



MODULE L1M8

## HANDICAP PLAY

# Golf Croquet



## Handicap Play – Golf Croquet

The purpose of the Golf Croquet handicap system is to allow players of mixed ability to compete on a more equal basis. Each player, on joining a croquet club, is allocated a handicap according to the outcome of a basic test of ability (counting the average number of strokes to complete a course of hoops three times). Player handicaps currently range from zero (scratch) for the lowest handicap (strongest) players and up to 12 for the highest (weakest).

In singles, the highest handicap player is allowed a number of extra turns equal to the difference between the players' handicaps for a 13 point game and as shown in the table below for 7 and 19 point games. The term given to extra turns is a '**bisque**' i.e. when a player elects to play one of their extra turns, they are deemed to have *taken a bisque*.

In doubles games, bisques are allocated to a player, not a side. The higher handicap player of the side plays any extra turns that are allocated to their side. To work out the number of bisques to be allocated, the lower handicap of each side is subtracted from the higher handicap of the other side. The difference between the sides is halved, and the highest handicap player of the side with the highest combined handicap receives that number of bisques.

When two players on the same side have the same handicap, they decide which will be considered the lower handicapped player for the game about to be played.

### Extra turns for handicap games:

Handicap Difference	19 point game	13 point game	7 point game
0	0	0	0
1	2	1	1
2	3	2	1
3	5	3	2
4	6	4	2
5	8	5	3
6	9	6	3
7	10	7	4
8	12	8	4
9	13	9	5
10	15	10	5
11	17	11	6
12	19	12	7

For example: A (11) & B (7) are playing C (8) & D (4) in a 13 point game of handicap doubles. A & B's combined handicap is 18. C & D's combined handicap is 12. The difference is 6 and half of that is 3. Player A is allocated 3 bisques which can be used during the game.



## Player Handicaps and the Handicap Card

When a player is assigned a starting handicap, they are provided with an individual Handicap Card on which their wins and losses are recorded. Index points are won or lost according to the outcome of a game. In the case of a handicap singles game, the winner adds 10 index points to their index total and the loser subtracts 10 index points from their index total.

As index points are won or lost, players will rise above or fall below a Trigger Point which will determine their current handicap. High index points = a lower handicap, low index points = a higher handicap. Handicap changes are immediate, so any change in a player's handicap as a result of passing a Trigger Point is applicable in the very next game they play, even during a tournament.

A chart of Trigger Points, and the number of Index points won or lost in any particular game is displayed on the CNZ Golf Croquet Handicap Card.

Note: Players with a handicap of 10, 11 or 12, do not lose any index points as a consequence of losing a match.

## Outline of the Rules Effecting GC Handicap Games

- **No point may be scored for the striker's side in an extra turn**
- An extra turn may only be played by a striker at the end of that striker's turn and is to be played with the same ball. If bisques are available, extra turns may be played in succession.
- At the end of a turn a striker intending to take an extra turn must give clear indication of the intention to their opponent - and stop their opponent from playing if necessary.
- An extra turn may not be taken in place of a turn missed because of a non-striking fault or the playing of a wrong ball.

A complete copy of the WCF Golf Croquet Rules is available from Croquet NZ. They are also printed in the Croquet NZ Yearbook annually.

## Practice



The best way to learn about handicap games and tactics is to play handicap matches - as a player joins a club and is assigned a GC Handicap, they should be encouraged to participate in the club competitions for the CNZ Gold and Silver Stars – a 13 point handicap singles event. With the highest number of bisques available to them, it is an excellent opportunity to experience handicap matches and to become familiar with playing in a competition from within their own club environment.

# Handicap Play Tactics – Golf Croquet

## Key points

- An extra turn is best used to turn a very poor position into a very good one.
- An extra turn is best used as an offensive tactic, not a defensive tactic i.e. use bisques to secure a position where winning the point is highly probable rather than just denying the opponent unless of course, not using a bisque would lose the game.
- Don't use an extra turn in a situation where you are likely to lose the hoop anyway.
- Odd numbered hoops are the most important hoops to win. If run firmly and cleanly, the striker may also be the first ball to the next hoop in order.

## Examples:

### Example 1:

Playing an extra turn to get a good hoop running position when the opponent balls are both a long way away is often good use of a bisque, especially on odd numbered hoops.

In Figure 1, the opponent has just run hoop 2 and Blue has the first opportunity to take position at hoop 3.

If Blue gets close to the hoop but not in a good position to run the hoop, an extra turn can be taken to place Blue in a very strong position. If the opponent balls miss the long shot, Blue can run hoop 3 firmly, all the way to hoop 4.

This option may also be useful for a higher handicap player in the first shot of the game when playing for hoop 1.



Figure 1: Improving hoop running position.



**Example 2:**

The opponent's Red ball is in the jaws of hoop 6. Yellow has just cleared Blue but in doing so, also sent the yellow ball well away from the hoop.

If Blue plays to the back of hoop 6 then takes a bisque to clear Red out of the hoop and well away while staying close to the hoop ( hoop running position is unlikely), Blue and Black has a very good chance of winning the hoop.

If the positions of Blue and Black were reversed, the option is not as strong because a 'two on one' situation has not been created. It may be better to wait for a later time to take an extra turn.



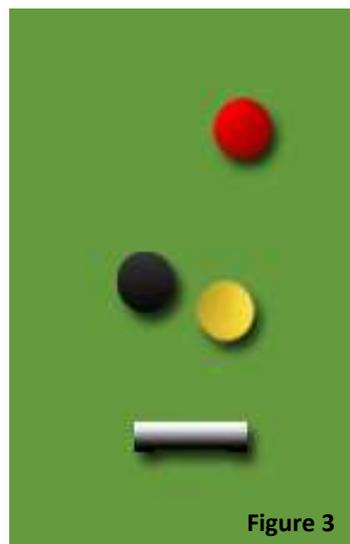
**Figure 2: Clearing opponent out of the hoop**

**Example 3:**

Yellow has just cleared Blue and stopped in front of hoop 3. **(Figure 3)**

- Blue is unlikely to clear anything from where it is but Red can clear Black, leaving Yellow to run the hoop.

So, Blue can play to the East of Red in its usual turn and with an extra turn clear Red, leaving partner ball Black to score the hoop if Red misses the long shot. **(Figure 4)**



**Figure 3**



**Figure 4**

**Example 4:**

Because of the close proximity of hoop 5 to hoop 4, it is not always a good hoop to use an extra turn to take a better position. In this example however, Black has over-run position at hoop 5 after Red made hoop 4. Yellow is a long distance and Blue can be used to block Red from Black. **(Figure 5)**

Black may choose to use a bisque here and take a better position at hoop 5, hidden by Blue from Red.



**Figure 5**