

REGULATIONS FOR ASSOCIATION CROQUET



TOURNAMENTS

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Preface

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

Regulations on refereeing are global, and governed by the Association Croquet Laws Committee of the World Croquet Federation.

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I. INTRODUCTION

The game of Association Croquet (often referred to in 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 Association Croquet Laws Committee (ACLC) and jointly approved by World Croquet Federation, 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.

The eligibility requirements for the USCA Association Croquet Championships are set forth in Appendix 2.

P2 CONDUCT

1 ATTIRE

- 1.1 Footwear must be of a type that will not damage the lawns.
- 1.2 Predominantly white clothing must be worn during play in National Championships and Selectors Eights events, and where required by the host club or tournament organiser (this does not apply to raingear).

2. GAMBLING

- 2.1 A player may not accept bets on himself nor place them on his immediate opponent.
- 2.2 A player or official may not bet nor take bets or positions of a significant amount on an event whose outcome he could influence.
- 2.3 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.

3. MISCONDUCT

- 3.1 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.
- 3.2 During a tournament, a first offence will normally result in a warning, a second offence in forfeiture of the current match, and a third offence 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

All games shall be conducted according to the current version of the Laws. The applicable Laws include all amendments approved by the Association Croquet Laws Committee and the World Croquet Federation, and any amendments made by the USCA. Some laws may also be varied for individual tournaments under Regulation C2.

C2 VARIATIONS

1. Variations on the standard game, as described in Part 3 of the Laws and in the Appendices of the Laws, are permitted.
2. 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.
3. 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

1. HOOPS

1.1 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.

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

1.1.2 **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 must be 1/16” for all championship games and up to 3/16” for other levels. All hoops must be within 1/16” of each other.

1.2 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.

2. 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

Lawns must be available to players for practice and acclimatisation for at least 3 hours before the tournament begins.

Players are permitted a 10 minute warm up before that player’s first game of the day. Players may also have a five minute warm up before a game that is not the player’s first game of the day if there has been a substantial break before the player’s previous game. “Substantial break” is deliberately not defined, but is roughly three hours or longer.

Practice may be on the lawn the player is scheduled to use for his or her first game, and the player may use two of the balls from that game. A player may shoot hoops, but no harder than to send the ball seven yards in a single ball shot that is not a hoop shot. Players must not shoot at the hoop or at the peg (that is, using them as a target).

Players must not practice while their game is in progress. A player may only practice on a lawn while a game is in progress with permission of both players from that game or from the tournament director.

T. TIME LIMITS

When time limits are used, Law 61 applies, supplemented by the following regulations

T1 IMPOSITION OF TIME LIMITS

1. **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.
2. **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

1. **Single games:** The minimum time limit is 2 hours. However, the recommended minimum (and the required minimum for the USCA Association Croquet Championships) is 3 hours.
2. **Best-of-three:** For a match played as best of three games:
 - 2.1 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.
 - 2.2 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.
 - 2.3 If a game concludes before the time limit, the extra time is carried forward to subsequent games.
3. **Shortened games:** For shortened games (see section 3D of the Laws), proportionally shorter time limits may be used.

T3 TIME-KEEPERS

1. 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.
2. As soon as the time limit expires, the time-keeper will make an announcement to that effect.
3. 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”).

TD. TOURNAMENT DIRECTOR

TD1 POWERS AND DUTIES OF THE TOURNAMENT DIRECTOR

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

1. **ENTRIES.** To determine the maximum number of entries that can be accommodated.
2. **DRAW.** To superintend or make the draw or to nominate another to do so on his behalf.
3. **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.
4. **SEEDING.** To seed the blocks and/or ladders as appropriate (see Appendix 1).
5. **TIE-BREAK.** Prior to the start of the competition, to determine the method of tie-break.
6. **ORDER OF PLAY.** To decide the order in which events and games are played.
7. **COURTS.** To assign courts to competitors and to declare any court to be unfit for play.
8. **HOURS OF PLAY.** To decide when play shall start and finish each day of the tournament.
9. **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.
10. **LEAVE.** To grant or refuse leave of absence to players.
11. **PROGRAM.** To alter the tournament program at his discretion, namely to:
 - 11.1 Impose time limits under Regulation T1;
 - 11.2 Introduce double-banking;
 - 11.3 Allow extra time for double-banked games or in an emergency;
 - 11.4 Otherwise alter the program as necessary to deal with an emergency;
12. **INFORMATION AND REPORTING.**
 - 12.1 To keep players and spectators informed of alterations to the program and of the progress of the event.
 - 12.2 To submit results and reports to the USCA and the World Ranking Officer (see Appendix 3, part A3.3).
13. **SANCTIONS.** To impose such sanction as he sees fit, including, in the last resort, disqualification, on any player who is found to be:
 - 13.1 Absent or unable to play when called upon by the Tournament Director; or
 - 13.2 Practicing on the courts without the Tournament Director’s permission; or
 - 13.3 Guilty of misconduct.

14. **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

1. DEFINITIONS

- 1.1. **Organising Body:** The body responsible for organising a tournament or event.
- 1.2. **Tournament Referee:** The official with responsibility for hearing appeals and nominating Authorised Referees and allocating them to act as a Referee on Request or Referee in Charge. The Tournament Referee is also an Authorised Referee.
- 1.3. **Qualified Referee:** A person on an official list of referees, but not necessarily an Authorised Referee for a tournament or event.
- 1.4. **Authorised Referee:** A Qualified Referee nominated or permitted under these Regulations to assist players by making decisions on Laws or Rules and facts. An Authorised Referee can perform one of the following roles:
 - 1.4.1. **Referee on Request** who generally may act only at the invitation of a player. A Referee on Request is said to be an **Inactive Referee** when first authorised. The referee becomes an **Active Referee** by responding to a request by a player to exercise a power or a duty or, exceptionally, by intervening in a game under R4. An Active Referee becomes an Inactive Referee again on quitting the court believing that the powers and duties arising from the request have been discharged or, after intervening under R4, when all relevant matters have been settled.
 - 1.4.2. **Referee in Charge**, who is allocated to a game and is therefore always an Active Referee for that game and may intervene in it whenever the referee considers it necessary. A referee may be allocated as a Referee in Charge to more than one game at the same time and, under those circumstances, may be referred to as a **Supervising Referee**.

2. POWERS AND DUTIES OF THE TOURNAMENT REFEREE

- 2.1. **Tournament Referee**

The Organising Body must arrange for the Tournament Referee to be appointed.
- 2.2. **Appointment of Deputy Tournament Referees**
 - 2.2.1. The Tournament Referee must appoint a Deputy Tournament Referee whenever the Tournament Referee becomes unavailable.
 - 2.2.2. If play occurs at more than one venue at the same time, a Deputy Tournament Referee must be appointed for each venue where the Tournament Referee is not present. As an alternative, the Tournament Referee may arrange for appeals to be made by telephone.
 - 2.2.3. A Deputy Tournament Referee has the powers and duties of the Tournament Referee when the latter is not present.
- 2.3. **Nomination of referees**

The Tournament Referee has the power to nominate Authorised Referees from an official list of Qualified Referees and to nominate other suitable persons if there are not enough Qualified Referees available. These powers are subject to any conditions published by the Organising Body.
- 2.4. **Allocation of referees**
 - 2.4.1. The Organising Body has power to direct whether Authorised Referees may act as Referees on Request or Referees in Charge.
 - 2.4.2. Subject to any such direction, the Tournament Referee may allocate Authorised Referees to act as:
 - 2.4.2.1. Referee on Request either generally or for one or more specified games or courts; or
 - 2.4.2.2. Referee in Charge for one or more specified games or courts.

The Tournament Referee may also carry out such duties.

- 2.4.3. Irrespective of any such direction, the Tournament Referee has the power to act as a Referee in Charge of a game or allocate another Authorised Referee to do so.
- 2.4.4. The Tournament Referee must ensure that the players are told of any referee allocated to their game or court and whether that referee is a Referee on Request or Referee in Charge.
- 2.4.5. If no referee has been allocated to a game, any Authorised Referee may act as a Referee on Request for that game.

2.5. **Checking courts and equipment**

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

3. **POWERS AND DUTIES OF AN ACTIVE REFEREE**

An Active Referee has the following powers and duties subject to the restrictions in R5 on using certain information.

3.1. **General powers and duties**

- 3.1.1. An Active Referee has power to decide all questions of fact and Law or Rule. However, a referee who is asked to rule on a matter for which the referee is insufficiently qualified should seek advice from or refer it to another Authorised Referee who is able to deal with the matter.
- 3.1.2. An Active Referee must try to ensure that a match is played in accordance with the Laws of Association Croquet or Rules of Golf Croquet as appropriate and any applicable regulations and tournament or event conditions.
- 3.1.3. An Active Referee should go onto or remain on the court only when necessary and should be mindful of any double-banked game.

3.2. **State of the game**

- 3.2.1. An Active Referee has the power to ask the players for information on the state of the game. The referee must do so when that information is required 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.
- 3.2.2. An Active Referee who has reason to think that there is any disagreement about the state of the game must investigate and settle the matter before play continues. This applies especially to a referee who is appointed to be a Referee in Charge for a game that is already in progress.
- 3.2.3. An Active Referee must ask about any apparent discrepancy between the position of a clip and the course of play that the referee notices. This is subject to Law 23.3.

3.3. **Ruling on a past incident that is in dispute**

The following regulations apply if an Active Referee is asked to rule on an incident that has already occurred.

- 3.3.1. The Active Referee must tell the players anything that the referee has seen that may affect a decision. The referee must hear what both sides have to say and may question them. The referee has the discretion to hear other witnesses. The referee will then give a decision to the best of the referee's ability.
- 3.3.2. The Active Referee may declare a fault only on the basis of:
 - 3.3.2.1. facts about the stroke agreed by the striker and the opponent;
 - 3.3.2.2. the evidence of the striker;
 - 3.3.2.3. the referee's own observations of the stroke, its effects and its outcome; or
 - 3.3.2.4. the evidence of well-placed neutral witnesses, excluding the opponent, whom the referee chooses to consult believing that they have sufficient understanding of relevant Laws or Rules. The referee may not declare a fault solely on the evidence of the

opponent.

3.3.3. As a last resort, the Active Referee may give a compromise decision. This may involve arbitrary adjustment of:

- 3.3.3.1. the positions of the clips and balls.
- 3.3.3.2. the number of bisques outstanding.
- 3.3.3.3. the amount of time remaining.
- 3.3.3.4. the order of play.

Exceptionally, the referee may direct that the game is to be restarted.

3.4. **Forestalling**

- 3.4.1. An Active Referee who observes or suspects that an error or interference is about to occur must forestall play subject to the conditions that apply to the opponent.
- 3.4.2. Under Law 23 – an Active Referee must not forestall play while Law 23.3 applies.

3.5. **Before watching a stroke**

If about to watch a questionable stroke, an Active Referee has the power to:

- 3.5.1. Ask the player what stroke the player intends to play. The player must answer the question.
- 3.5.2. Choose the position from where to watch the stroke.
- 3.5.3. Ask another Authorised Referee to watch the stroke from a different position and provide an opinion on the stroke to the Active Referee who remains responsible for judging the effect or fairness of the stroke.
- 3.5.4. Tell the striker when the stroke may be played. If the striker plays before the Active Referee is ready, the referee may direct the stroke to be re-played.

3.6. **Referee giving information to players**

An Active Referee may give information to a player subject as follows.

- 3.6.1. An Active Referee who is asked about the state of the game at any time should tell the player what the referee knows, subject to R3.7 below.
- 3.6.2. An Active Referee must state the Law or Rule on any matter if asked by a player and may choose to volunteer such information.
- 3.6.3. An Active Referee may choose to explain the reasons for a ruling, and must explain the reasons as fully as possible to a player who asks for an explanation.
- 3.6.4. An Active Referee may not otherwise give information or advice to a player. 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.

3.7. **Testing for a wired ball**

An Active Referee must be aware of the following Laws:

- 3.7.1. A decision whether one ball is wired from another may not be given unless the striker is claiming a wiring lift. The Active 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 16.5.2)
- 3.7.2. When judging whether one ball is wired from another, the benefit of any doubt is given to the claimant. (Law 16.5.3)

3.8. **Adjusting court settings or repairing damage**

An Active Referee may arrange for the settings of the court to be adjusted or for special damage to be repaired, where the Laws or Rules permit it. In doing so, the referee must:

- 3.8.1. Consider the effect on any other game on the court.
- 3.8.2. Act consistently with Law 4.5 (which forbids some types of adjustments), and Laws 5.1.4 and 5.2.3 (which place restrictions on adjusting a hoop or the peg).

4. POWERS AND DUTIES OF AN INACTIVE REFEREE

An Inactive Referee is permitted to intervene in a game without having been invited, and is required to do so, only in the following cases:

- 4.1. 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 Active Referee is present. If an Active Referee is present, an Inactive Referee who has relevant evidence should volunteer to be a witness.
- 4.2. On hearing a player give erroneous information on the Laws or Rules to the opponent.
- 4.3. If a ball is pegged out in breach of Law 43.

5. RESTRICTIONS ON INFORMATION OBTAINED EARLIER

- 5.1. The following restrictions apply to an Active Referee who is a Referee on Request or a Referee in Charge who has been allocated to a game after it has started. They override the powers and duties specified in R3.
 - 5.1.1. A referee may not use, or draw attention to, knowledge about the state of the game the referee acquired while inactive.
 - 5.1.2. The same applies to knowledge acquired while the referee was an Active Referee on a previous occasion, but only if at least one stroke has been played since the referee acquired the information.
- 5.2. These restrictions do not apply to knowledge relating to an issue:
 - 5.2.1. To which a player has drawn attention; or
 - 5.2.2. For which an Inactive Referee could intervene under R4; or
 - 5.2.3. Which would be apparent to a referee who had not previously seen the game.

6. APPEALS

6.1. Grounds for an appeal

An appeal may be made by a player against a decision of a referee only in respect of:

- 6.1.1. A question concerning the interpretation or application of a Law/Rule, a regulation or a tournament or event condition; or
- 6.1.2. A ruling under Law 63; or
- 6.1.3. A compromise decision under R3.3.3.

6.2. Power to hear an appeal

The Tournament Referee or a Deputy Tournament Referee has the sole power to hear and decide an appeal, except that if such an official is a party to an appeal, either as a player or referee, another referee must be appointed to do so.

6.3. Appeals are final

The decision on an appeal is final for the game.

6.4. Limit of claims

A player who has played a stroke after a ruling was given cannot appeal against that ruling. Likewise, a player cannot appeal after the opponent has played two strokes. However, in a singles game, if the opponent is absent and performing official duties, the opponent may appeal before the first stroke of the opponent's next turn.]

6.5. Reporting of Appeals

If a situation that is subject to appeal does not seem to be covered by the Laws or Rules or an official commentary, the Tournament Referee must report the facts and the decision to the appropriate national association for reference to whichever of the WCF AC Laws Committee and the WCF GC Rules Committee is appropriate.

7. PLAYERS PERFORMING THE FUNCTION OF REFEREES

7.1. Players who are Qualified Referees

Unless the Tournament Referee or the Organising Body has directed otherwise, players competing in a tournament or event who are Qualified Referees may act as Referees on Request.

7.2. Other players

Unless the Tournament Referee has directed otherwise, all experienced players competing in a tournament or event may act as follows, but only if requested by the striker or the opponent:

7.2.1. To watch a stroke to decide:

7.2.1.1. Where a ball crosses the boundary; or

7.2.1.2. Whether a ball hits the peg or another ball; or

7.2.1.3. Whether a ball is moved or shaken, but only if specifically asked].

7.2.2. To decide whether a ball:

7.2.2.1. Is on or off the court; or

7.2.2.2. Protrudes out of or into the jaws of a hoop.

8. OTHER REGULATIONS

8.1. The presence of a referee does not relieve a player in a game of the duty to draw attention to an irregularity that the player thinks the referee may have overlooked.

8.2. The Organising Body may modify these Regulations in accordance with Law 62.

8.3. Only an Authorised Referee may intervene in a game under R4 (see R1.4.1). However, any Qualified Referee may report a problem to the Tournament Referee or a Deputy Tournament Referee.

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 *winner's bracket*). A player who loses at any stage then enters the *loser's 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
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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 association croquet 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 knockout. 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 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 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 International Committee.

A2.5 EQUIPMENT

A2.5.1 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 must 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 block play followed by knock out 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 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 3 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.

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.

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:

- 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.