

Croquet North Golf Croquet League 2026

Background

1. The structure of the league will involve three divisions. If there are 8 or more teams in a league they will be split into northern and southern groups where all play all. A deciding match on neutral ground will be played between the two winning teams.
2. Most games will be played on a Saturday, but there are exceptions.
3. The season will start in early May and should be concluded by the end of September.
4. Rearrangement of matches can only be sanctioned by agreement between the team captains and in exceptional cases, such as waterlogged lawns or the inability to field a team. If matches are rearranged the League Manager must be informed.
5. All matches will be at level play (i.e. with no handicapping), so that results count for the GC Rankings.

League Format

6. The objective of the league is to get as many people as possible playing competitive croquet. It is also desirable that teams have an opportunity to enjoy a game where they are as evenly matched as possible. To help achieve this we must have some method to see that players with large difference in their handicaps are not having to play each other on a regular basis. Therefore, the following restrictions will apply:
 - 6.1 The total handicap for a team of players in division 3 must be greater than 27 at the start of the season.
 - 6.2 No player in Division 3 may have a handicap less than 7 two weeks before a match.
 - 6.3 Once a player has played in a team in Divisions 1 or 2, he/she may not play in a lower division; unless there are exceptional circumstances agreed in advance by the league manager. For example a player's handicap might have increased
 - 6.4 Once a player has played in a team in a lower division, he/she may play in a higher division but only twice in the season without prejudicing their eligibility to play for the lower division team. If he/she plays up three times he/she may not play in the lower division again in that season
 - 6.5 Where a club has more than one team in a division, a player cannot be switch between the teams in the same division.

6.6 Division 1 and 2 players are undefined by handicap, but clubs will need to ensure that they follow the rules above.

7. Players who are members of more than one club can only represent one club.

8. Team Squads. Clubs must nominate the squads of players, from which each team will be drawn, to the League Manager before their first match. The squads will be kept in the 'Members only' section of the Croquet North website.

8.1 If a Club considers a person has played for a Team they are not entitled to play for, the matter should be raised with the League Manager. Sanction could include forfeit of match.

Match Format

9. Substitutes during matches should only be used in exceptional circumstances.

10. Each team will normally consist of four players (but see paragraphs 27-30).

11. Team members will be ranked by team captains according to their handicaps and entered on the score sheet accordingly. Players 1 and 5 will be the lowest handicaps; 4 and 8 will be the highest handicaps. Team captains have discretion in ranking players of the same handicap.

12. In the singles, each team member will play three games against members of the opposition. The top ranked player in each team will play the 1st, 2nd & 3rd ranked players from the other team. The 2nd ranked player will play the 1st, 2nd & 4th, the 3rd ranked player will play the 1st, 3rd & 4th and the 4th ranked player will play the 2nd, 3rd & 4th. **It is therefore vital to use a current score sheet.**

13. The order of play allows for all six possible combinations of doubles pairings. Each double pairing will play against a double pairing of the same combination from the other team (i.e. players 1 & 2 will play 5 & 6, 3 & 4 will play 7 & 8 etc.)

14. Each match will consist of 18 games. A match will consist of 12 singles games and six doubles games.

15. All 18 games should be played even if one team is already guaranteed to win the match. If both teams win nine of the 18 games the match will be drawn with each team being allocated one league point. Otherwise, the winning team will receive two league points.

16. In the event of a tie on league points at the end of the season, the number of individual games won will be the first tie-breaker. If still tied, the result of the head-to-head match will decide. If still tied, the team who won a league match by the biggest margin will be the winner.

Games

17. Full lawns should be used for all games except in extreme circumstances. The use of two lawns will enable the singles games to be “double banked” on one lawn with the doubles played on the other. It is possible to use a single full lawn for all games in which case a different order of play and score sheet should be used, as provided. Although the order of play will be different from the two-lawn format, the matchups will be exactly the same.

18. Each player will play in three doubles and three singles.

19. Each game will be played to the best of 13 points, the game ending when one player or pair reaches seven points.

20. The games will use the 6th Edition of the World Croquet Federation’s Golf Croquet Rules as amended from time to time.

21. Games shall have a time limit of 45 minutes.

22. In double banked games the clock should be paused whenever play in one game is stopped to wait for the other game to move on. It is strongly recommended that double banked games both start from the normal starting corner at staggered intervals rather than from opposite corners.

23. The Expiry of Time procedure in the CA Tournament Regulations will be adopted for all CN GC tournaments, including league matches. At the end of time:

1. 23.1. For the sole purpose of determining whether the striker's turn ends before or after time is called, it is deemed that the striker's turn ends, and the adversary's turn begins as soon as the striker's ball is struck.
2. 23.2. After time has expired, play continues for an extension period of a further eight turns for matches on two lawns. For matches on one lawn the games will stop when the last ball halts after the time is up. That means there will be no extra turns. This is to cut down the time of play which has, on occasions meant very long days.
3. 23.3. At the end of the extension period, the side that has scored the greater number of points is the winner. If the scores are equal the match is halved.

24. If possible, the home team should provide a match referee. In most cases this will not be feasible. Therefore, players should referee their own games as much as possible. Any disputes should be brought to the attention of the more experienced players in both teams.

25. Results should be passed to the League Manager as soon as possible. (Clubs might find it easier and quicker to photograph the score sheet and e-mail the picture).

Unfulfilled Fixtures

26. League matches should take place on the date allocated by the League Manager unless rearranged by mutual consent. The rearranged date should be notified to the League Manager immediately. If a mutually agreed rearranged date cannot be agreed, then a 9-9 draw will be declared.

27. Where a team cannot get a team of four, and rearrangement is not possible, a match with a team of three against a team of four should take place. The six games that the missing player would have appeared in will be forfeited.

28. If each team can only field three players, please contact the League Manager for an appropriate format.

29. If a rearranged fixture has still not been played by the agreed alternative date, the points should be awarded to the team which could have originally fulfilled the fixture with a 12-0 score. If neither team could have fulfilled the original fixture, a draw will be declared with a 9-9 score.

Handicaps

30. Club Handicappers are urged not to rely solely on the Automatic Handicapping System but to cut the handicaps of players in line with the Croquet Association prescribed limits for Club Handicappers

31. All players must maintain a current handicap card of the present format. Cards should be brought to matches and completed on the day whenever possible. Do not be afraid to ask for guidance on completion of your card if you are not sure.

32. Authentic handicaps that reflect a player's performance over a number of games are a means of comparing players from different clubs and can be used to rank players within a team. It is unfair on those players who do conscientiously maintain their handicap cards if someone is playing with an inauthentic handicap. The impact on the loser's handicap in level play is that much greater if the winner has a nominally higher handicap than it should be.

33. Match results will be appraised by the Federation handicapper and a CA Handicapper. Results that consistently indicate an incorrect handicap may prompt a revision of players' handicaps in accordance with CA guidance.