

# World Croquet Federation

## Laws of Association Croquet

### 7<sup>th</sup> Edition

#### Introductory Statement from the WCF Association Croquet Laws Committee

- Purposes** The purposes of the 7<sup>th</sup> Edition of the Association Croquet Laws are:
  - to implement the substantive changes recommended for future consideration in the Official Rulings on the Laws of Association Croquet 6<sup>th</sup> Edition (the ORLAC);
  - to introduce other changes to the Laws that have been the subject of discussion amongst croquet players and referees, both online and in person, over a number of years and on which a reasonable degree of agreement exists that the changes are desirable;
  - to work towards greater commonality of both substance and language with the Golf Croquet Rules on issues that are common to the two codes and for which such commonality is consistent with the format of the Association Croquet game;
  - to include material in the main body of the Laws that was previously in appendices to the Laws or in tournament regulations but provides greater coherence to the Laws by being included there;
  - to introduce an expanded index, a glossary of defined terms and summary tables of rulings, all of which have the common objective of making it easier for players and referees to locate and understand material in the Laws; and
  - to implement a number of stylistic changes to the Laws as recommended in the ORLAC accompanying the 6<sup>th</sup> Edition.
- Stylistic changes to the Laws** As recommended in the ORLAC accompanying the 6<sup>th</sup> Edition, the Laws have been rewritten in gender-neutral language.

The ORLAC recommended shortening and simplifying the Laws and achieving greater consistency and simplicity of language. The ACLC has taken the view that shortening the Laws and simplifying them are not necessarily compatible objectives. It has therefore given priority to simplifying the language used in the Laws, to achieving greater consistency of language and to ensuring that the necessarily frequent cross-references are more self-explanatory.

As recommended by the 6<sup>th</sup> Edition ORLAC, a glossary has been developed to provide specific meanings for commonly used terms and to ensure that those terms have the same meaning throughout the Laws. Throughout the Laws, the defined terms are identified by being italicised the first time they occur in each law.

To assist players and referees further in understanding and applying the Laws, tables have been added at the end of the Laws text summarising the rulings on borderline positions and the limits of claims and remedies for each of the errors and interferences. In addition, a substantially expanded index has been developed with the same objective of helping players and referees to understand and apply the Laws.

- Law changes that affect the way the game is played** These and other changes from the 6<sup>th</sup> Edition are set out in greater detail in the accompanying Laws comparison document.

**Accidental contact between the striker's mallet and a ball (Law 8.5)** If the striker's mallet accidentally contacts a ball during the striking period of a critical stroke, that accidental contact will constitute the stroke. If the ball contacted is not the striker's ball, the stroke will be a fault. A critical stroke is one for which a minor change in the position of the striker's ball could

have a material effect on the intended outcome of the stroke. This change necessitated an extension of the striking period and the new definition matches that of the Golf Croquet Rules.

**Restriction on play following an accidental contact (Law 8.5)** If an accidental contact occurs when the stroke is not a critical stroke, or when the striker's ball has been marked before the stroke is played, the accidental contact does not constitute the stroke. The striker should discontinue the stroke and it is then annulled. The striker may begin the stroke again after replacing any balls that may have been accidentally moved, but may not then attempt any critical stroke that could have been an alternative to the one annulled.

**Declaring a stroke to have been played (Law 8.8)** The striker may declare a stroke to have been played whenever the striker is entitled to play the stroke. The striker's ball must be at rest in a lawful position, but it is not necessary for the previous stroke to have ended.

**Restriction on striker's options when lifting a ball can create a group of balls on the baulk-line (Laws 11.2.2.1, 16.1, 39.3 and 40.3)** If the striker validly lifts a ball when entitled to a wiring lift or an advanced play or super-advanced play lift and can create a group of balls by placing the lifted ball on the baulk-line, the striker may take croquet immediately from any ball the striker's ball can contact while placed on the baulk-line. The striker may not, however, take croquet immediately from any other ball in the group.

**Rover ball becomes dead when it is pegged out (Law 22.3.1)** A rover ball other than the striker's ball becomes dead immediately it hits the peg in the stroke in which it is pegged out. This means that it cannot thereafter be roqueted, although it can cause other balls to move and thereby score points, be roqueted or make a roquet.

**Multiple errors and interferences (Law 24)** This law generalises the 6<sup>th</sup> Edition law on compound errors and extends its scope to include interferences. Errors and interferences are dealt with in the chronological order of their occurrence. The effect on play is that if more than one error or interference occurs simultaneously when a stroke is played, any interferences are considered first followed by any errors. If play is cancelled as part of the remedying of an interference or the rectification of an error, any remaining errors or interferences are ignored. In certain circumstances, this can mean that an error is ignored that would otherwise have the effect of ending the turn.

**Resting hand or arm on legs during a stroke (Law 29.1.2)** This law makes it unconditionally a fault to rest a hand or arm against the legs or feet during the striking period.

**Hitting the striker's ball not with an end face (Laws 29.1.5 and 29.2.3)** It is a fault to hit the striker's ball with a part of the mallet other than an end face: in a hampered stroke; in a single ball stroke in which the striker is attempting to make the striker's ball jump; or when the striker's ball is part of a group. A hampered stroke is one in which the striker has to take special care because the swing of the mallet or the striker's stance is impeded by a hoop, the peg or an extraneous ball.

**Multiple contacts between mallet and striker's ball in strokes involving two balls in contact (Laws 29.1.6.1 and 29.2.5)** A multiple contact in a croquet stroke or a continuation stroke when the striker's ball is in contact with another ball is a fault only if an adjudicator or the striker sees a separation between mallet and ball followed by a second contact. This is the same criterion as is used in the Golf Croquet Rules.

**Causing court damage with the mallet (Laws 29.1.14 and 29.2.3)** It is a fault if the mallet causes significant court damage: in a hampered stroke (as defined above); in a single-ball stroke in which the striker is attempting to make the striker's ball jump; or when the striker's ball is part of a group.

**Player misled by false information (Law 32.1.1)** The circumstances under which a player can claim a replay after being misled by false information have been extended to cases where the information is provided by a referee or an authorised timekeeper.

**Failing to adopt a different line of play in a replay after being misled (Law 32.5)** A player who is granted a replay after being misled but then fails to adopt a different line of play in the replay loses the right to the replay and the original play is reinstated.

**Involving an outside agency ball in the play (Law 33)** If an outside agency ball is erroneously brought into the game and play is affected, the affected play is cancelled and the striker resumes the turn, subject to any errors that may also be discovered. If a ball of the game is inadvertently replaced by another of the same colour and type while both are off the court, the swap is reversed when it is discovered and the play that occurred while the outside agency was present remains valid. The striker aiming to roquet, or play to a position relative to, a ball from the double-banked game is specifically excluded from the scope of Law 33.

**Outside agency or player interfering with a ball during a stroke or interfering with the playing of a stroke (Laws 34.2.1 and 35.2)** When the striker is required to replay a stroke in either of these situations, the striker must attempt the same stroke with the same objectives. Should the striker attempt something else, the opponent can choose either to accept the replay's outcome or to require a further replay of the original stroke.

**Interference with a ball between strokes (Law 36)** If the striker unlawfully moves the striker's ball between strokes and the next stroke is a single-ball stroke, the striker may not attempt any critical stroke (as defined above) but may otherwise continue the turn. Similarly, if the striker unlawfully moves a ball other than the striker's ball between strokes and the next stroke is a single-ball stroke, the striker may not involve that ball in the stroke if it would be a critical stroke but may otherwise continue the turn. These restrictions do not apply if the ball interfered with had already been marked, nor if the striker was entitled to remove it temporarily, nor if it was moved in an emergency to avoid it being hit by an outside agency.

**Stroke affected by incorrect equipment (Law 38.2)** Of the two options provided in the 6<sup>th</sup> Edition Laws, the more commonly used one has been made the only option but with additional conditions applied. If the outcome of the previous stroke was materially affected by the hoop being incorrectly set or the ball not conforming to specifications, the player may elect to replay the stroke provided the player's claim that play was affected is plausible and the player had attempted to get the ball through the hoop in the stroke. If the player elects to replay the stroke, the player must attempt to get the ball through the hoop again in the replay. Should the player not do so, the opponent can choose either to accept the replay's outcome or to require a further replay of the original stroke.

**Play affected by a ball striking a clip (Laws 38.3 and 5.4)** The 6<sup>th</sup> Edition law dealing with a ball striking a clip during a stroke has been extended to cover any clip, not just a clip from the game. Any clip is treated as part of the equipment while attached to a hoop or the peg, but as an outside agency while falling to or lying on the ground. Consequently, it is no longer a fault if a clip being carried by the striker falls off and hits a ball.

**Alternate stroke doubles (Laws 48 to 50)** Alternate stroke doubles has been added as an option alongside ordinary doubles in the Laws. Both players must be present for a game to begin. The law specifies how it is decided which player is to play when there is a replay after an error or interference, or after a lengthy turn by the opponents, and it cannot be determined which of them is to play to maintain their alternate stroke sequence.

**Referee awarding a fault post-facto (Law 55.4)** If neither the striker nor the opponent calls a referee to adjudicate a stroke before it is played, the opponent is entitled to appeal to a referee to award a fault after the stroke has been played. To award a fault, the referee must be satisfied that a fault was committed on the basis of specified types of evidence, excluding any evidence from the opponent.

**Player must not seek advice (Law 57.2)** During a game, a player must not seek advice, whether in written or oral form or by watching or listening to a commentary on the game. A player who breaches this law is subject to penalty, increasing in severity for repeat offences.

**Spectators should not provide advice (Law 57.4)** Spectators and, in a team competition, team members or officials should not provide advice. In the latter case, the player receiving the advice may not act on it. Spectators may be asked to move away from the vicinity of the players.

**Player receiving advice about an imminent mistake (Law 57.6)** The striker is permitted to act on advice concerning an imminent mistake, but Law 57.6 imposes restrictions on the striker's subsequent play, based on the likelihood of the striker otherwise discovering the mistake before committing it and the advantage the striker would gain from following the advice.

**Other unsolicited advice (Law 57.7)** A player who receives advice relevant to the game or the player's play must inform the opponent. Either side is then entitled to ask a referee to use the overriding law to restore the balance of the game.

**The use of headphones (Law 57.9)** This law imposes restrictions on a player's use of headphones capable of receiving advice electronically or that make communication with the player difficult.

**Double-banking precedence (Law 59.2)** The list defining the circumstances under which one game should be given precedence over the other has been re-ordered and a provision added giving precedence to the game closer to its time limit when there is less than 15 minutes remaining.

**Time-limited games (Law 61)** The procedure for ending a game on a time limit, previously specified in tournament regulations, has been brought into the Laws. Laws have been added specifying which side is in play at the expiry of the time limit when an error or interference is discovered in the turn in progress when time is called. A law has also been added specifying the circumstances under which a game's timer may be stopped.

**Overriding law: advice about a past mistake (Law 63.4)** Procedures have been added that a referee can follow when asked to restore the balance of a game following unsolicited advice that an error or interference has been committed. These are based on the likelihood that the mistake would otherwise have been discovered and the penalty involved. The referee is also entitled to apply any other remedy that appears justified in the circumstances.

**Overriding law: advice about an imminent mistake (Law 63.4)** If either the striker or the opponent considers his or her interests to have been adversely affected by how Law 57.6 deals with advice about an imminent mistake, that player can seek redress under the overriding law. A referee may confirm or vary the relevant provisions of Law 57.6, based on the likelihood the striker would otherwise have discovered the mistake before committing it and the advantage the striker would gain from following the advice.

**Overriding law: other advice (Law 63.4)** A referee asked to restore the balance of a game after a player has received advice about the game or the player's play is required to act to negate as far as possible the advantage the player would otherwise gain from the advice.

**Overriding law: dealing with time wasting (Law 63.5)** This law specifies measures a referee may take when one or more players is wasting time and a warning has produced inadequate improvement. The referee may add extra time to a game to counter delaying tactics towards the end of a game. The referee may impose a cumulative time limit on all turns of both players as a means of countering unacceptably slow play. The referee may alternatively take any other action that appears justified in the circumstances.

**Overriding law: penalties for a player seeking advice (Law 63.6)** This law specifies penalties that must be applied if a player, or side in doubles, is found to have sought advice in breach of Law 57.2. For a first offence, the penalty is permitting the striker to play only one further stroke in the current turn or, in the case of the opponent, limiting the next turn to one stroke. The penalty for a second offence is the loss of the player's or side's next turn. The penalty for a third offence is the loss of the match.

4. **Commonality with Golf Croquet** Other changes, in addition to some of those described above, are proposed to achieve greater commonality with the Golf Croquet Rules.

**Naming of the hoops (Law 2.4)** The last 6 hoops, until now named as 1-back to rover, are renamed as hoops 7 to 12. The old names continue to be recognised as alternatives.

**Permitted variation in hoop and peg positions (Law 4.4.3)** The positions of each hoop and the peg are subject to a tolerance of 12 inches, but with the requirement that certain hoops and the peg must remain in alignment.

**Permitted variation in the height of hoops (Law 5.2.1.1)** The height of each hoop is subject to variations of +½ inch to -1 inch from the nominal height of 12 inches.

**Definition of the striking period (Laws 8.2 and 8.6)** The extended duration of the striking period, needed to make sense of the new laws on accidental contacts, matches that in the Golf Croquet Rules.

4. **Accommodating players with disabilities** The ACLC has discussed the issue of accommodating players with disabilities, but it was thought better to leave it to a general WCF initiative, along the lines of the approach used in Golf, than to complicate the Laws further by giving specific relief in individual circumstances. The ACLC **recommends** that the WCF should develop and implement a disabilities initiative.

5. **Timeline** The timeline for the development of the 7<sup>th</sup> Edition of the Laws has been as follows.

April 2017	Committee meeting to discuss ideas for inclusion in the 7 <sup>th</sup> Edition (a joint meeting with members of the GC Rules Committee)
September 2019	Consultation draft of the 7 <sup>th</sup> Edition provided to the Australian, English, New Zealand and United States national laws committees
October 2019	Draft of the 7 <sup>th</sup> Edition released for public consultation
November 2019	Completion of ACLC responses to issues raised during the public consultation
July 2020	Formal consultation version submitted to the WCF for consultation with members
December 2020	Final version submitted to the WCF for the formal vote on adoption by WCF members

6. **Acknowledgements** The Association Croquet Laws Committee is particularly grateful to David Harrison-Wood for his exceptionally thorough proof-reading of the final Laws draft. The Committee also thanks all of those croquet players who suggested issues that the 7<sup>th</sup> Edition ought to cover or contributed views on the public discussion draft of the Laws. The Committee thanks the national laws committees of Australia, England, New Zealand, and the United States of America for their contributions at various stages in the development of the 7<sup>th</sup> Edition.

### **The World Croquet Federation Association Croquet Laws Committee**

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