

Is there any “gap tolerance” in the “double hit” rule Rule 13(a)(6)?

Take the following cases:

1. What is the case if the balls are about 2 inches apart (approx. 50 mm) and the stroke was struck directly along the line of centres?

This will be a Double Hit (Double Tap) Rule 13(a)(6) fault, because the struck ball will depart the mallet striking surface, hit the target ball, and momentarily stop allowing the mallet to catch up and hit the striker ball again — end of turn — no hoop scored — opponent chooses to leave the balls where they have come to rest or replace them where they were (leave or replace).

How to avoid this fault is fairly easy — just ‘hit away’ and just snick the target ball so the departure angles are close to 90 degrees.

2. What is the case if the balls are about 1/16 inch apart (aprox. 2 mm) and the striker ball was struck directly along the line of centres?

With such a small gap the mallet would still be in contact with the strikers ball when it hits the target ball, therefore a double tap will not occur. BUT it will still be a Rule 13(a) (8) fault, called a ‘ball crush’ or ‘maintaining contact’.

3. When the striker ball and another ball are in contact (they start in contact) it is OK to strike along the line of centres because no DT can occur, nor can a ‘ball crush’ occur, because the balls are already touching before the stroke commences.

But just make sure the stroke is not performed with an excessive follow through as it is possible to perform a “Push”. Some referees are really harsh on pushers and award a penalty.

Your coach will tell you that ‘pushing’ or ‘maintaining contact’ for an observable period is counterproductive to the development of good stroke technique.