REGULATIONS FOR ASSOCIATION CROQUET

TOURNAMENTS

Updated Edition
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Preface

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

It governs all 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.

I. INTRODUCTION

The game of Association Croquet referred to in the USA as "International Rules") 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 Association Croquet tournaments sanctioned by the USCA. The section on referees is identical in all croquet countries and is used for World Croquet Federation tournaments. Other sections are specifically for tournament play within the USCA domain. 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 Association Croquet 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 Association Croquet 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. **HOOPS**

1. WIDTH

The clearance is defined as the difference of the distance between the inside edges of the hoop uprights at half-ball height and the maximum diameter of the largest ball to be used on the court.

a. General: For general events, the clearance must be 1/8", with a downward tolerance of 1/32" and an upward tolerance of 1/16"

b. Exceptions:

i. Championships: for USCA championship events and the USCA selectors eights tournaments, the clearance must be 1/16", with a tolerance of 1/32" in either direction.

ii. Other Events: If advertised before players send entries, or in exceptional conditions at the discretion of the Tournament Director, the clearance may be 3/16" or 1/16" with a tolerance of 1/32" in either direction. In general, clearance should only be set a 1/16" on lawns used exclusively for championship flight games.

2. SETTING: Hoops must be set firmly in the ground and placed in new holes at the start of each tournament. Hoops may be repositioned during the tournament at the discretion of the tournament referee.

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 Championship Tournaments 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 Association Croquet 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 Association Croquet 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 request of either side and at the discretion of 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   DEFINITIONS

a. **AUTHORIZED REFEREE***:* A person nominated or permitted under these regulations to assist players by making decisions on laws and facts. An authorized referee can perform one of several roles:

   1.   A **referee on request**, who generally may act only at the invitation of a player. A referee on request is said to be **inactive** when first authorised. He becomes **active** when he responds to a request by a player to exercise a power or a duty or, exceptionally, intervenes in a game. He becomes **inactive** again when he quits the court believing that his duties have been discharged.

   2.   A **supervising referee**, who may act on his own initiative and thus is always active for games he is supervising. A supervising referee who looks after only one game is also called a **referee in charge**.

b. **QUALIFIED REFEREE:** A person on an official list of referees, but not necessarily authorised for the tournament.

c. **TOURNAMENT REFEREE:** The official with responsibility for nominating and allocating authorised referees, and hearing appeals. The tournament referee is also an authorised referee.

R2 POWERS AND DUTIES OF AN ACTIVE REFEREE

The following powers and duties apply to both supervising referees and referees on request while active, subject to the restrictions in R4 on using certain information.

A.   GENERAL POWERS AND DUTIES

   1.   An active referee has power to decide all questions of fact and law. However if a referee is asked to rule on a matter for which he is insufficiently qualified, he should seek advice from or refer it to an authorised referee who is able to deal with the matter.

   2.   An active referee must try to ensure that the match is played in accordance with the Laws and conditions for the event.

B.   STATE OF THE GAME

   1.   An active referee has the power to ask the players for information on the state of the game. He must do so when he requires it to make a decision, but should otherwise avoid questions which might suggest a line of play. The players are obliged to answer to the best of their knowledge.

   2.   If an active referee has reason to think that there is any disagreement about the state of the game, he must investigate and settle the matter before play continues. This applies especially to a referee who is put in charge of a game that is already in progress.

   3.   Subject to Law 23(b), a referee must ask about any apparent discrepancy between the position of a clip and the course of play that he notices while he is active.

C.   RULING ON A PAST INCIDENT THAT IS IN DISPUTE

The following regulations apply if an authorised referee is asked to rule on an incident that has already occurred:

   1.   The referee must tell the players anything he has seen that may affect his decision. He must hear what both sides have to say, and may question them. He has the discretion to hear other witnesses. He will then give a decision to the best of his ability.

   2.   The referee may declare a fault only on the basis of his own observations, the evidence of the striker, or, at his discretion, the evidence of well placed witnesses who have sufficient understanding of the laws. He may not do so solely on the evidence of the adversary.

   3.   As a last resort the referee 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 or even restarting the game.

D.   FORESTALLING

An active referee who observes or suspects that an error or interference is about to occur must forestall subject to the conditions that apply to the adversary under Law 23. He must not forestall while Law 23(b) applies.

E. BEFORE WATCHING A STROKE

If about to watch a questionable stroke, an active referee has the power to:

1. Ask the player what stroke he intends to play. The player must provide the referee with this information.
2. Choose the position from where to watch the stroke.
3. Ask another authorised referee to watch the stroke from a different position and tell him what he observes.
4. Tell the striker when he may play the stroke. If the striker plays before the referee is ready, the referee may order the stroke to be re-played.

F. REFEREE GIVING INFORMATION TO PLAYERS

A referee may give information to a player subject to the following regulations:

1. If asked about the state of the game at any time, an active referee should do what he can to inform a player, subject to (g) below.
2. An active referee must state the law on any matter if asked by a player, and may volunteer it at his discretion.
3. A referee may explain the reasons for a ruling at his discretion, and must do his best to explain the reasons if a player asks him.
4. A referee may not otherwise give information or advice to a player. In particular, a referee must not state whether a ball has been moved or shaken when a wiring lift may ensue unless asked by a player or unless a fault has occurred.

G. TESTING FOR A WIRED BALL

Referees are reminded of the following laws:

1. A decision whether one ball is wired from another may not be given unless the striker is claiming a wiring lift. The referee must confirm that the claimant has not played a stroke in this turn and that the adversary is responsible for the position of the relevant ball. (Law 13(e)(1))
2. When judging whether one ball is wired from another, the benefit of any doubt is given to the claimant. (Law 13(e)(2))

H. ADJUSTING COURT SETTINGS

An active referee may arrange for the settings of the court to be adjusted or for special damage to be repaired, where the laws permit it. In doing so, he must:

1. Consider the effect on any other game on the court.
2. Act consistently with Law 2(b)(5) (which forbids some types of adjustments), and Laws 3(a)(3) and 3(b)(3) (which place restrictions on adjusting a hoop or the peg).

I. ENTERING THE COURT

A referee should go onto the court only when necessary and should be mindful of any double banked game.

R3 POWERS OF AN INACTIVE REFEREE

An inactive referee may intervene in a game on his own initiative only in the following three cases:

a. To ensure that play is lawfully continued after an error or interference is claimed or admitted, but only if the players appear unable to deal with the issue themselves and no referee is active. If one is, and the inactive referee has relevant evidence, he may offer himself as a witness.
b. On hearing a player give erroneous information on the Laws to his adversary.
c. If a ball is pegged out in breach of Law 38.

R4 RESTRICTIONS ON USING INFORMATION OBTAINED EARLIER

a. The following restrictions apply only to an active referee on request and to a supervising referee who is allocated to a game after it has started. They override the powers and duties specified in R2.
   1. A referee may not use, or draw attention to, knowledge about the state of the game that he acquired while he was inactive.

2. The same applies to knowledge acquired while he was active on a previous occasion, but only if at least one stroke has been played since he acquired the information.
   b. These restrictions do not apply to knowledge relating to an issue:
      1. To which a player has drawn attention; or
      2. For which the referee has intervened under R3; or
      3. Which would be apparent to a referee who had not previously seen the game.

R5 THE TOURNAMENT REFEREE AND HIS DUTIES

A. TOURNAMENT REFEREE

The organising body responsible for the tournament must arrange for the tournament referee to be appointed.

B. APPOINTMENT OF DEPUTY TOURNAMENT REFEREES

The tournament referee must appoint a deputy if he becomes unavailable at any time. If play occurs at more than one venue at the same time, he must appoint a deputy for each venue where he is not present or ensure that appeals can be made by telephone. Such a deputy has the powers and duties of the tournament referee while the latter is absent.

C. NOMINATION OF REFEREES

The tournament referee has the power to nominate authorised referees from an official list of referees. If there are not enough qualified referees available, he has the power to nominate other suitable persons. These powers are subject to any conditions made by the organising body responsible for the tournament.

D. ALLOCATION OF REFEREES

1. The organising body responsible for the tournament has power to decide whether authorised referees will be supervising or on request.
2. Subject to any such direction, the tournament referee may allocate himself or other authorised referees to supervise or be available to act on request for one or more games or courts.
3. Irrespective of any such direction, the tournament referee has the power to allocate himself or another authorised referee as a referee in charge of a game.
4. The tournament referee must ensure that the players are told of any referees allocated to their game or court and whether they are supervising or on request.
5. If no referee has been allocated to a game, any authorised referee may act on request for it.

E. CHECKING COURTS AND EQUIPMENT

The Tournament Referee must ensure that the courts and equipment are checked for conformity with the laws, regulations and advertised conditions. Hoop settings must be checked at the start of each day and may be checked between games.

R6 APPEALS

A. GROUNDS FOR APPEALS

Appeals may be made by a player against a decision of a referee only on:
1. Questions of law, regulations or tournament conditions; or
2. Rulings under Law 55; or
3. Compromise decisions under R2(c)(3).

B. POWER TO HEAR AN APPEAL

The tournament referee or a deputy tournament referee have the sole power to hear and decide appeals, except that if such an official is a party to the appeal, either as a player or referee, someone independent must be appointed to do so.

C. APPEALS ARE FINAL

The decision on an appeal is final for the game.

D. LIMIT OF CLAIMS

A player cannot appeal if he has played a stroke after the ruling was given or if the opponent has played two strokes. However, in a singles game, if the adversary is absent and performing official duties, the adversary may appeal before the first stroke of his next turn.

E. REPORTING OF APPEALS

If a situation that is subject to appeal does not seem to be covered by the laws or commentary, the tournament referee must report the facts and the decision to the appropriate national association for reference to the International Laws Committee.

R7 PLAYERS PERFORMING FUNCTIONS OF REFEREES

A. PLAYERS WHO ARE QUALIFIED REFEREES

Players who entered the tournament and who are qualified referees may act as referees on request, unless the tournament referee or the organising body responsible for the tournament direct otherwise.

B. OTHER PLAYERS

Unless the tournament referee directs otherwise, all players in the event who have played in more than three previous tournaments may decide the following matters, but only if requested by the striker or his opponent:

1. Watch a stroke to decide:
    A. where a ball crosses the boundary.
    B. whether a ball hits the peg or another ball.
    C. whether a ball is moved or shaken, but only if specifically asked.
2. Decide whether a ball:
    A. is on or off the court.
    B. breaks the plane of a hoop.

R8 OTHER REGULATIONS

a. The presence of a referee does not relieve a player in a game of the duty to draw attention to an irregularity that he thinks the referee may have overlooked.
b. The organising body of a tournament may modify these regulations in accordance with Law 54.
c. Only an authorised referee may intervene in a game. However, any qualified referee may report a problem to the tournament referee or his deputy.

APPENDIX 1: TOURNAMENT FORMATS

A1.1 BACKGROUND

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

The tournament manager must inform players before the tournament commences how ties are to be broken when two or more players have won the same number of games. There are two main tie-breaking methods.

A1.3.2 .1 Games: using a game to break a tie between two players who have won the same number of games in block play is the preferred method, and tournament managers are encountered to set aside sufficient time to allow for this.

In the USCA Association Croquet Championship, games are mandatory to break ties that determine which player progresses from the block to the playoff. If time permits, games should be used to break all ties.

Games should be played under the same conditions as the block, however shortened games such as the 14-point game or one ball are also permissible if there is sufficient time for a full game.

A1.3.2.1.1 If three players are tied: the following method shall be used. If:

One place is available: two players are selected to play the first game, the winner then plays the third player, and the winner of that game progresses

Two places are available: two players are selected to play the first game, the loser plays the third player, and the two winners progress

Three places are available: two players are selected to play the first game. The loser is allocated the third place, and the two remaining players play for first and second places

A1.3.2.2 Other Criteria: if games are not used, then the following method shall be used to break ties

The player (or players) with the highest number of net points progresses

If players share the same number of net points, then the player with the most total points progresses

If players share the same number of net points and gross points, then head to head (who beat whom) determines who progresses

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							
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 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, some USCA Association 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 ASSOCIATION CROQUET CHAMPIONSHIPS

A2.1 GENERAL

The USCA Association Croquet Championships shall be held each year, at a time and site to be determined by the USCA Tournament 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 Association Croquet 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 Association Croquet 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 Tournament Committee.

A2.5 EQUIPMENT

A2.5.1 Hoop Settings

Hoop clearance should be set to 1/16" larger than the largest diamater 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.

A1.3.2.1 describes the required method for breaking ties at the end of the qualifying block round in the Championship

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 Association Croquet 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 Association Croquet 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 Association Croquet tournaments should be avoided. Established annual tournaments (and their usual dates) include:

North Carolina Open (late March or early April)

North American Open (mid- to late May)

Croq-Can (late June)

Minnesota Open (early July)

Delaware Weekend (late August)

USCA Association Croquet 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 tournamentsusca@aol.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.

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.