



MODULE L1M10

COMPETITION CROQUET



Competition

Tournaments

One of the best ways to improve skills and ability as a croquet player is to participate in competition events where learning and understanding of the game is accelerated by the experience of shot outcomes, winning, losing, and concentration. Much can be learned, not only through your own experiences but those of your opponents as well.

There are many events held every season for club players of all levels of ability. Closed club competition details are available from the Club Captain. Other Open events at all levels are advertised in the Croquet NZ Yearbook – available for ordering through your club, and an annual events calendar is available on the Croquet NZ website at:

<http://www.croquet.org.nz/NZ/index.php?CID=nz-croquet---event-calendar>

You are able to enter CNZ tournaments online via the same website.

There are two CNZ events in particular that are very beneficial to all new croquet players. They are:

- The Golf Croquet Gold and Silver Mallets
- The Association Croquet Arthur Ross Memorial

Both events are handicap singles events open to any affiliated player in NZ. The winner of each Club competition progresses to an Association event to determine a representative player at the National Finals. As handicap singles events that are held in a club environment initially, they are an ideal introduction to competition, especially for those with plenty of bisques available to use!

Guidelines to competition

Prior to the tournament

- Check the closing date and enter in plenty of time.
- Use the Croquet New Zealand Official Entry Form and enclose the entry fee or for CNZ events, complete an online registration and ensure all information is provided.
- Inform the manager of any alteration to your handicap as it is the player's responsibility to play on their correct handicap. Failure to present a handicapping card or play on the correct handicap ensures disqualification.
- Read the General Tournament Conditions in the Year Book.



During the Tournament

- Do not leave the venue without permission from the manager
- The winner leaves the court and reports the result to the manager immediately. (No post-mortems!)
- Both players must complete their handicap cards at the conclusion of each match.
- Read the Guide To Conduct In Double-Banked Games (Appendix 2 to the Laws) in the CNZ Year Book when playing double banked games.
- Practising during tournaments is allowed only with the manager's permission.
- Be expedient in play.
- Do not hassle managers, as they have an overall plan of the tournament, not just the games which interest you!

After the Tournament

Ensure that the tournament handicapper or the manager is aware of any change in your handicap.



Etiquette

Some issues of behaviour are required by the laws of croquet (such as lining in a ball with one's back to the court, or not wasting time). Others are a matter of good manners (such as not walking in front of or disturbing a player when they are about to take a shot).

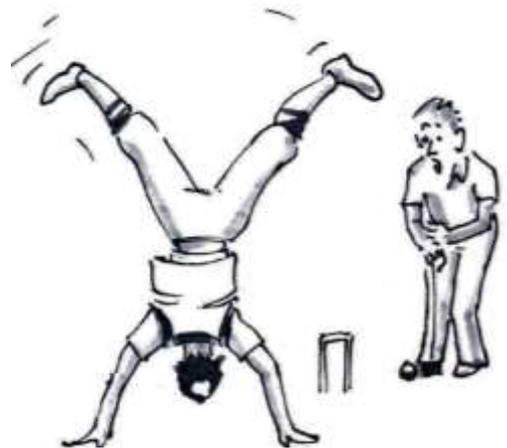
Coaches should address issues of both rules and good manners during croquet sessions. The following are some of the key issues which all players need to know:

From the Laws

- Report to the tournament manager at the start of each day.
- Call an umpire when about to play a questionable stroke.
- Declare any faults or errors immediately – even if there is a referee or umpire present.
- Players must not take advice from anyone but their partner in a doubles game.
- A player must not warn an opponent who is about to run a wrong hoop or play a wrong ball.

Good manners

- Avoid being in the line of sight of a player about to play a stroke – if you discover you are in another player's line of sight when they are about to play a stroke: stand still – any movement is distracting.
- Avoid talking within earshot of a player on the lawn. This can be very distracting.
- At the end of a game, congratulate (or thank) the opponent – look them in the eye and smile as you shake their hand.
- In double banked games, where there are two players at the same part of the lawn, the person playing a break has right of way. Otherwise they player who is likely to clear the area first should play.





Warm-Ups

There are two types of warm-up – those that help the body physically prepare for a match (e.g. stretching), and those that help with the game.

Physical warm-up examples:

- Start off with a brisk walk – swing your arms and legs and lift your knees high.
- Roll shoulders forward and back and move your arms around in large circles.
- Alternate making fists with your hands and spreading your fingers wide and shake your hands back and forth to loosen up your wrists. This is probably the most important step.

Modern research has shown that carrying out static (non-moving) stretches isn't particularly useful for performance, and can in fact reduce a players' power. Warm-ups should involve dynamic movements, moving joints through their full range of motion.

Game Warm Ups

It is now common practise for players to be permitted at least a 5 minute warm-up before the start of play. During this time, players are generally allowed to run hoops gently. You should ensure that you are aware of any special conditions around warmups for any tournament you have entered.

The warmup is a very important opportunity to get both physically and, at least as importantly, mentally prepared for the game. It's the opportunity to put the stressful drive to the tournament behind you, remind your muscles what their job is, and focus on playing the game that you enjoy.

The following is a suggested 5-minute warmup – it is designed to ensure you have played all of the strokes that might be required early in the game, and will enable you to get a feel for the playing conditions of the lawn.

- Place your balls about 2 feet apart. Make a gentle roquet, aiming to hit the middle of the target ball. Repeat this several times – at each contact the balls should end up slightly further apart, so that you end up with at least one shot of around 7 yards.
- Take off from somewhere distant to the East boundary level with hoop 5. (Pretend you are taking off to a ball that is sitting on that boundary.). Play your other ball over there with a gentle stroke, attempting to gently nudge your partner ball.
- Set yourself a short rush to hoop 1 from about level with hoop 5. Approach and run hoop 1.



- Take croquet from 2 yards west (left) of hoop1 – approach the hoop putting the croqueted ball forward and slightly east (right) of the hoop. Run your hoop if in front. Take croquet from 2 yards East (right) of hoop 1. Approach the hoop putting the croqueted ball forward and still slightly east (right) of the hoop. Run your hoop.
- Try a backward take-off to a hoop from 3-4 yards north of it.
- You can now use whatever remaining time you have to try some of the following:
 - Croquet strokes – e.g. approach hoop 1 from the south boundary with a firm stop shot
 - Roll up to a few hoops from some distance
 - Practice some more (gentle) hoop running

It's good to finish on a positive note, so try to make your last shot a successful roquet over 4 to 7 yards distance.

During your warm-up it is important to pay attention to how the balls react – understand the speed of the lawn is, and also how tight the hoops are. Relax and have a smooth backswing, and focus on how a clean contact between mallet and balls looks and feels and sounds. This is that you want to reproduce in the game.



Croquet New Zealand Merit Awards for Level 1 improvers

Croquet New Zealand acknowledges key achievements by croquet players in tournaments by the presentation of Merit Award badges to qualifying players. These awards give players goals to mark their progress as they develop their Association Croquet skills.

The awards are achieved by players while winning games in handicap or level play tournaments, and are closely aligned with the Association Croquet coaching levels. The Bronze Award is the goal of the player mentored by a Level 1 coach. It is awarded for the first occasion in a tournament that a player completes a break of 10 hoops or more, with or without bisques.

When you achieve this award, make sure you tell the tournament manager, and apply to CNZ for the Award you have earned. This award is an indication that you are moving towards Level 2 standard and should be looking to earn a handicap reduction to 14 or below.