



REGULATIONS FOR INTERNATIONAL RULES TOURNAMENTS

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Preface

This USCA Regulations for International Rules Tournaments is governed by the USCA's International Committee and approved by the USCA Management Committee.

It governs all International Rules (Association Croquet) tournaments played in the United States.

Every effort has been made to accommodate tournament practices that are already in place at established USCA-sanctioned tournaments. These regulations allow tournament organizers considerable flexibility in the formatting and running of events.

Tournament Directors are strongly encouraged to read through the entire document. Tournament organizers should take particular note of Appendix 3. Players may also find the document helpful, particularly the sections on eligibility, conditions of play, time-limited games, and referees.

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I. INTRODUCTION

The game of Association Croquet (more often referred to as “International Rules” within the USCA domain, and so referred to throughout this document) is played according to *The Laws of Association Croquet* (“the Laws”), subject to the applicable tournament regulations. While the Laws are overseen by an International Laws Committee (ILC) and jointly approved by the CA, the ACA, the NZCC, and the USCA (“the four Governing Bodies”), tournament regulations are administered locally by each national Association.

The following Regulations apply to all International Rules tournaments sanctioned by the USCA. There may be similarities with tournament regulations published by other Associations, but only these USCA Regulations shall apply to USCA-sanctioned tournaments.

P. PLAYERS

P1 ELIGIBILITY

Eligibility to play in USCA-sanctioned International Rules tournaments follows the general policy set forth in the USCA Standing Orders. The current policy is that non-USCA members may play in sanctioned non-titled events such as invitationals, opens, and club championships, but will not be awarded handicap adjustment or grand prix tracking points; they may be awarded a provisional handicap for use in calculating other players’ grand prix points.

The eligibility requirements for the USCA International Rules Championships are set forth in Appendix 2.

P2 CONDUCT

a. ATTIRE

1. Footwear must be of a type that will not damage the lawns.
2. Predominantly white clothing must be worn during play (this does not apply to raingear).

b. GAMBLING

1. A player may not accept bets on himself nor place them on his immediate opponent.
2. A player or official may not bet nor take bets or positions of a significant amount on an event whose outcome he could influence.
3. A player or member of the USCA, whether or not he is competing in an event, may not offer any inducement to another player or official to influence it, nor may such an inducement be accepted.

c. MISCONDUCT

1. A player who breaches these Regulations (especially Regulation P1, P2, or C4) or who deliberately breaches the Laws may be liable to disciplinary action by the USCA, in addition to any sanction imposed by the Tournament Director during the event.
2. During a tournament, a first offense will normally result in a warning, a second offense in forfeiture of the current match, and a third offense in expulsion from the tournament. However, in the case of flagrant abuse a player may be expelled without warning. Any violation resulting in forfeiture or expulsion must be reported to the USCA Grievance Committee.

C. CONDITIONS OF PLAY

C1 LAWS

a. GENERAL

All games shall be conducted according to the current version of the Laws. The applicable Laws include all amendments approved by the ILC and the four Governing Bodies, and the amendment set out in Regulation C1b. Some laws may also be varied for individual tournaments under Regulation C2.

b. BALL LARGER THAN HOOP

In all tournaments the laws are amended as follows. Law 35 (b) does not apply, and is replaced by Law 53 (b) (3). If a player suspects that the outcome of a stroke he has just played was affected by a ball being in contact with both uprights of a hoop simultaneously, he is entitled to have the equipment checked and, if necessary, adjusted or replaced. If it is found that the ball does touch both uprights of that hoop on some axis, he may elect to replay the stroke, unless his turn has ended for another reason.

C2 VARIATIONS

- a. Variations on the standard game, as described in Part 3 of the Laws and in the Appendices of the Laws, are permitted.
- b. In accordance with Law 2(b)(6), smaller courts may be used at tournaments not designated "Championship" or "Open". The minimum court size is 20 x 25 yards.
- c. Any such variations to be used must be included in tournament entry announcements as stated in Regulation A3.2.1. Certain optional regulations, namely Regulations T4b and T5c, are also subject to this requirement.

C3 EQUIPMENT SPECIFICATIONS

a. HOOP WIDTH

1. Hoops should be set firmly in the ground such that the distance between the inside edges of the uprights at half-ball height is greater than the maximum diameter of the largest ball to be used on the lawn by 1/8", with a tolerance of 1/32" in either direction, except for the USCA International Rules Championships, where the gap should be 1/16", with an upward tolerance only of 1/32".
2. If advertised beforehand, or in exceptional conditions at the discretion of the Tournament Director, the nominal width may be specified to be either 3/16" or 1/16" for normal events, and 3/32" or 1/32" for the USCA International Rules Championships, with the same tolerances as above.

b. BALLS

1. All four balls of a set must be of the same make, which must be on the WCF's list of approved balls.
2. The diameters of all balls used on a lawn are to differ by no more than 1/32" at the USCA International Rules Championships and 1/16" at other tournaments.

C4 PRACTICE

Players must not practice on or immediately next to the courts without the Tournament Director's permission.

T. TIME LIMITS

When time limits are used, the regulations in this section apply.

T1 IMPOSITION OF TIME LIMITS

- a. **Before the start of a game:** The Tournament Director may impose a uniform time limit on all games in an event, or on all games in a particular round of an event. Once a round is in progress, time limits may not be altered except under Regulation TD1.
- b. **During a game:** If no time limit has been imposed under (a) above, the Tournament Director may impose a time limit of one hour on any game that has been in progress for at least one and a half hours.

T2 PERMITTED TIME LIMITS

- a. **Single games:** The minimum time limit is 2 hours. However, the recommended minimum (and the required minimum for the USCA International Rules Championships) is 2.5 hours.
- b. **Best-of-three:** For a match played as best of three games:
 1. The minimum time limit is six hours, as follows: there is a cumulative time limit of 2.5, 4.5 and 6 hours for the first, second and third games respectively. However, the recommended minimum (and the required

minimum for the USCA International Rules Championships) is 7.5 hours, with cumulative time limits of 3, 5.5 and 7.5 hours.

2. If the time limit for a game is reached, the match-time clock continues running until the conclusion of that game, thus time is deducted from subsequent games.
3. If a game concludes before the time limit, the extra time is carried forward to subsequent games.
- c. **Shortened games:** For shortened games (see section 3D of the Laws), proportionally shorter time limits may be used.

T3 TIME-KEEPERS

- a. The game clock is started when the first stroke of the game is played or deemed to be played.
- b. Preferably an independent person will manage the game clock, particularly in the last fifteen minutes of the game. Otherwise the players are responsible for managing the clock.
- c. As soon as the time limit expires, the time-keeper will make an announcement to that effect.
- d. The time-keeper announces how much time is remaining in response to player requests. However, the time-keeper does not provide count-downs or pre-set time announcements (e.g., “tell me when fifteen minutes remain”).

T4 END OF GAME

- a. **GENERAL PROCEDURE:** When the time limit expires, the game enters the extension period, which may comprise one or two turns, as follows:
 1. The current striker completes his turn. For the sole purpose of determining whether the striker’s turn ends before or after time is called, it is deemed that his turn ends and the opposing side’s turn begins as soon as he strikes the striker’s ball or is deemed to have played it in the last stroke of his turn.
 2. If the side playing the first turn of the extension period is behind at the end of that turn, the game is over and the opposing side does not play a turn.
 3. Otherwise, the opposing side plays a turn. If, during this turn, the striker’s side has the lead at the end of any stroke, the game is immediately over and any subsequent play is disregarded.
 4. Otherwise, the side with the greater number of points at the end of the extension period is the winner. If the score is tied, play continues and the side for which the next point is scored is the winner.
- b. **OPTIONAL EXTRA TURNS**
 1. Alternatively, the Tournament Director may impose on all games in an event a four-turn extension period, such that the current striker completes his turn, then each side plays an additional turn, and finally if necessary (as in (2) and (3) above) a fourth turn is played.
 2. This variation is recommended when time limits shorter than two and a half hours are used. If the four-turn extension period is to be used, a statement to this effect must be included in all entry announcements (see Regulation A3.2.1).

T5 TIME OUTS

- a. **INTERFERENCE TIME-OUTS**
 1. During the last 15 minutes of a game, the game clock may be stopped for double-banking interference. The striker is the best judge of what constitutes double-banking interference, but if the striker has ceased play because of such interference and does not request an interference time-out, the opponent may do so.
 2. Alternatively, the Tournament Director may allow the game clock to be stopped for double-banking interference at any time during the game. This condition, if invoked, applies to all games in an event.
 3. The clock is re-started as soon as the interference is resolved and the striker is ready to re-commence playing.
- b. **OFFICIAL TIME-OUTS**
 1. The game clock may be stopped for referee calls, at the discretion of either side or the referee. The clock is restarted as soon as play is ready to resume.
 2. With the permission of the Tournament Director, the clock may also be stopped for other legitimate game interruptions.
- c. **OPTIONAL PLAYER TIME-OUTS**
 1. The Tournament Director may impose this optional regulation on all games in an event. If player time-outs are to be allowed, a statement to this effect must be included in all entry announcements (see Regulation A3.2.1).

2. Each side is entitled to two “player time-outs” of up to one minute each. During a player time-out the game clock is stopped until the first of: a stroke is played or deemed to be played, the side calls “time in”, or the time-out expires.
 3. A player must not request a player time-out during a stroke or during an opponent’s turn. Any such request is invalid and the time-keeper shall inform the player that he is not entitled to take a time-out. However, for the purposes of this regulation only, it is deemed that a turn ends and the opponent becomes entitled to take a player time-out as soon as the last stroke of that turn has ended.
- d. **CORRECTING THE GAME CLOCK**
1. Where it may have a material effect on the game, the game clock may be corrected by:
 - i. Adding time where a player has made a proper time-out request but the clock was not immediately stopped, or;
 - ii. Subtracting time where the clock was not immediately re-started after a time-out, or;
 - iii. Subtracting time where the clock was wrongly stopped in response to an invalid time-out request.
 2. Note also Law 53(g).

TD. TOURNAMENT DIRECTOR

TD1 POWERS AND DUTIES OF THE TOURNAMENT DIRECTOR

The powers and duties of the Tournament Director are as follows:

- a. **ENTRIES.** To determine the maximum number of entries that can be accommodated.
- b. **DRAW.** To superintend or make the draw or to nominate another to do so on his behalf.
- c. **FLIGHTS.** To determine, where applicable, the assignment of players to flights (classes) based on the most appropriate sources of ranking data, such as World Ranking, handicap, or a combination thereof.
- d. **SEEDING.** To seed the blocks and/or ladders as appropriate (see Appendix 1).
- e. **TIE-BREAK.** Prior to the start of the competition, to determine the method of tie-break.
- f. **ORDER OF PLAY.** To decide the order in which events and games are played.
- g. **COURTS.** To assign courts to competitors and to declare any court to be unfit for play.
- h. **HOURS OF PLAY.** To decide when play shall start and finish each day of the tournament.
- i. **ADJOURNMENT.** To adjourn an unfinished game, provided that no ball is in a critical position (see Law 6(d)), and to record the state of the game or to nominate another to do so on his behalf.
- j. **LEAVE.** To grant or refuse leave of absence to players.
- k. **PROGRAM.** To alter the tournament program at his discretion, namely:
 1. to impose time limits under Regulation T1;
 2. to shorten games in accordance with Section 3D of the Laws;
 3. to play the final game of an event in which the games have been shortened or subject to a time-limit as a full game;
 4. to play a single-life event as two-life, best of three, block or Swiss, or play later rounds of an event advertised as best of three as best of some larger odd number;
 5. to introduce double-banking;
 6. to allow extra time for double-banked games or in an emergency;
 7. to otherwise alter the program as necessary to deal with an emergency;
- l. **INFORMATION AND REPORTING.**
 1. To keep players and spectators informed of any alterations to the program and of the progress of the event.
 2. To submit results and reports to the USCA and, where applicable, to the World Ranking Officer (see Appendix 3, part A3.3).
- m. **SANCTIONS.** To impose such sanction as he sees fit, including, in the last resort, disqualification, on any player who is found to be:
 1. absent or unable to play when called upon by the Tournament Director; or
 2. practicing on the courts without the Tournament Director’s permission; or
 3. guilty of misconduct.
- n. **EMERGENCIES.** To take such other actions as may be appropriate in an emergency to safeguard the well-being and interests of players, spectators, the Tournament Committee and any host club.

R. REFEREES

R1 THE TOURNAMENT REFEREE

The powers and duties of the Tournament Referee are as follows:

- a. **ASSISTANTS AND APPEALS.** To nominate, at his discretion, Referees or Assistant Referees from the official list of referees to assist him in the duties specified below. If there are insufficient official referees available, he may nominate other suitable persons. There is no appeal from the decision of a Referee or Assistant Referee except to the Tournament Referee, before the next stroke, on questions of law and decisions under Law 55 or Regulation R2(j). If the Tournament Referee will be absent or unavailable at any time, he must appoint a Deputy, from whose decision, while acting as Tournament Referee, there is no appeal.
- b. **COURT SETTING.** To check that the accuracy of court settings and tournament equipment is in accordance with the advertised tournament conditions.
- c. **REFEREE IN CHARGE.** To place himself or a Referee nominated under (a) above in Charge of a game, either at his discretion and after informing the players accordingly or at the request of either side.
- d. **OTHER REFEREEING.** To be available or to see that an official nominated under (a) above is available to act as a Referee on Call or as a Referee on Appeal or as an Umpire.

R2 REFEREE IN CHARGE

The powers and duties of a Referee in Charge of a game are as follows:

- a. **INFORM HIMSELF.** If he takes charge of a game already in progress, to ascertain the state of the game. If the players disagree, he must settle the dispute as a Referee on Appeal.
- b. **ACT AS EVER VIGILANT ADVERSARY.** To give his attention entirely to the game and to act as an ever-vigilant adversary. The presence of a Referee in Charge neither relieves the striker of his obligation nor deprives the adversary of his right to warn that a questionable stroke is about to be played or to draw attention to any error that may have been committed.
- c. **ADJUDICATE STROKES.** To take up the most favorable position for adjudicating the fairness and effect of a questionable stroke. The Referee in Charge should not go on to the court unless a questionable stroke is about to be played.
- d. **GIVE DECISIONS.** To decide all questions of fact and law, subject to the right of either player to appeal to the Tournament Referee under Regulation R1(a). When adjudicating whether one ball is wired from another the benefit of any doubt should be given to the claimants.
- e. **GIVE INFORMATION.** On request, to give any information to any player concerning the state of the game at any time. However, a decision whether one ball is wired from another may not be given unless a player is claiming a wiring lift at the start of a turn.
- f. **STATE LAW.** To state at his discretion or if appealed to what the law on any matter is. Such information may be given before any stroke likely to be affected is played. He may not otherwise advise a player. He must not state whether a ball has been moved or shaken when a wiring lift may ensue unless asked by a player.
- g. **EXPLAIN FAULTS.** To explain to a player who has committed a fault the nature of the fault, either at his discretion or on request.
- h. **CORRECT SETTING.** If practical and not detrimental to any other game on the court:
 1. at the request of either player, to correct the setting of the court and its equipment before the start of a game;
 2. at the request of either player, to reset a boundary marking, hoop or the peg to its previous state following a material change to it;
 3. at the striker's request only, to correct the setting, other than location, of a hoop or the peg, performing tests and adjusting balls as specified in Laws 3(a)(3) and 3(b)(3).
- i. **REPAIR DAMAGE.** At his discretion, to repair any special damage on the court.
- j. **PENALIZE BREACHES.** To penalize any player for breaches of the Laws or other blameworthy conduct as best meets the justice of the case. In the last resort, he may disqualify a player. These powers should be exercised sparingly and any player aggrieved by a decision of a Referee may appeal to the Tournament Referee under Regulation R1(a).
- k. **EMERGENCY POWER.** To do anything else necessary to discharge his duties as a Referee in Charge.

R3 REFEREE ON CALL

A Referee on Call is the Tournament Referee or other Referee nominated under Regulation R1(a) who is asked to act before an event has occurred. Subject as follows, his powers and duties are identical to those of a Referee in Charge while he is so acting. He remains in charge until he quits the court in the belief that his duties have been discharged.

- a. **INFORM HIMSELF.** He must first inform himself of the state of the game so far as it relates to the matter on which he has been called. If the players disagree, he must settle the dispute as a Referee on Appeal.
- b. **WIRING LIFTS.** If he is called to adjudicate a wiring lift, he must confirm that the claimant has not yet started his turn and that the adversary is responsible for the position of the relevant ball.
- c. **APPEALS.** Either player may appeal to the Tournament Referee under Regulation R1(a).

R4 REFEREE ON APPEAL

A Referee on Appeal is the Tournament Referee or other Referee nominated under Regulation R1(a) who is asked to give a decision on any matter of fact or law after an event has occurred. He may decide the matter by observation or investigation or both. Subject as follows, his powers and duties are identical to those of a Referee in Charge while he is so acting. He remains in charge until he quits the court in the belief that his duties have been discharged.

- a. **PERSONAL OBSERVATION.** If the Referee on Appeal witnessed the relevant event and is satisfied that he can decide the matter without investigation, he must inform the players that he is deciding the appeal by observation and give his decision accordingly.
- b. **INVESTIGATION.** In other cases the Referee on Appeal must decide the appeal after investigation. He should hear both sides and, at his discretion, other witnesses. He must inform the players of anything that he has observed that may be relevant. He must then decide the matter to the best of his ability.
- c. **COMPROMISE DECISIONS.** In the last resort the Referee on Appeal may give a compromise decision. This may involve arbitrary adjustment of the positions of the clips and balls, the number of bisques outstanding or the amount of time remaining and the order of play. The Referee on Appeal may direct that a game must be restarted.
- d. **FAULTS.** The Referee on Appeal may not decide that a fault has been committed under Law 28(a) unless he is satisfied of the fact by personal observation or by the evidence of the striker or a Spectator Referee who personally observed the fault.
- e. **APPEALS.** Either player may appeal to the Tournament Referee under Regulation R1(a).

R5 SPECTATOR REFEREE

A Spectator Referee is a Referee not in charge, on call or on appeal whose powers and duties are confined to the following.

- a. **ERRORS.** To intervene to ensure that play is lawfully continued after an error is claimed or admitted.
- b. **ERRONEOUS INFORMATION.** To intervene if he hears a player giving erroneous information on the Laws to his adversary.
- c. **BALL WRONGLY REMOVED.** To intervene in a handicap game if a ball is wrongly removed from the game in breach of Law 38.
- d. **VOLUNTEER INFORMATION.** To volunteer relevant information to a Referee on Appeal.
- e. **BECOME IN CHARGE.** To apply to the Tournament Referee to be placed in charge of a game. If so appointed after he has observed that a particular error has been committed, he may not act in respect of that error or draw attention to a misplaced clip until the error has been claimed or admitted or until the limit of claims has passed.

R6 ASSISTANT REFEREE

An Assistant Referee nominated by the Tournament Referee under Regulation R1(a) may act in a limited capacity as Referee on Call or a Referee on Appeal. When so acting, his powers and duties comprise the following.

- a. **ON CALL.** To act as a Referee on Call to decide whether
 1. a ball hits another ball; or
 2. a ball is moved or shaken; or
 3. a ball hits the peg; or
 4. a claim for a wiring lift is valid; or

5. a fault is committed in a stroke.
- b. **ON APPEAL.** To act as Referee on Appeal to decide whether
 1. a ball has run a hoop in order or is in position to do so; or
 2. a ball is off the court.

R7 UMPIRE

An Umpire is a suitable person nominated by the Tournament Referee under Regulation R1(a) whose powers and duties are confined to the following.

- a. **ON CALL.** To act as a Referee on Call to decide whether
 1. a ball hits another ball; or
 2. a ball is moved or shaken; or
 3. a ball hits the peg.
- b. **ON APPEAL.** To act as Referee on Appeal to decide whether
 1. a ball has run a hoop in order or is in position to do so; or
 2. a ball is off the court.

APPENDIX 1: TOURNAMENT FORMATS

A1.1 BACKGROUND

USCA-sanctioned International Rules (Association Croquet) tournaments are required to use standard formats. This Appendix includes the most common types. Other acceptable formats may be found in the tournament regulations of the CA, the ACA, and Croquet NZ. The use of any format not listed in one of these sources must be approved by the USCA International Committee. The players at a sanctioned tournament have the right to expect a fair and orderly format.

A1.2 KNOCK-OUT FORMATS

Some form of “knock-out” or “ladder” format is used for most events, either alone or in combination with a preliminary qualifying (e.g., block) round.

A1.2.1 Single-life knock-out formats

When a knock-out is used as a stand-alone format (i.e., no preliminary qualifying round), the draw must be of the standard type. If the number of players is not equal to a power of 2 (i.e. 2, 4, 8, 16, 32, etc.) one or more players will have a bye in the first round. To determine the number of byes, subtract the number of players from the next higher power of 2. For example, if there are 11 players, there will be 5 byes ($16 - 11 = 5$), hence 6 players playing in the first round ($11 - 5 = 6$).

If the number of byes is even, either half are placed at the top of the draw and half at the bottom or, if the number of byes is not divisible by 4 (i.e. 2, 6, 10, 14, 18 etc.), two more byes may be placed at the bottom than at the top; if the number of byes is odd, one more bye is placed at the bottom than at the top; within each half the byes may be distributed between the two quarters according to the same principle; similarly within each quarter between each eighth, etc.

Each match may be a single game, or best of three games (or, in exceptional cases, best of five or even seven games). It is permissible to progress by round from shorter to longer matches (e.g., single-game matches in the early rounds and best of threes in the semi-final and final rounds), but not the reverse.

When used in conjunction with a preliminary qualifying round (typically as blocks), the knock-out must be seeded strictly according to the qualifying results. The ladder may be of the standard type, or may use a system of progressive byes (“Patmor draw”).

A1.2.2 Two-life knock-out formats

The two principal variations are double-elimination and Draw & Process. Draw & Process is suitable for any number of players, while double-elimination is best suited to a number equal to a power of 2 (2, 4, 8, 16, 32, etc.).

A1.2.2.1 Double-elimination

The players are entered into a standard draw, as in A1.2.1 above (called the *winners bracket*). A player who loses at any stage then enters the *losers bracket*. A player who loses a second time is eliminated from the event.

The first round of the losers bracket consists of the players who lost in the first round of the winners bracket. Thereafter, the losers from subsequent rounds of the winners bracket enter into alternate rounds of the losers bracket, starting with the second round. The losers bracket is constructed so as to avoid early rematches as much as possible. (If the number of players does not equal a power of 2, there may have to be a complicated arrangement of byes in the losers bracket. This is why double-elimination is not recommended unless the number of players equals a power of 2.)

The winners of the two brackets then play the final. This will be one or two games, because the losers bracket winner must beat the winners bracket winner twice to win the event, while the winners bracket winner needs to win only once.

A1.2.2.2 Draw & Process

The players are entered into a standard draw, with any byes allocated at the top and bottom as in A1.2.1 above. This is called *the Draw*. The players are numbered from top to bottom as they appear in the Draw, and are then entered into a second draw, called *the Process*. To compile the Process, enter onto a draw sheet the appropriate sequence of numbers from the table below. (You may write “bye” in place of any number that is higher than the total number of players.) Then enter the names of the players so that each player has the same number in both the Draw and the Process. (Note: These numbers are **NOT** seeds. See Seeding, below, for suggestions on how to seed a Draw & Process.)

The winner of the Draw plays the winner of the Process to determine the overall winner. If the same player wins both the Draw and the Process, that player has won the event and if there are two different losing finalists they may play off for second place.

| # of Entries | | Process Order | | | | | | | |
|--------------|---------------------|---------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| 1 to 4 | | 1 | | 3 | | 2 | | 4 | |
| 5 to 8 | | 1 | 5 | 3 | 7 | 2 | 6 | 4 | 8 |
| 9 to 16 | (1 st 8) | 1 | 9 | 5 | 13 | 3 | 11 | 7 | 15 |
| | (2 nd 8) | 2 | 10 | 6 | 14 | 4 | 12 | 8 | 16 |
| 17 to 32 | (1 st 8) | 1 | 17 | 9 | 25 | 5 | 21 | 13 | 29 |
| | (2 nd 8) | 3 | 19 | 11 | 27 | 7 | 23 | 15 | 31 |
| | (3 rd 8) | 2 | 18 | 10 | 26 | 6 | 22 | 14 | 30 |
| | (4 th 8) | 4 | 20 | 12 | 28 | 8 | 24 | 16 | 32 |
| 33 to 64 | (1 st 8) | 1 | 33 | 17 | 49 | 9 | 41 | 25 | 57 |
| | (2 nd 8) | 5 | 37 | 21 | 53 | 13 | 45 | 29 | 61 |
| | (3 rd 8) | 3 | 35 | 19 | 51 | 11 | 43 | 27 | 59 |
| | (4 th 8) | 7 | 39 | 23 | 55 | 15 | 47 | 31 | 63 |
| | (5 th 8) | 2 | 34 | 18 | 50 | 10 | 42 | 26 | 58 |
| | (6 th 8) | 6 | 38 | 22 | 54 | 14 | 46 | 30 | 62 |
| | (7 th 8) | 4 | 36 | 20 | 52 | 12 | 44 | 28 | 60 |
| | (8 th 8) | 8 | 40 | 24 | 56 | 16 | 48 | 32 | 64 |

For example, with 22 players, 4 players are given byes and placed at the top of the Draw, and numbered 1 through 4. 12 players, numbered 5 through 16, do not receive byes and are placed below. The final 6 players are given byes and placed at the bottom, numbered 17 through 22. The names are copied to the Process, where players 7 through 16 will receive byes.

For certain numbers of players, the number of isolated byes can be reduced by using an alternate method. (This might be desired to allow more second-round matches to start early, if the number of courts allows this.) Prepare the Draw as though the number of players equals the next higher power of 2. Number the spaces from top to bottom, and allocate byes as follows:

- For 6 players, byes at positions 7 and 5;
- For 11 to 13 players, byes (as appropriate) at positions 15, 13, 11, 9 and 1;

- For 22 to 26 players, byes (as appropriate) at positions 31, 2, 21, 12, 29, 4, 23, 10, 25, 8.
- Transfer the names to the Process, retaining the same numbering of players and byes.

A1.2.3 Hybrid single-life/two-life formats

The simplest type is the two-life format that regresses to single-life, typically at the semi-final or final stage. This is not permitted for major (championship or open) tournaments (except to deal with an emergency under Regulation TD1(k)). For an example, see “Two-life variations” under Regulation F1 of the (UK) Croquet Association (available online at <http://www.oxfordcroquet.com/>).

Another variation has some players starting with two lives while others start with only one life. That is, some players begin directly in the losers’ bracket. Draws of this type must be preceded by a qualifying (block) round to determine seeding.

A1.3 BLOCK FORMATS

A1.3.1 Standard blocks vs. incomplete blocks

Standard blocks (every player plays every other player in the block once) are preferred to incomplete blocks (also known as “occluded blocks”, of which “cross blocks” are a variant). If there are multiple blocks in one event, it is preferred that all the blocks are of the same size. If this is impossible to achieve then there are two compromise solutions. The preferred method is to use standard blocks of different sizes, so that some blocks have one less player than the other blocks. The alternate method is to use incomplete blocks, or a combination of standard and incomplete blocks, such that every player plays the same number of games.

A1.3.2 Tie-breaking methods

When two or more players have won the same number of games, there are two main tie-breaking methods. Net points is simple in concept, but in practice requires great care with the accurate recording and calculation of scores. Head-to-head (“who beat whom”) is less prone to error, but has other disadvantages. Neither method is truly satisfactory. The best solution is to play a tie-breaking game (or games, as appropriate) but this is not always practical.

If head-to-head is the primary tie-breaker, net points is usually the secondary tie-breaker. If net points is the primary tie-breaker, total points is usually the secondary tie-breaker.

Whatever method is to be used, the players must be informed of this at the start of the tournament.

A1.4 SWISS FORMAT

The Swiss format requires play to proceed in complete rounds (pairings determined by the results of the previous round), so it is best suited to events where there are enough courts for everyone to play at once. This is a rarity within the USCA domain, so the format is not described here. For a detailed description, see Regulation F3 of the (UK) Croquet Association (available online at <http://www.oxfordcroquet.com/>).

A1.5 EGYPTIAN and FLEXIBLE SWISS FORMATS

A1.5.1 Introduction

These two formats are essentially the same, differing only in the scoring system used to rank the players. Because of their informal structure, these formats are not suitable for major (championship or open) tournaments, except as consolation events.

Either can be used as a stand-alone event, as a qualifier for a knock-out, or as a consolation event (in which case players can be credited with their wins and losses from the main event). When used as a qualifier to a knock-out, the Flexible Swiss or Egyptian can continue as a consolation event once the knock-out begins.

A1.5.2 General method for both formats

- A card is prepared for each player, with the player's name at the top, and space to record opponents and scores below.
- For the first round, players are paired by random draw.
- As games finish and courts become available, the Tournament Director arranges new pairings according to the following criteria:
 1. No repeat pairings (if necessary this can be broken near the end of the event).
 2. As much as possible, players with similar records (or ratings, in the Egyptian) are paired.
 3. Players who have been waiting longest are given priority.
- Players may play as many or as few games as they choose, although there may be a minimum number of games required to win a prize (or qualify to the knock-out stage, if the event is being used as a qualifier). With the permission of the Tournament Director, a player may declare himself unavailable, by placing his card in the "Resting" group.

A1.5.3 Scoring: Flexible Swiss

Players are ranked according to their win/loss records. This can be by net wins (wins minus losses) or percentage wins (number of wins divided by number of games played).

A good tie-breaker is to find the average strength of each player's opponents (for each player, sum the records of all opponents played, and divide by the number of opponents). Secondary tie-break can be by net points (per game average) or some other suitable method, which must be announced at the start of the event.

A1.5.4 Scoring: Egyptian

Each player is assigned a rating at the start of the event. In a handicap (bisque) event, each player is assigned an initial rating of 100. In a level event, initial ratings are assigned according to the following table:

| Egyptian system: Initial rating based on handicap | | | | | | | |
|---|--------|------|--------|------|--------|------|--------|
| Hcap | Rating | Hcap | Rating | Hcap | Rating | Hcap | Rating |
| -2 | 260 | 1.5 | 185 | 5 | 150 | 12 | 115 |
| -1.5 | 240 | 2 | 180 | 6 | 145 | 13 | 110 |
| -1 | 225 | 2.5 | 175 | 7 | 140 | 14 | 110 |
| -0.5 | 210 | 3 | 170 | 8 | 135 | 15 | 105 |
| 0 | 200 | 3.5 | 165 | 9 | 130 | 16 | 105 |
| 0.5 | 195 | 4 | 160 | 10 | 125 | 17 | 100 |
| 1 | 190 | 4.5 | 155 | 11 | 120 | 18 | 100 |

Or if World Ranking grades are available, the initial ratings can be set by dividing each player's grade by 10.

After each game, both players' ratings are adjusted according to the table below. Note that the loser always loses the same number of points as the winner gains.

| Egyptian system: rating adjustment after a game | | | | |
|---|---------------------|------|--------------------|------|
| Rating difference | Higher rated player | | Lower rated player | |
| | Win | Lose | Win | Lose |
| | | | | |

| | | | | |
|----------|----|----|----|----|
| 0 to 8 | +5 | -5 | +5 | -5 |
| 9 to 16 | +4 | -6 | +6 | -4 |
| 17 to 24 | +3 | -7 | +7 | -3 |
| 25 to 32 | +2 | -8 | +8 | -2 |
| 33 + | +1 | -9 | +9 | -1 |

Players are paired by rating, but the final ranking is made by calculating how many points each player has gained or lost during the event. The player who has gained the most points is the winner. (Note that in a level event this might not be [and in fact usually will not be] the player with the highest rating.)

A1.6 SEEDING

A1.6.1 General

Seeding can be appropriate when there is a clear and unbiased means of ranking the players. By far the best source of ranking data is the Association Croquet World Ranking (see Appendix 3, Seeding). However, many USCA International Rules players do not have a world ranking. For the seeding method used at USCA national championships, see Appendix 2.

A1.6.2 Seeding a knock-out (with no preliminary qualifying round)

When a knock-out is used as a stand-alone event (no preliminary qualifying round), there are three general methods of compiling the draw.

A completely random (or “blind”) draw is suitable if all or nearly all of the players are of a similar standard. In practice, this is seldom the case. At the other extreme, a completely seeded draw is best suited to the case where no two players are at the same level of play. Again, this will rarely occur.

A good general method is to divide the players into two or more groups of similarly ranked players, then randomly distribute the players within each group. The groups do not need to be of the same size.

The simplest example is where there are two players who are clearly above the rest. The top two are seeded into opposite halves of the draw, and the remaining players are drawn at random. Similarly, the top 25% or 50% of players can be seeded with the remaining players drawn at random.

This principle can be extended so that all the players are grouped by rank. For example, if the groupings are best four, second four, third four and last four, the first four players are randomly drawn into the top four positions, then the second four players are randomly drawn into the next four positions, and so on. Or the groups can be of different sizes, as appropriate.

A1.6.2.1 Special problem of seeding a Draw & Process

Correctly seeding a Draw & Process requires care, to ensure that an appropriate distribution is maintained in both the Draw and the Process. A suitable seeding for sixteen players is to put the top four seeds at positions 1, 6, 11 and 16, and the next four seeds (if needed) at positions 4, 7, 10 and 13.

A1.6.3 Seeding blocks

The principles and general method are the same as for seeding a knock-out. Distribution of the players into the blocks can be done randomly, in strict sequence, or by group.

For the latter method, divide the players into groups according to the number of blocks, then randomly order the players within each group. For example, if there are four blocks: take the best four players and put one of them into each of the blocks, then take the next best four players and use a random draw to place one of them in each of the blocks, and so on, until all the players are distributed.

A1.6.4 Seeding a knock-out based on block results

In any standard block, no matter how many players, it is always possible to have three players tied for first with only one loss each. (An incomplete block can result in more than three such players.) This needs to be considered when deciding how many players are to advance to the knock-out stage. It is generally inappropriate to eliminate a player based on a single loss in the block.

A1.6.4.1 Multiple blocks

If there is only one block, seeding the ladder is straightforward. With more than one block, the choice is between seeding by block position and seeding by record (as though all the players were in the same block).

Example: There are two blocks, A and B, from which a total of four players will advance to the knockout. If seeding by block position, the winner of A plays the runner-up of B, while the winner of B plays the runner-up of A. If seeding by record, all the players are compared and the players with the four best records are drawn into the knock-out. This might result in three players advancing from one block and only one player advancing from the other block (or in an extreme case, four players advancing from the same block).

In some cases seeding by record seems to give a fairer result, and in some cases the reverse. A point to note is that if any games go unfinished (due to forfeiture or bad weather), seeding by record becomes highly problematic.

To seed by block position when there are three or more blocks, proceed as follows: the top seed is the block winner with the best record, the second seed is the block winner with the next best record, and so on through all of the block winners. Then the next seed is the block runner-up with the best record, and so on through all of the block runners-up. Continue in this way, comparing the block 3rd place finishers as a group, then the block 4th place finishers, etc., until all the spaces in the knock-out have been filled.

APPENDIX 2: USCA INTERNATIONAL RULES CHAMPIONSHIPS

A2.1 GENERAL

The USCA International Rules Championships shall be held each year, at a time and site to be determined by the USCA International Committee. The dates and site should be selected and publicized at least six months in advance, and preferably before the start of the calendar year of the tournament.

A2.2 EVENT DATES

Dates shall be chosen so as not to conflict with other USCA Regional and National events. Consideration should also be given to other major international tournaments (e.g. Croq-Can, the British Open, world championships) and to established annual USCA-sanctioned International Rules tournaments (see Appendix 3, section A3.1).

A2.3 VENUE

The tournament venue should be chosen according to the following criteria:

- At least four full-size lawns available
- From year to year, varied locations around the US
- Easy access by airline; inexpensive lodging nearby
- Reasonable cost for court rental

A2.4 ELIGIBILITY

The eligibility policy for the USCA International Rules Championships is set forth in the USCA Standing Orders. The current policy is that the tournament is open to any player who is a member of a WCF-affiliated croquet association and who meets a minimum World ranking grade requirement, as determined by the USCA International Committee.

A2.5 EQUIPMENT

A2.5.1 Hoop Settings

Hoop clearance should be set to 1/16" larger than the largest diameter of the balls to be used, with an upward tolerance of 1/32". On sand-based lawns, clearance may be reduced to 1/32", with an upward tolerance of 1/32". Care should be taken to ensure that hoops are firmly fixed in the ground.

A2.5.2 Balls

Tournament balls must be WCF-approved, and must all be of the same make. Notice should be given on the entry form of the type of ball to be used.

A2.6 FORMAT

A2.6.1 General Considerations

Both a singles and a doubles championship should be contested. The tournament should begin with doubles, to allow players the option of playing a shorter tournament by entering singles only. Restricted "First Flight" events should be offered as space and interest allow.

A2.6.2 Playoff Format

The preferred playoff format is best-of-three-games, single-life knockout. Alternately, a two-life format (e.g. Draw & Process) with single-game matches may be used.

A2.6.3 Blocks

If a qualifying block round is to be used, standard blocks (all play all) are required and each block must contain at least six players. If necessary, some blocks will have one more player than the other blocks.

Qualification to the playoffs will be by block position (see Appendix 1, Seeding), with a minimum of 50% and a maximum of 75% of the players from each block advancing to the playoffs.

A2.6.4 Seeding

If there is a qualifying block round, blocks will be fully seeded using the “seeding by group” method (see Appendix 1, Seeding). Playoffs will be fully seeded, strictly according to the block results. Any byes will be given to the top seeds.

For stand-alone knockout events (no preliminary qualifying round) at least 25% of the entries will be seeded.

The primary seeding determinant is World Ranking as of the entry deadline. Players without a current World Ranking will be assigned provisional grades, based on: most recent World Ranking (if the player was previously ranked and has at least some current games in the system); USCA International Rules handicap, or; USCA American Rules handicap.

A2.6.5 Consolation Events

Consolation events should be scheduled as necessary to ensure that every player has the choice of playing at least two games on every day of the tournament, not necessarily including the final day.

A2.6.6 Time Limits

For single-game matches, the minimum time limit is 2.5 hours. For best of threes, the minimum time limit is 7.5 hours, with cumulative time limits of 3, 5.5 and 7.5 hours for the first, second and third games respectively. Longer time limits may be used if the schedule permits it.

Shorter time limits may be used for consolation games, down to a minimum of 2 hours.

APPENDIX 3: TOURNAMENT ORGANIZERS

The following requirements regarding scheduling, information and reporting apply to all USCA-sanctioned International Rules tournaments.

A3.1 SCHEDULING

Tournament dates and sites should be submitted to the USCA as early as possible, preferably at least 6 months in advance of the tournament. Conflicts with other USCA-sanctioned International Rules tournaments should be avoided. Established annual tournaments (and their usual dates) include:

- North Carolina Open (late March or early April)
- Sonoma-Cutrer World Croquet Championship (mid- to late May)
- Croq-Can (late June)
- Minnesota Open (early July)
- Meadowood Classic (late July)
- Delaware Weekend (late August)
- USCA International Rules National Championship (date varies, usually September or October)
- US Open (early December)

A3.2 INFORMATION FOR PLAYERS

A3.2.1 Entry Forms

The following information must be included with all entry announcements that contain an entry form:

- The dates and venue(s)
- Starting time on the first day of play
- Approximate finish time on the final day of play
- Entry fees for players and guests
- The entry deadline
- Whether entry is by first-come, first-served, or by ranking (grade or handicap)
- Any entry qualifications for each event (handicap or grade, residency)
- The type of format to be used for each event
- Any variations to be used in any event (advanced play, handicap play, shortened games, extra turns as in Regulation T4b, player time-outs as in Regulation T5c)
- The dimensions of any modified courts
- The type of balls to be used
- The width of the hoop settings, if not as in Regulation C3(a)(1).

- The names of the Tournament Director and other officials, if known

A3.2.2 Entry Acknowledgment

All entrants should be contacted upon receipt of entry. This may be done in person, or by telephone, mail, fax, or email.

A3.2.3 Tournament Program

Before the start of play, the tournament program must be distributed or publicly posted, including the following information:

- A detailed description of the format and schedule for all events
- Tiebreakers to be used in block, Swiss or Egyptian events
- The tournament's practice policy

A3.3 REPORTING and SANCTION FEE

A3.3.1 USCA

Send the complete order of finish to the USCA office, at <usca@msn.com> (or alternately by mail to the address below, or by fax to (561) 686-5507). Mail the \$8 per player USCA sanction fee to the USCA office, at 700 Florida Mango Rd., West Palm Beach FL 33406.

Send a complete list of game scores to the USCA International Handicap Committee chairman, Erv Peterson, at <ErvP@aol.com>. This may be a copy of the World Ranking report (see below).

A3.3.2 World Ranking

A3.3.2.1 Eligible Events

To qualify for entry into the World Ranking system, an event (e.g. flight) must meet the following criteria:

- The event must be sanctioned by the national governing body
- All games must be 26-point advanced singles
- At least half of the players must already be in the system (i.e. have previously played in an event included in the ranking)

A3.3.2.2 How to Report

Send the complete results (including scores) to the World Ranking Officer, Chris Williams, at <chris@butedock.demon.co.uk>. Include in the report:

- A list of the players, showing each player's country of residence.
- A complete list of games in chronological order. If there are separate blocks, you may give the results by block, but within each block the results must be presented in chronological order.
- Use net scores (e.g. if Hogg beats Bloggs 26-9, report as "Hogg bt. Bloggs +17"; if Hogg beats Bloggs 22-5, report as "Hogg bt. Bloggs +17 (t)").
- Indicate any games that are part of a consolation (plate) event.
- Indicate any games in which a player completes a triple (or better) peel.