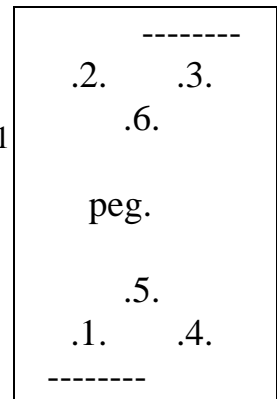


Chiltern U3A Croquet rules

The standard lawn is a 28 by 35 yard rectangle. The yard line is 1 yard inside this. The six hoops are arranged symmetrically as shown 7 yards from the boundary or the central peg. Play starts, in the initial order blue, red, black and yellow balls, from either baulk line. These run half way along each short boundary, and 1 yard from it, nearest to hoops 1 and 3. Due to lack of space our lawn is 10 m by 12.5 m and the yard line is 2 feet inside this.



Blue and black play the red and yellow. In "doubles" the players play in their initial order, but may "strike" either of their colours. The ball must be struck cleanly, without foot contact, with the face of the mallet only. Any part of the handle may be held but the head must not be touched. To avoid a "fault", loss of turn and replacement of all balls, "double tapping", "shepherding" or "crushing" of the ball between hoop and mallet must not occur.

The object is to "run" each ball through each hoop from the correct side and hit the peg in the following direction and order: up 1, up 2, down 3, down 4, up 5, up 6, down 2, down 1, up 4, up 3, down 6, down 5 and be first to peg out both balls. As each ball pegs out it is removed. A coloured clip, one for each ball, is moved to the next hoop when a hoop is run. If time is limited the side running the most hoops wins.

Your turn starts by striking your chosen ball. If it runs the correct hoop, by passing through such that the back of the ball cannot be touched by a straight edge against the front of the hoop, then a **continuation** strike is taken. Any ball can be "run" through a hoop, or pegged out, by your partner or your opponents, however the extra strike can only be taken after running the hoop yourself.

If your ball hits another ball (a roquet), without the roqueted ball crossing the boundary, **your ball is "in hand"** when it stops **and you place it against the roqueted ball. Your ball is struck such that both balls move (a croquet). Your ball is struck again (a continuation strike). If it hits a different ball this two strike sequence is repeated. During a turn each different ball can be roqueted no more than once before the next hoop is run, when the other balls still on the lawn can, if desired, be roqueted once each again. And so on for each hoop in the correct order.** It is the next player's turn if the above **hits** or **runs** are not achieved.

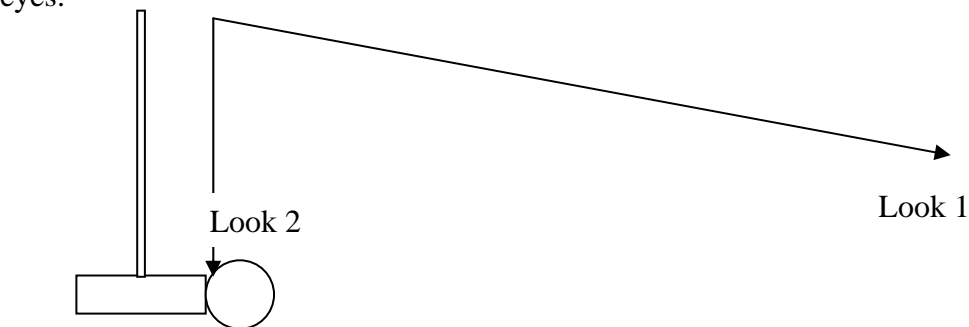
If any part of any ball, **unless it is "in hand"**, crosses the boundary it is out of play until the next person's turn when it is replaced 2 feet from where it ran off. At the start of a turn any ball within 2 feet of the boundary is also moved 2 feet in.

Tactics

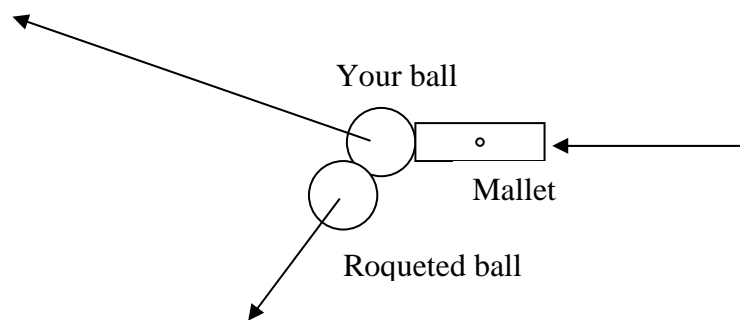
Plan ahead; keep all four balls on the lawn so that you can make use of them. Try to have a ball near the next hoop and one near the hoop after that. If a shot is likely to be missed, keep the opponents' balls far from any other ball and yours near each other in preparation for your partner's turn. Remember you have a Roquet, Croquet & Continuation shot for each ball between each hoop if you don't miss.

Techniques

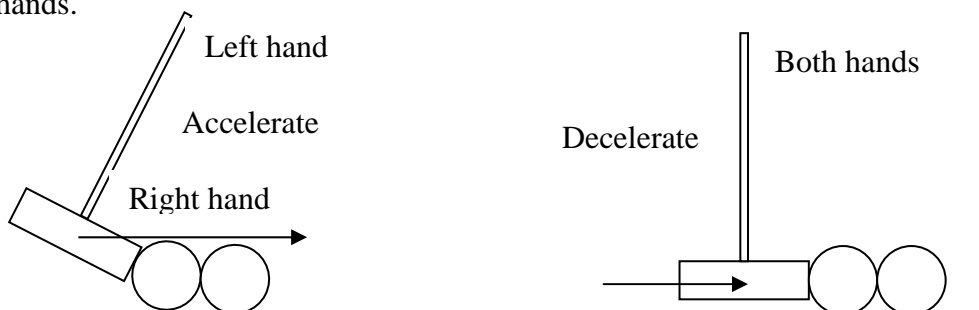
When aiming at a ball or hoop, aim carefully, watch the point on your ball you wish to strike, strike it at uniform velocity and follow through without raising your eyes.



When taking "croquet" place your ball in **contact** with the roqueted ball in line with the direction you wish the roqueted ball to travel. Aim your strike between the intended travel direction of the two balls, but favouring the direction of the ball you wish to travel furthest. The combined distance of travel is determined by the power you put into the strike.



Further variation of the relative distance of travel can be achieved by accelerating or decelerating the mallet while striking. Accelerate to make your ball go further and angle the mallet face to strike the upper half of your ball but travelling parallel to the ground to spin your ball and make it go further still. This is facilitated by gripping both ends of the shaft. Decelerate the mallet to put more power into the roqueted ball and less into yours by holding the upper part of the shaft with both hands.



Before you roquet another ball it is advantageous to position your ball in line with the direction you wish that ball to travel in, and close to it, so that it can be "rushed" to the position from which the best croquet can be taken from it.

