules of 1998 were issued, every change to the Rules has been made for a specific reason and in the main it is drifting away in some aspects from the spirit and intent of Association Croquet. The game of Golf Croquet is intended to be a game that involves prompt interactive play incorporating active Refereeing. Most of the changes to the WCF Rules have been to facilitate play and time wasting rules have either been removed or truncated. Etiquette is the major emphasis. The rules require the outplayer to be discrete and to be silent, stationary and unnoticeable to the striker. The expectation is that play will be continuous with almost no time lapse between strokes. Time wasting discussions between strokes is discouraged and is to be penalised under the Etiquette rule. Referees: The intention is that it is to be played with a "Referee in Charge" who is an 'active participant', calling the score and keeping spectators informed by signalling when appropriate.

The following passage is from **Section C3 Page 3** of this Manual

19 **Players as their own Referees - Rule 15**

*15(a) "The players in all matches are responsible for the fair and correct application of these Rules."*

*"... if there is a difference of opinion on a matter of fact, the opinion of the player with the best view is to be preferred, but if two views are equal, the strikers opinion prevails"* .

Sometimes a player may perceive that the striker is possibly/probably about to commit a fault – what is the appropriate procedure?

One of the basic principles of refereeing is that in order for a decision (any decision) to be made the referee is to be in a position where “*they can see – not where they cannot see*”. If a player suspects that the striker is likely to commit a fault they ought to “stop play” and request that the striker call a referee.

If an independent referee is not available then courtesy requires that the striker call the opponent to referee. If the striker declines then the opponent may insist that the game is delayed until an independent referee is available. Play cannot continue a play has been “stopped”. The striker is therefore honour bound to invite the opponent to be the referee for that stroke.

If the ugly situation occurs where the opponent claims a fault on the striker while standing several yards away (**without** having been appointed as above as the referee) such a claim is to be rejected on the following grounds:

- 1 A decision cannot be made if the opponent is not in a suitable position to make a decision. Being several yards away is a position where they cannot see or hear properly. Referees are not to give credibility on the ‘sound’ as it is confusing and inaccurate.
- 2 If they have not formally been invited to be the referee (as above) they have no right to say anything.
- 3 Claiming faults on the opponent is completely inappropriate, particularly as:  
“... *if there is a difference of opinion on a matter of fact, the opinion of the player with the best view is to be preferred, but if two views are equal, the strikers opinion prevails*”.
- 4 If you as a TR are called to adjudicate on an appeal, as above, you are to rule as in point 3.
- 5 The only possible appeal on any matter such as this is if a referee incorrectly applied the Rules.