



# Cammeray Croquet Club

<http://www.cammeray-croquet.org.au>

## November Newsletter

### Club News

The Christmas Party is on the 30<sup>th</sup> November from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m

The lawns will be closed for refurbishment from 8<sup>th</sup> December to the 26<sup>th</sup> December.

### Tournaments:

#### NSW Bronze Medal

This is a tournament when leading players from NSW compete for selection as the NSW representative in the Australian Gold Medal competition. This year, 5 of the 7 entries were members of Cammeray. Trevor Bassett of Cooks River won with six wins out of six, followed by James Carlisle 5/6, Peter Landrebe 4/6, and Alison Sharpe 3/6

#### NSW Champion of Champions

The champions of each club play each other in this. James Carlisle swept the board with six wins out of six.

#### Australian Open Doubles

Mike Gidding and Chris Borlase won this narrowly Stephen Pearce and Trevor Bassett; our own Rob Elliott and James Carlisle came a creditable fourth.

#### Australian Open Singles

James Carlisle (again!) did very well in this, reaching the semi-final, nearly beating Trevor Bassett, then winning the 3<sup>rd</sup> 4<sup>th</sup> play-off. A great effort! Trevor beat Callum Hyland in the final.

James reports on the deciding semi-final game: 'I managed to get a ball to rover and then got in with the back ball (from hoop 4), but got hampered and missed after 3-back with the lawn set up nicely for the straight rover peel in front of me. Trevor then stuck in 1-back and gave me the balls for another go, but I stuck in penult! He then finished in two turns. So close but no cigar.'

James now has a handicap of -1.5 and a world ranking of 81.

#### Cammeray silver

This is nearing its end, with six players competing. There will be final between the top two players on Friday 28<sup>th</sup> November.

# Transform your game by discovering your natural ratio!

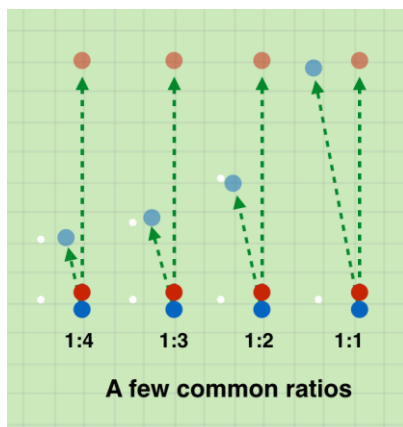
by Chris Lavina

I have been coaching for the past couple of years. I don't coach many, but I do enjoy coaching players who seek me out and are ready to improve their game. My approach is player-centred. We all learn and apply concepts differently, hence it is critical to identify a player's learning style - how they might grasp and apply concepts. Some players need concrete examples, and some prefer concepts that they can test themselves and come back with questions. It's also useful to encourage a certain style of play matched to their physical abilities.

Personally, I managed to build my game with my own natural tendencies. For example, I found the traditional 1:3 ratio difficult to replicate when I was a beginner. I discovered that I preferred 1:4 and could replicate it simply, easily, naturally using my own tendencies. Knowing this and developing a decent rush served my own development well.

## Find your natural ratio

In Association Croquet, performing croquet strokes of varying ratios for any given situation allows us to start a break, keep a break alive or gather balls out of position. You would be familiar with the "Drive" and the "Stop Shot". The drive is defined as a technique performed as a standing stroke with a follow through - often described as a 1:3 ratio shot. The "Stop Shot" on the other hand is roughly defined as a technique that allows a player to stretch the Drive ratio. 1:4 or 1:5 are common stop shot ratios. Although certain conditions allow for more extreme 1:7 and above ratios.



**There are several factors that affect ratios.** In this article, we will concentrate on finding your natural ratio. Stay tuned for additional details on how to alter your natural ratio - Neil Hardie suggested this be covered in a future article. Hint for those wanting to do some experimentation: ball position, grip (lower hand), weight shift or weight bias in stance, mallet face angle... a combination of those actually affect the other. For example, it is

difficult to achieve a steep face angle without moving your stance forward and in effect move your weight forward also. **Details, drills and method in the next article!**

## Drill - determine your natural ratio

You need to find out how your natural ratio develops over several distances.

1. **A Baulk to Peg.** Set up a croquet shot from A Baulk and with **your most natural standing shot** concentrate on propelling the front ball to land next to the peg. Perform this several times until you can consistently land the front ball very close the peg. Once you learn the speed and feel you have a consistent shot, start measuring the distance where your back ball or striker ball lands. Perform this at least 10 times: same stroke and same speed or weight. Is your striker ball landing about the same spot? This set of results averages out to your natural ratio.
2. **Hold and Load.** Yes the usual term is Load and Hold. But this time concentrate on the hold. Set up a croquet stroke on A Baulk almost being behind H1. Perform your natural stroke so your striker ball lands 1-2 feet in front of H1. Don't worry too much if you land a little angled from the hoop. The drill is to determine the ratio. As long as you achieve the same shot at least 5-10 times. Measure your Load. The resulting ratio should be quite similar to the previous drill.
3. **Check a shorter distance.** Try your natural ratio on a 2 yard hoop approach. Measure and confirm. Sometimes, there are slight variations to the ratio when using a delicate shot. It should still be similar, but worth taking note.

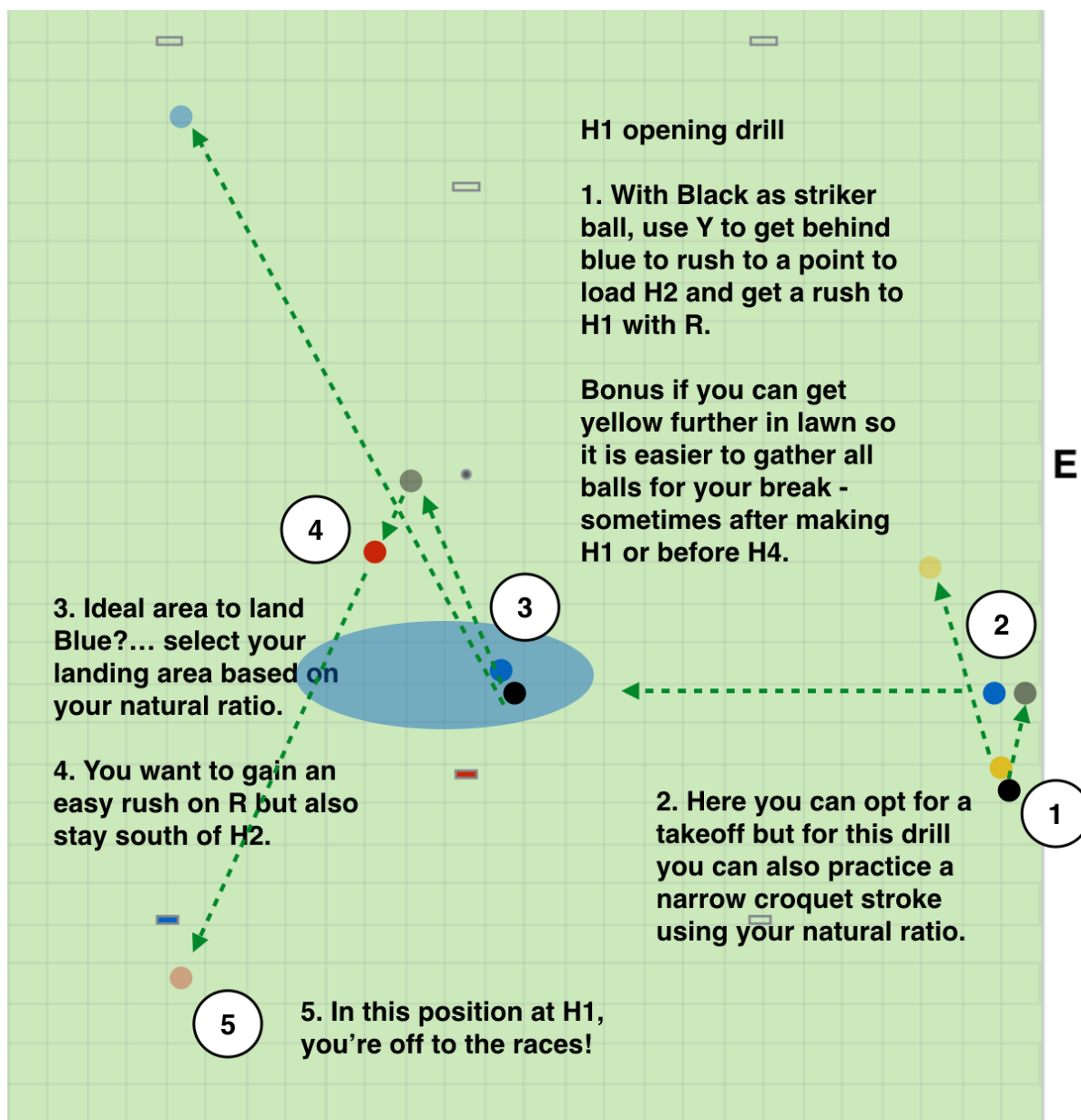
## Why the natural ratio?

The greatest argument for using your natural ratio is repeatability! When you have to manufacture a ratio it may not turn out as planned (unless you've done the work - dedicated training!)

**You can develop an infinite number of ratios**, but observe the top players and you will find that they will place pivots, reception balls and pioneers in a pattern adapted to their own play. I enjoy watching and re-watching the 2023 World Championships at Hurlingham (via YouTube), specifically Robert Fulford's play. Here is a player who with his skill and experience can generate a more complete gradient of ratios, but if you watch his breaks, he places balls in specific spots on the lawn, also relative to where his other balls have landed and based on his intent. Perhaps he too relies on favoured and natural ratios. Look to compare his finishing Triple Peel turns - virtually identical ball placements!

### Application:

**Try this Hoop 1 drill**, a situation that occurs during the opening phase. But can be applied to many positions -



croquet behind a ball, rush that ball to another ball to set load and rush again to make hoop.

The question that comes up after getting a rush to the ball in the middle of the lawn is, "where should I rush this ball to be able to load, rush, and start my break?" The simple answer would be, the **best possible spot is**

**where you can use your natural ratio.** If you end up shallow then accept that your pioneer will be short of the next hoop. Or if you're too deep, you will have to play with more roll on the striker ball.

**If you're wondering, this author's natural ratio 1:4 is achieved** by a semi-grounded stroke with weight evenly balanced. My reliable stop shot, where I just step back from the ball an inch or 2 and try to keep my weight mostly on my heels is about 1:5 or 1:5.5 depending on the lawn. For my 1:3, I simply lower my dominant hand 5 inches down the shaft and make sure I perform a full follow through. Small, repeatable adjustments!

**Good hitting.**

## **ADVICE IN CROQUET GAMES**

### **1. GENERAL**

Giving advice to a player during a game is forbidden in croquet, except from a partner in a doubles game. The laws 57, 58.1 and 63.6 outline the restrictions and penalties

### **2. INFORMATION WHICH CAN BE PROVIDED**

A player may ask an active referee for information about the laws of croquet, and can ask an active referee or an opponent about the state of the game i.e. which is the striker's ball, what hoop is next, how much time is left. They can also ask a timekeeper how much time is left (57.2.3.1).

An active referee or an opponent can also forestall a player if they are about to play a shot in error which does not incur a penalty – such as taking croquet off a wrong (but live) ball, failing to take croquet when required, or playing a ball from another game (57.6.1).

If an opponent offers advice, the player may act on that advice (58.1)

### **3. INFORMATION WHICH IS NOT PERMITTED**

Except from a partner in doubles, no advice can be given to a player on how to play the game, such as which shot to play, or how to play a shot. It is also forbidden to warn a player that they are about to play a shot which is an error, and has a penalty – such as playing the wrong ball, running the wrong hoop, taking croquet from a wrong (dead) ball etc.

If a player receives advice that they are about to play such a shot, they must inform the opponent. They may then act on that advice, but may not score any more points in that turn. It must be clear that the player intended to play the shot in error – there is no penalty if the player was still making up their mind on what shot to play (57.6.2).

Spectators must never offer advice, or comment on the game within the hearing of the player. If advice is given by team members or team officials in a team competition, the player is not allowed to use that advice. If a spectator offers advice, they may be asked to move away from the vicinity of the players (57.4).

Players may not, during the course of the game, refer to any notes or recordings which might constitute coaching. Headphones are not permitted during play (57.2.1).

If a player is discovered seeking advice then they are allowed to play one further stroke in the turn, then the turn ends (57.2 and 63.6).