

# ASSOCIATION CROQUET FOR GOLF CROQUET PLAYERS

## LESSON 1

### DIFFERENCES BETWEEN GC AND AC:

In AC the player can get additional shots during his/her turn. This means that an experienced player can make several hoops in one turn.

The main characteristic of AC is the CROQUET SHOT. When a player uses the ball he/she is playing (called the STRIKER BALL) to hit another ball, this is called a ROQUET. The player then picks up the striker ball and places it beside the ball which has been roqueted (the CROQUET BALL), and plays a shot hitting the striker ball so that the croquet ball moves. After this CROQUET SHOT, the player gets a further shot called the CONTINUATION SHOT.

If the player uses this continuation shot to roquet another ball, they can play another croquet shot and keep going.

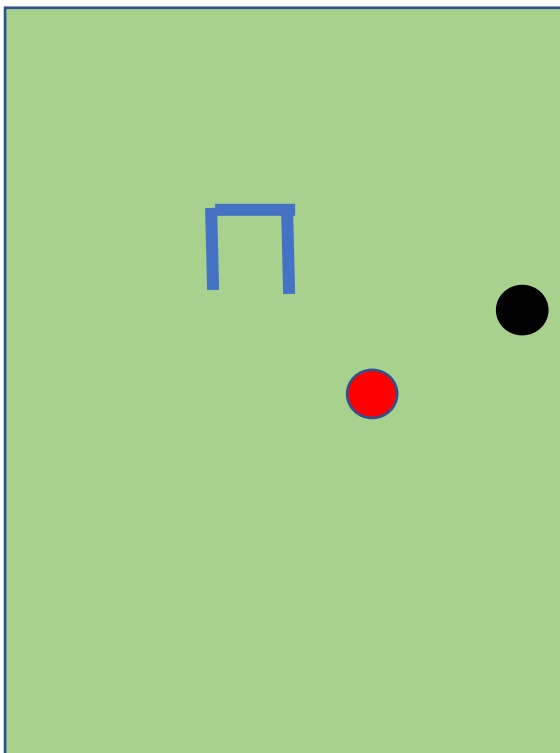
Each of the other three balls in the game can be roqueted only once; but if the player makes a hoop, all the balls become LIVE and can be roqueted again.

The player also gets an extra shot when they run a hoop.

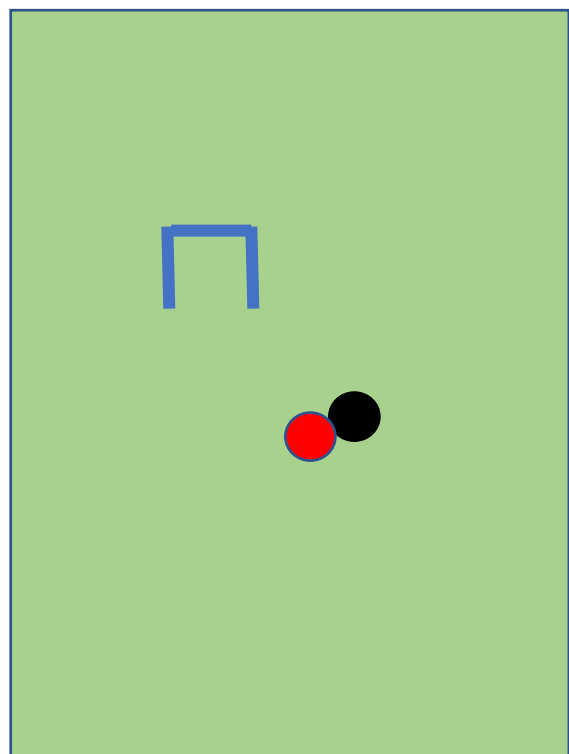
### MAKING A HOOP IN AC

There is a standard way of making a hoop in AC. If we look at the diagram below:

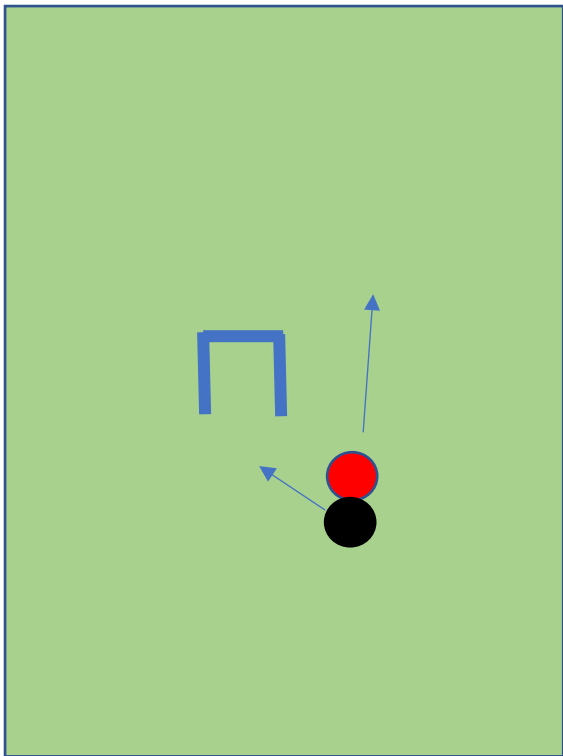
#### 1. Initial position



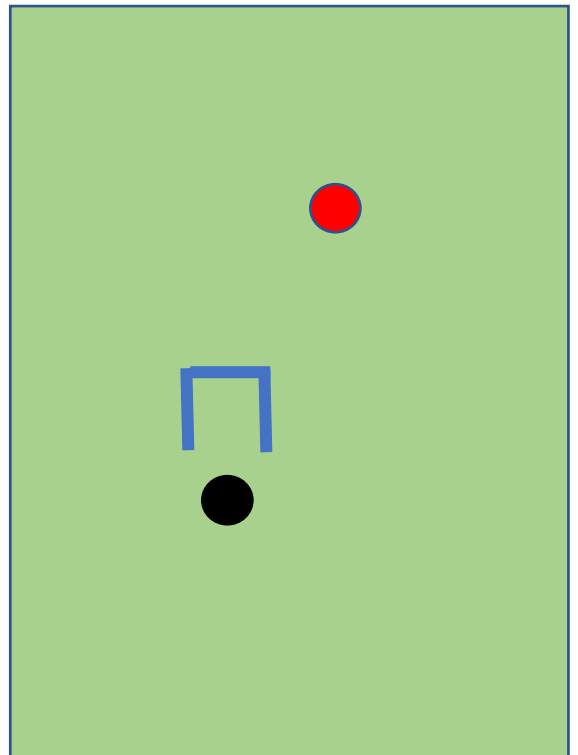
#### 2. Player of black roquets red



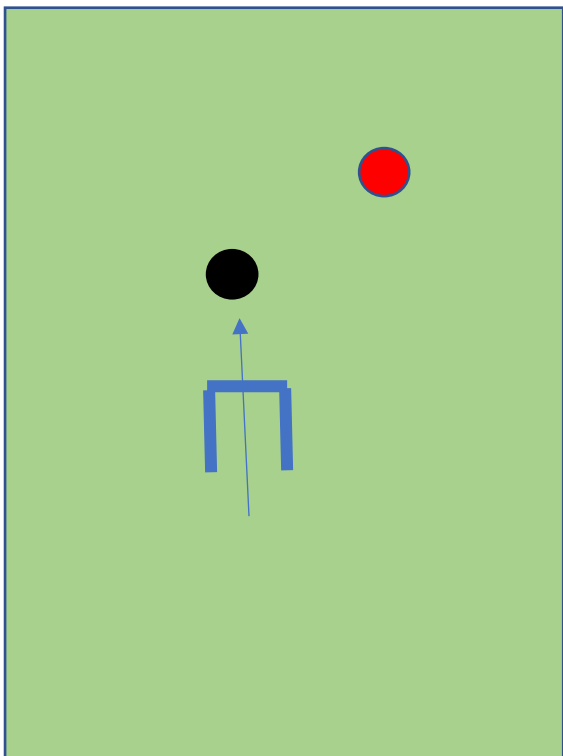
3. Black plays a croquet shot



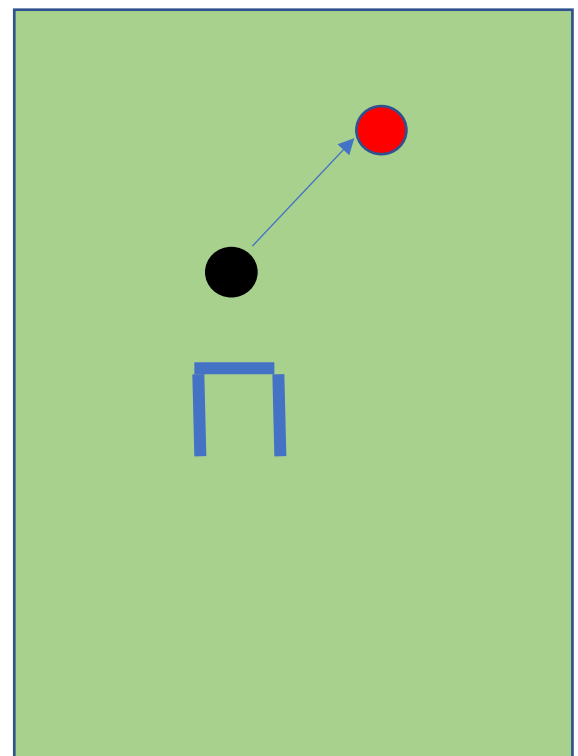
4. Result of the croquet shot



5. Black runs the hoop



6. As black has run a hoop, red is now 'live' again, and can be roqueted

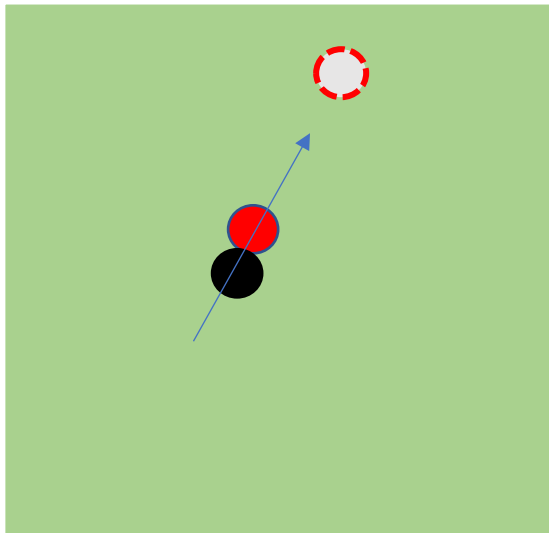


Black can now play another croquet shot with black in contact with red.

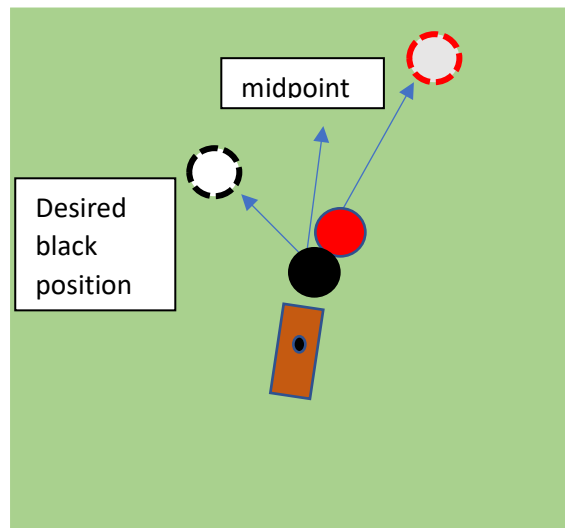
It is easier for the player if the red ball is close to the black ball after the black ball has run the hoop. One of the arts of AC is to get the croquet ball in a good position for a roquet after the hoop has been run.

The croquet shot played in diagram 3 is called a DRIVE. In future lessons we will learn other kinds of croquet shots which are used in a variety of situations.

In a croquet shot, the croquet ball goes along the line of the ball centres: Diags. 7 & 8



**7. Direction of croquet ball**

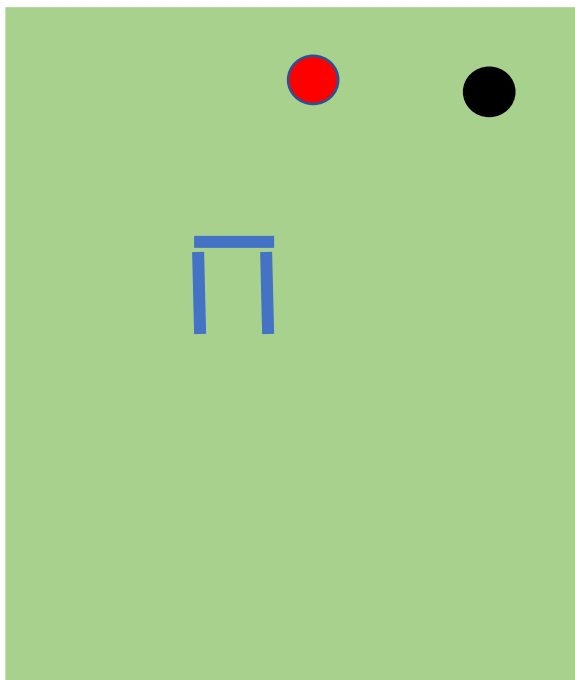


**8. Direction of striker ball**

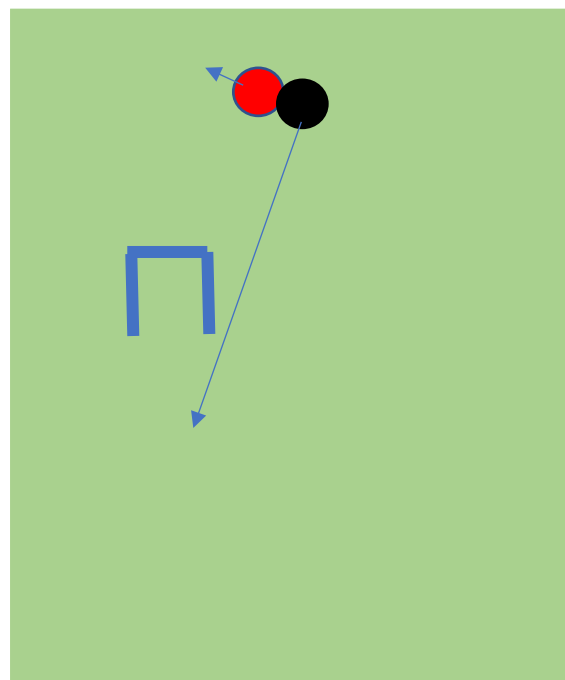
To get the striker's ball to the desired position, you aim the mallet swing at the midpoint between the end positions of the croquet ball and the striker's ball.

The other croquet shot which is useful for making hoops is the TAKE-OFF. In this shot the croquet ball is only moved a small amount. In diagram 9 the croquet ball is on the non-playing side of the hoop, so we want to leave it there:

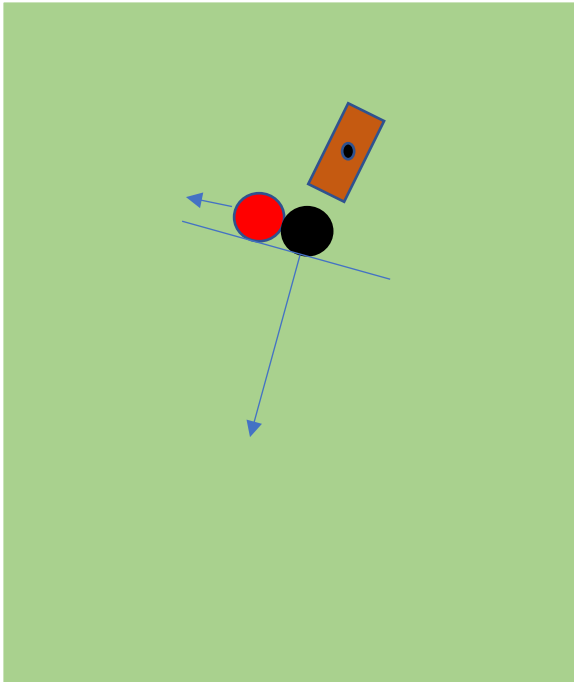
**9. Initial position**



**10. Take-off**



## 11. The Take-off



The direction that the striker's ball goes is set by the way the balls are lined up, not by the direction of the mallet swing. The striker's ball will go at right angles to the lines of the balls.

The mallet aim should be at an angle to the intended line of the striker's ball, as the stroke must make the croquet ball move. The greater the angle, the more the croquet ball will move.

The student should now practice the process for running hoops, using both drives and take-offs.

Next lesson: rushes.

# ASSOCIATION CROQUET FOR GOLF CROQUET PLAYERS

## LESSON 2

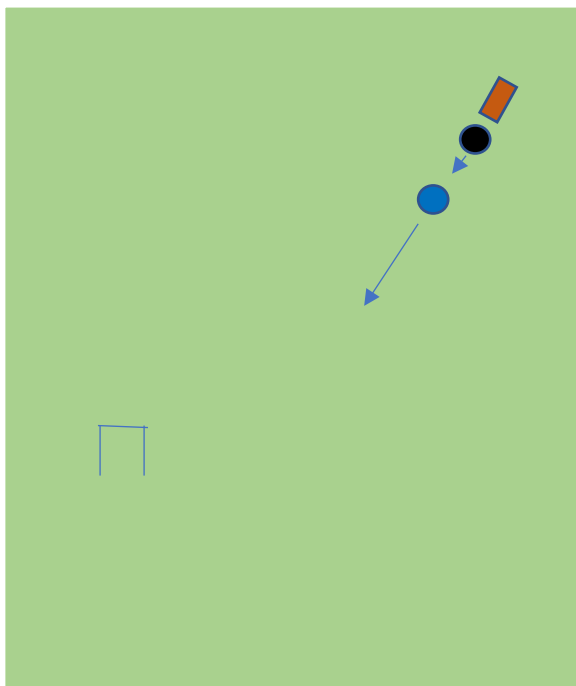
Revision: AC rules : roquet – croquet – continuation

Making a hoop by roquet – drive – hoop run; Making a hoop by roquet – take-off – hoop run.

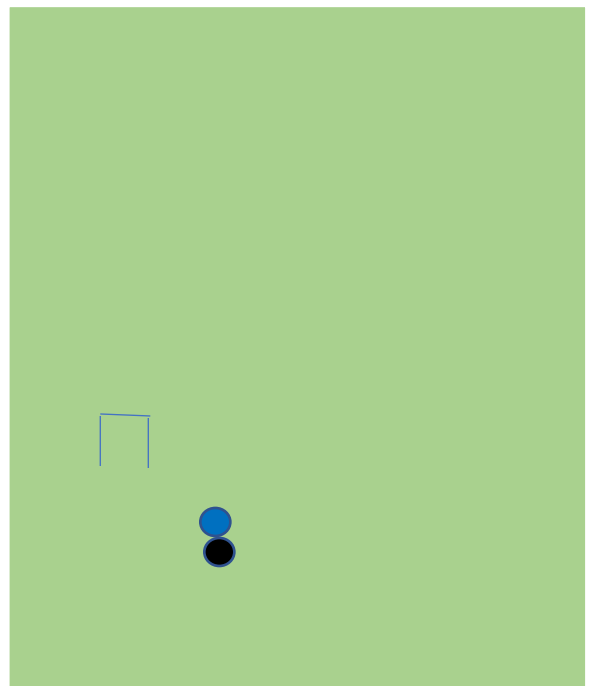
### RUSHES

In AC a roquet which sends the croquet ball a considerable distance is called a RUSH. A rush is a very useful shot because it can be used to move the croquet ball to a position near a hoop, where it is then easy to make the hoop.

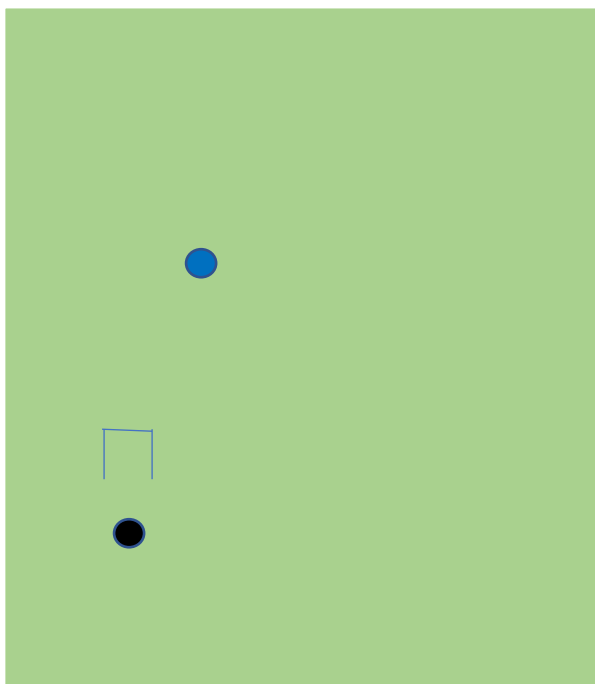
#### 1. Black rushes blue towards the hoop



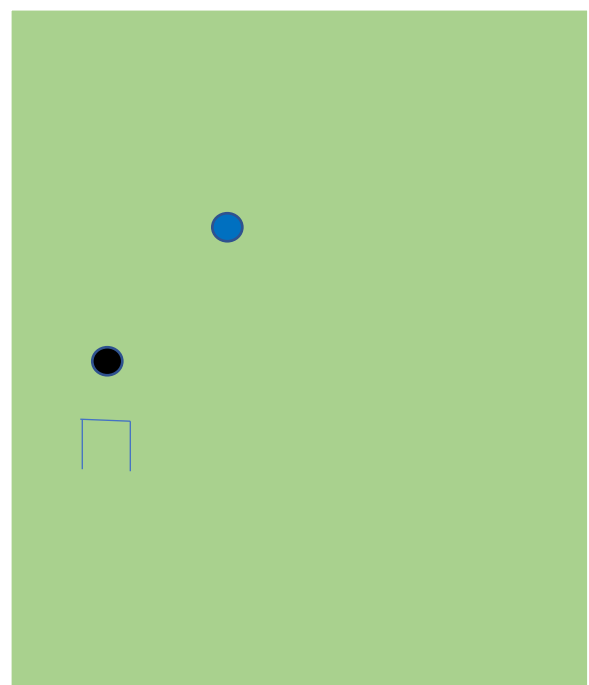
#### 2. Player places black in contact with blue



#### 3. Black plays a drive to get hoop position

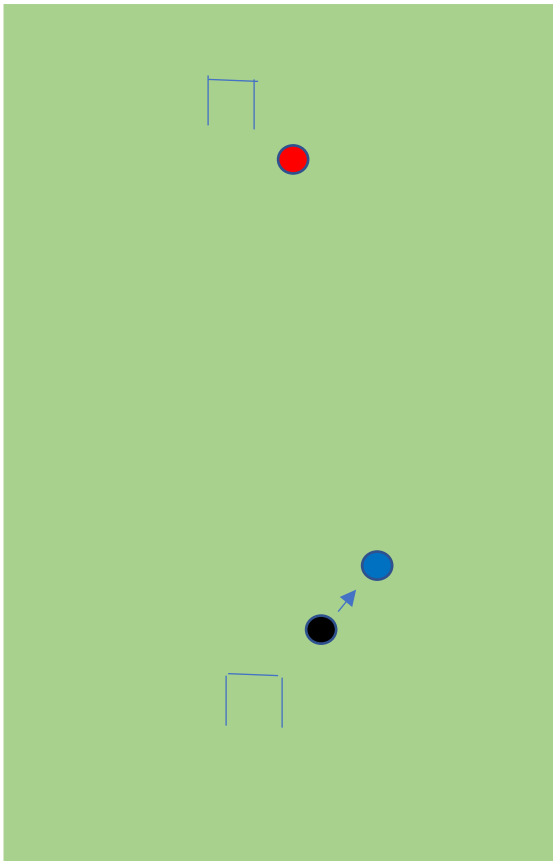


#### 4. Black runs the hoop

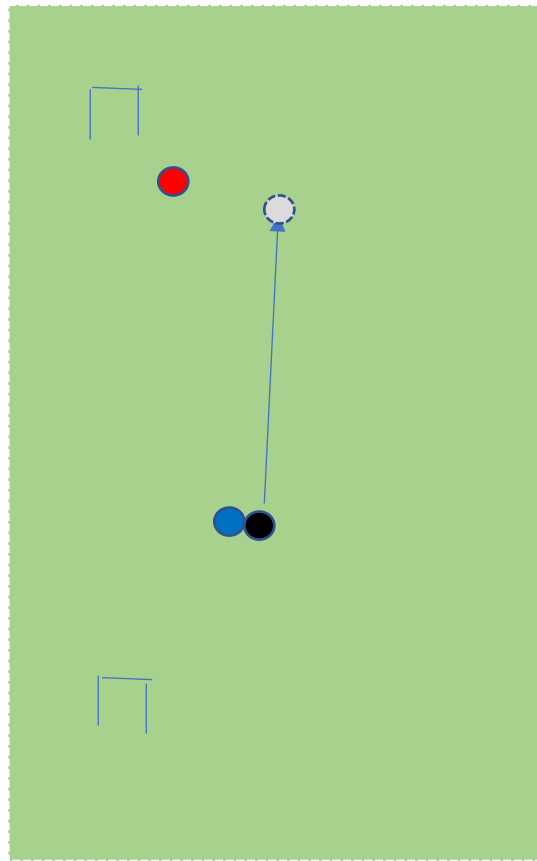


### MAKING MORE THAN ONE HOOP IN A TURN

In Association Croquet, the aim is to make more than one hoop in a single turn. In AC, each player tries to take each of his/her balls through each of the hoops in sequence, unlike golf croquet. For high handicap players, the games are 18 point games: a player takes each ball through the six hoops, then through hoop 2 in the reverse direction (called 1-back), then through hoop 1 in the reverse direction (2-back), then hits the peg for the final point.



5 Black roquets blue after making the hoop



6 Black takes off to near red to make hoop 2

After black has made hoop 1 in Fig. 4, it has an additional shot, and all balls are now live again, so it can roquet blue. As there is a ball near hoop 2, it can use this to make another hoop. It takes off from blue to near red, then rushes red nearer the hoop, and plays a croquet shot to get into position to make hoop 2.

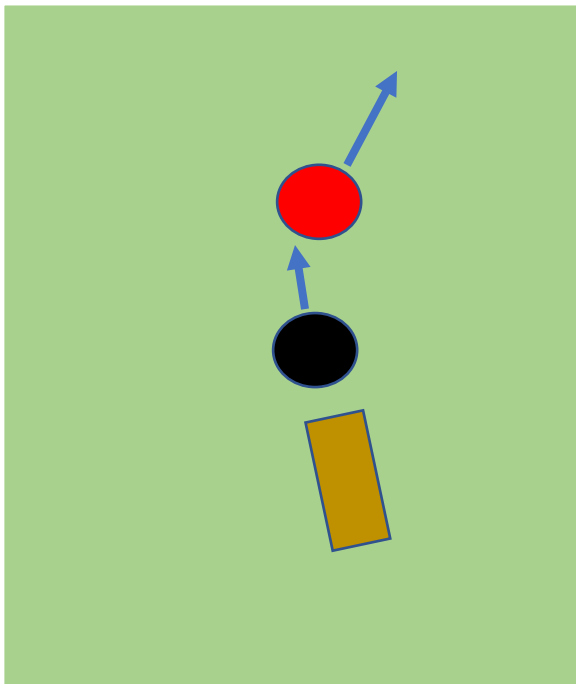
If there was a ball at this point which was near hoop 3, the player could have continued to make hoop 3 as well. The process of putting a ball at the hoop after the one it is currently aiming for is the key to making several hoops in one turn.

In Fig 6, if black had played a croquet shot which sent blue to hoop 3 while black goes near red, it would have been possible to make hoop 3 as well. The shot needed to do this is the **roll**, which we will cover in the next lesson.

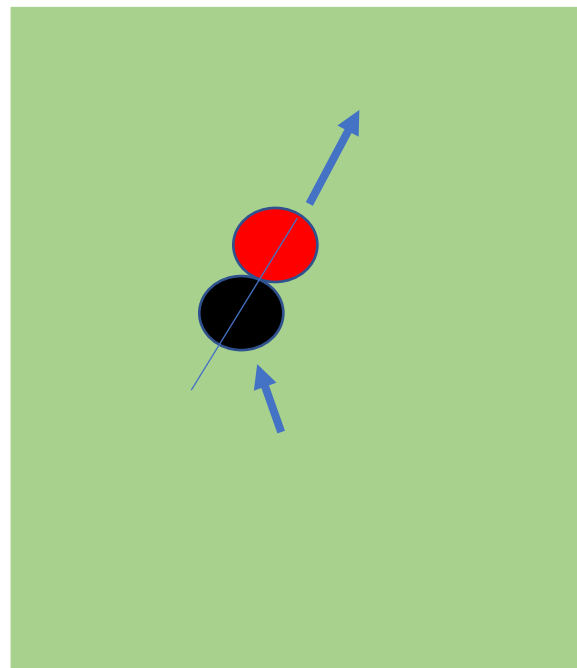
In AC the position of the striker's ball after a roquet is unimportant, as it will be picked up and put in contact with the croquet ball. The skill in AC is to get the croquet ball to the desired position.

To get the croquet ball to the right position it is often necessary to play a CUT RUSH. A cut rush is when the striker's ball hits the croquet ball off-centre and sends it off at an angle.

The direction of the croquet ball is along the line of centres at the moment of contact.



**7. Aim for a cut rush**



**8. Direction of croquet ball**

The student should now try rushing at various angles and distances to get the croquet ball near the hoop; then playing the croquet shot and trying to run the hoop.

Note that for cut rushes, as the angle increases, the shot has to be played harder to get the same distance.

Some rules for AC: In a croquet shot, if either the striker's ball or the croquet ball goes over the boundary, it is the end of turn.

A ball is over the boundary if any part of it overlaps the boundary line.

If a ball is hit over the boundary, it is replaced opposite the point where it went out, but one yard inside the boundary – 'on the yard-line'

At the start of a turn, the player can select either of his/her two balls to play.

Next lesson:   Rolls

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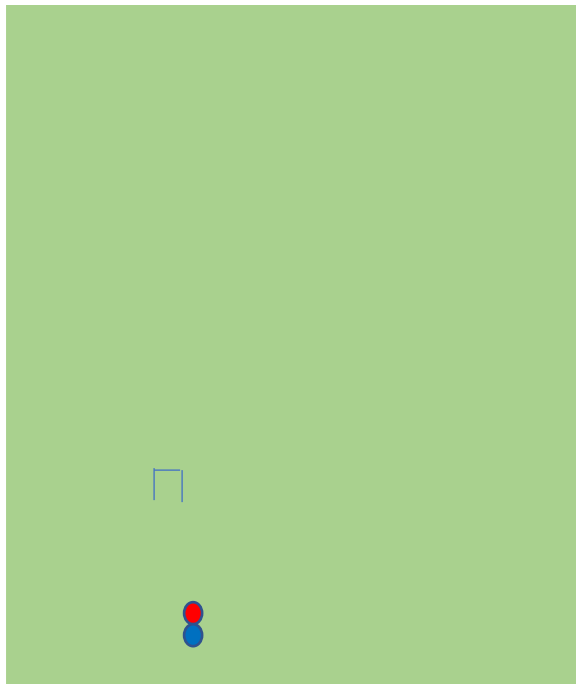
## LESSON 3

Revision: Take-offs, rushes

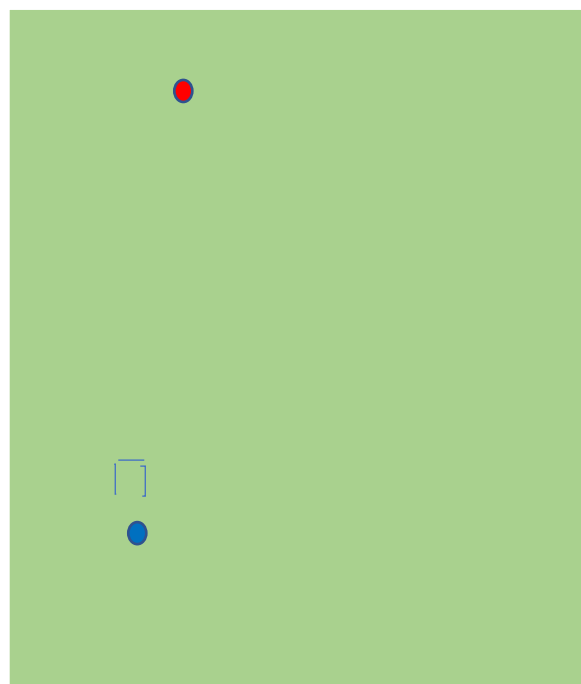
### ROLLS

The roll is a croquet shot where we control the relative distances of the striker's ball and the croquet ball. In a roll we try to make the striker's ball go further than it would with a drive, and the croquet ball less distance.

In the diagram 1 below, the croquet ball is near the boundary. If a drive is played, the croquet ball will go 3 or 4 times as far as the striker's ball, and will therefore finish a long way past the hoop – too far to roquet after the hoop has been run. So we need a way of changing the ratio of distances of the croquet ball and the striker's ball.



1. Hoop approach played from boundary



2. A drive sends the croquet ball too far

A *half-roll* is when the striker's ball goes half as far as the croquet ball.

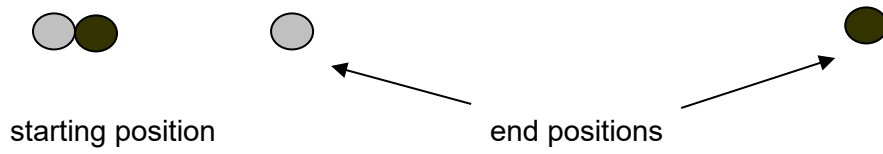
A *three-quarter roll* is when the striker's ball goes three-quarters of the distance of the croquet ball.

A *full roll* is when both balls go the same distance.

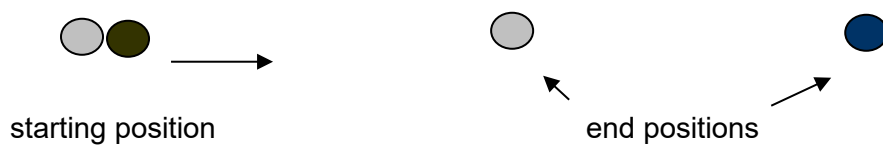
A *pass roll* is when the striker's ball goes further than the croquet ball (a difficult shot to play – not advised for beginners!)



**DRIVE:**



**HALF ROLL:**



**THREE-QUARTER ROLL:**



**FULL ROLL:**



In order to play a roll, you hit down on the striker's ball, and follow through firmly.

The roll is played by hitting down on the striker's ball. The greater the angle of the mallet, the more roll is imparted. One of the easiest ways of playing a roll is to play a normal shot, but move the feet further forwards and hit down on the striker ball. This works for shots up to a half roll, but is difficult for rolls between a half roll and a full roll.



**3. Stance to play a half roll**



**4. Position to play a three-quarter roll**

For rolls more than a half roll, you need to separate your hands and bend down as shown in Fig. 4.

Remember to play the shot firmly and follow through.

#### **Some more rules:**

Many of the rules in Association Croquet are the same as for Golf Croquet; so a crush when attempting a hoop is a fault; a double tap when running a hoop is also a fault.

The penalty for a fault is that it is end of turn, and the opponent is given the choice of leaving the balls where they lie, or returning them to the position they were in before the fault was committed.

One difference with AC is that if a double-tap occurs in a roquet, it is not a fault. As soon as the striker's ball hits another live ball, it becomes a 'ball in hand' and cannot commit a fault or run a hoop.

# ASSOCIATION CROQUET FOR GOLF CROQUET PLAYERS

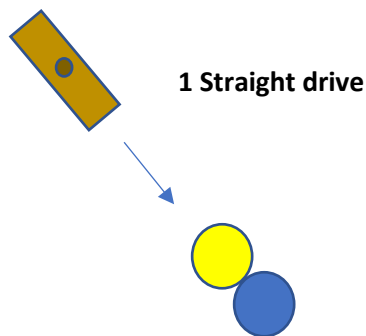
## LESSON 4

Drives and split shots

We encountered drives and split shots in lesson 1. We will now learn more about these shots.

### DRIVES

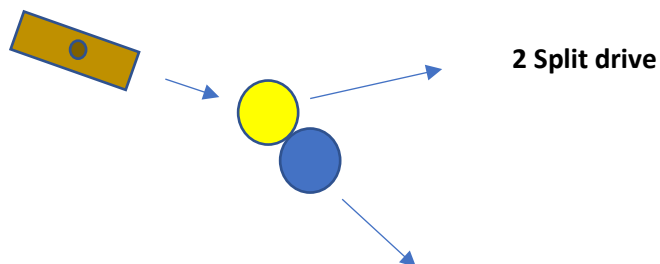
A drive is when we place the balls for a croquet shot – the striker's ball in contact with the croquet ball – and swing normally to hit the striker's ball. The simplest form is the straight drive, when we swing along the line of the ball centres:



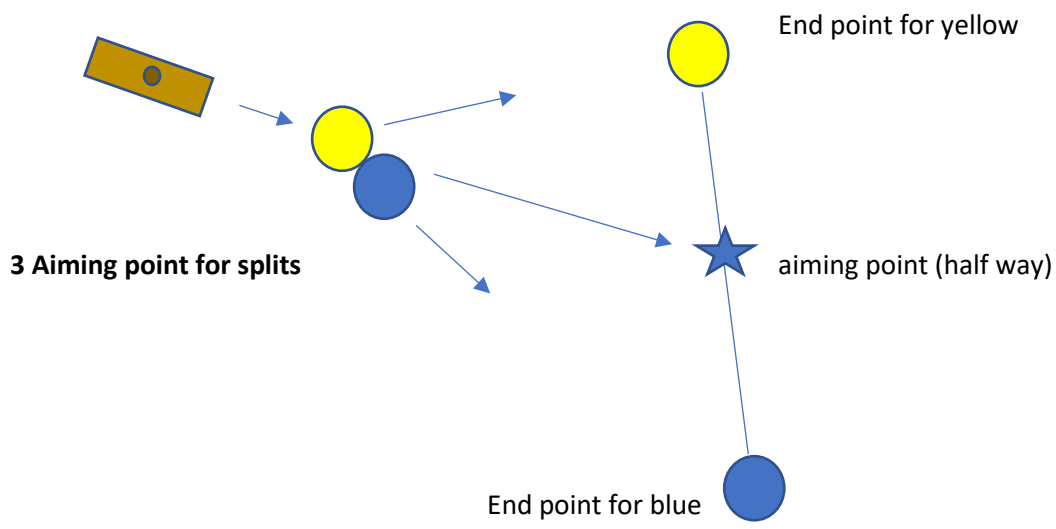
Both balls will go along the line of the swing. The croquet ball will go much further than the striker's ball. The ratio of the distances of the croquet ball to the striker's ball varies according to the style of the player, but it is usually between three and four times as far. A player should play a number of straight drives to see what his/her ratio is. The ratio should stay about the same whether the shot is played hard or softly.

### SPLIT DRIVES

We often want the croquet ball and the striker's ball to go in different directions. This is called a split drive. In this, the mallet swing is at an angle to the line of centres.



The blue ball will still travel along the line of the ball centres, but the yellow ball will go off to the left.



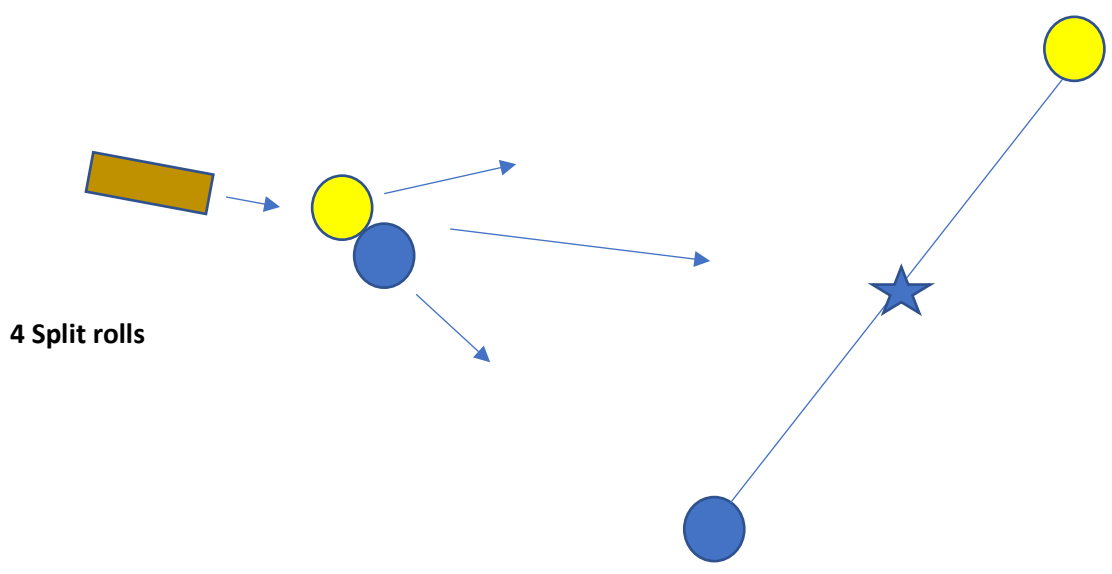
The star, which is the point at which the mallet aims, is the half-way point between the places where the two balls finish.

Note that for a split shot, the striker's ball goes further than it would in a straight drive, and the croquet ball goes a shorter distance. The greater the angle, the further the striker's ball goes. For example, if you hit the striker's ball at 45 degrees to the the line of centres, the striker's ball and the croquet ball will go roughly equal distances (with 90 degrees between the directions of each). The player needs to practice split shots to get a feel for the ratios of the distances of the croquet ball and the striker's ball for different angles.

**SPLIT ROLLS**

Split rolls follow the same rules as split drives. The aim of the mallet is at the half-way point between the end positions of the two balls, and the croquet ball goes along the line of the ball centres. The ratio of croquet ball distance to striker's ball distance decreases as the angle increases.

If you play a full roll in Fig. 4, the striker's ball will go further than the croquet ball because of the angle.



## STOP SHOTS

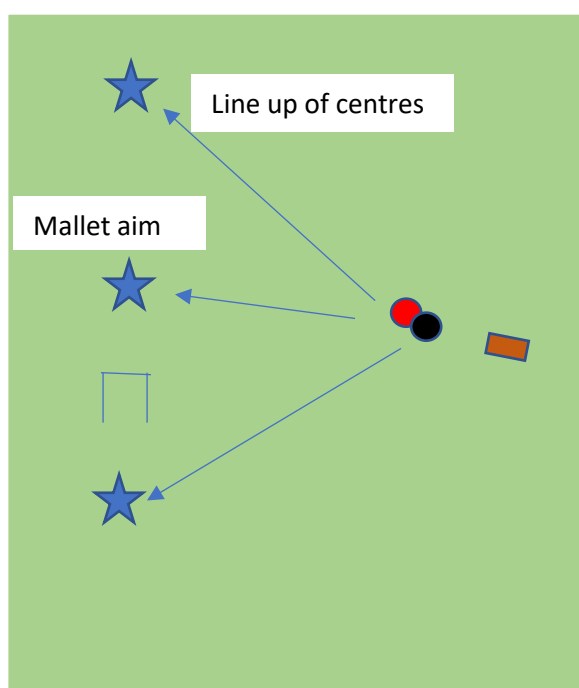
There are situations when you want the striker's ball to go a shorter distance than it would in a drive. For this you need to play a stop shot. With a drive the ratio of croquet ball distance to striker's ball distance is typically three or four to one. With a stop shot it is possible to get ratios of six or eight to one.

The stop shot is difficult to play, and involves stopping the mallet from following through. Newcomers may prefer to leave this shot until they have mastered some of the others.

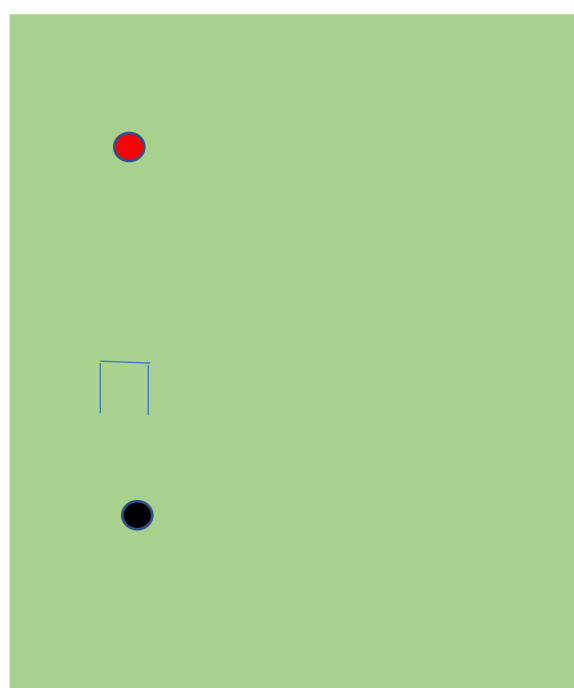
## CIRCLE HOOP APPROACH

A particular example of a split roll is the circle hoop approach which enables a player to get in position to run a hoop from any position within a few yards of the hoop.

5: Circle hoop approach



6: Result of half roll



In this shot, the ball centres are lined up to a point beyond the hoop which is the same distance from the hoop as the current croquet ball position. The mallet is aimed at a point a third of the distance from the hoop to the end-point for the croquet ball.

This system works from any position round the hoop.

Another rule:

If a ball finishes inside the yard-line, it is replaced on the yard-line before the next shot is played. The only exception is when the striker's ball finishes within the yard-line but the turn is continuing – in that case the ball is played from where it lies. However, if the striker's ball is within the yard-line at the end of its turn, then it is placed on the yard-line opposite its position.

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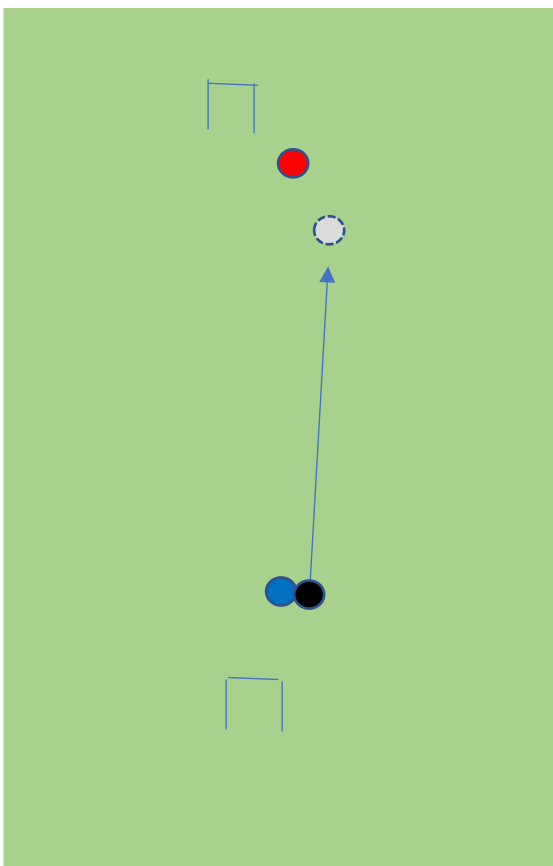
## LESSON 5

### The Four ball break!

In lesson 2 we saw how it is possible to make hoop 2 after making hoop 1 in the same turn. This was done by having a ball at hoop 2 before making hoop 1.

In Association Croquet the aim is to make as many hoops as possible in a single turn. This is called 'making a break'.

A break is done by placing a ball at the hoop after the one you are aiming for; then after you make the hoop, you send the ball you roquet after the hoop to the hoop after the next one.

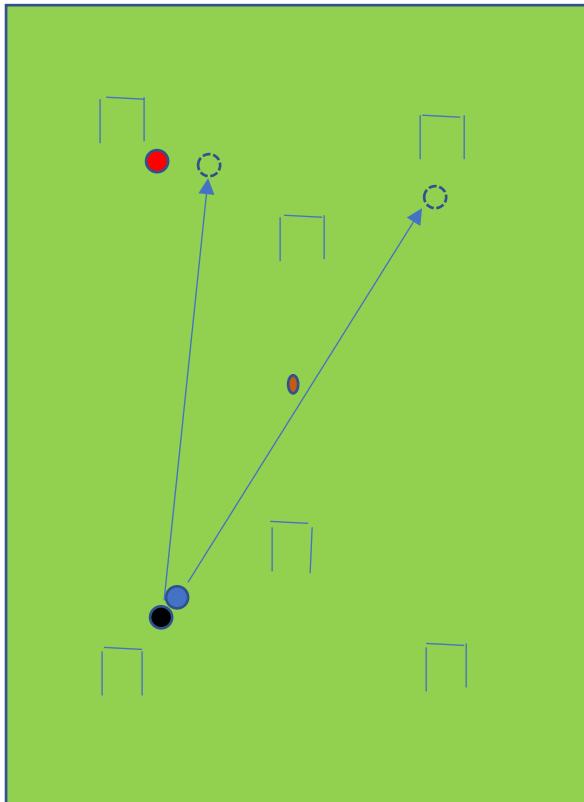


**1** Black takes off to near red to make hoop 2

In lesson 2 we saw how, after making hoop 1, we could roquet a ball nearby (called the receiver ball) and then take off to go to a ball near the next hoop.

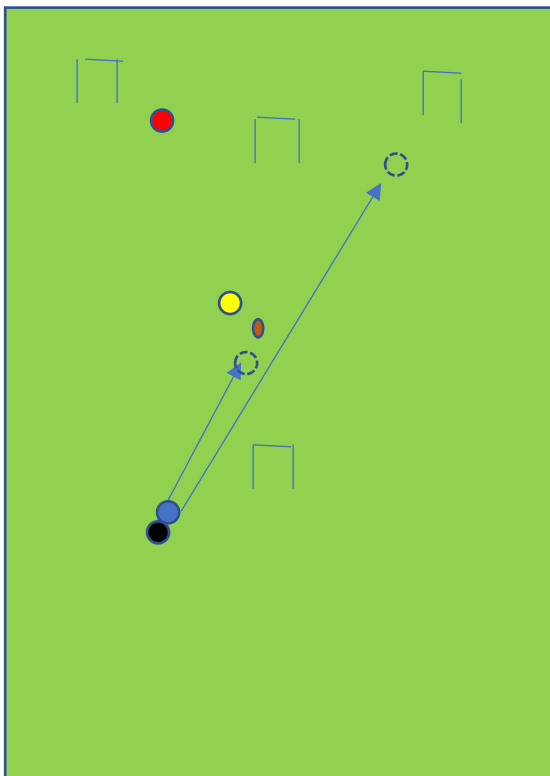
However, after we have made hoop 2, we need another ball at hoop 3 to continue the break.

We can do this by playing a roll shot after we have roqueted the receiver ball: by this we send the receiver ball to hoop 3, while sending the striker ball to near hoop 2.



**2. Black sends blue to hoop 3 while going to near red**

**3. Black send blue to near hoop 3, while going to near yellow**



In Fig. 2 black sends blue to hoop 3 in a croquet shot – a three-quarter roll – while going to a point where it can rush red behind hoop 2. After black has made hoop 2, it sends the receiver ball (red) to hoop 4, while going across to blue at hoop 3.

The long split roll, however is a difficult shot. We can make this easier, as we still have another ball to use. We put this extra ball near the peg, so now we can play a reasonably straight half-roll, roquet the ball near the peg (called a pivot), and then doing a take-off to near red.

After we roquet blue, we do a straight half roll which sends blue to be the pioneer at hoop 3 while black, the striker's ball, goes near yellow. Now black roquets yellow then takes off to get a rush on red to a point in front of the hoop 2.

After black has made hoop 2, it roquets red, then sends red to hoop 4 while black goes to near yellow again. This time it takes off from yellow and rushes blue in front of hoop 3.

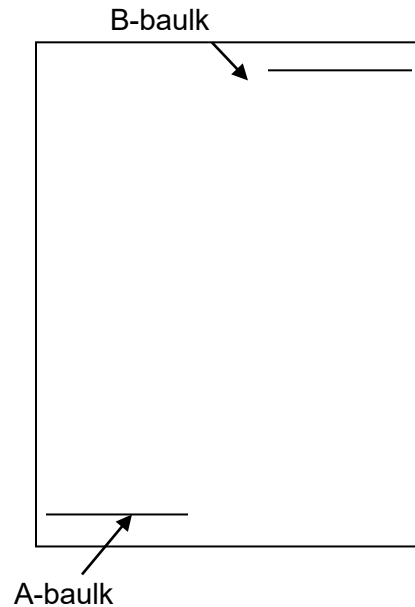
After black has made hoop 3 off blue, it sends blue to hoop 5 as it goes to yellow.

This way a series of hoops can be made

# ASSOCIATION CROQUET FOR GOLF CROQUET PLAYERS LESSON 6

## THE OPENING

To start the game, the players toss. The winner can elect to go first or second, and the other player can choose the colour of balls they use. The players then take turns to hit each ball onto the lawn from one of the 'baulks' which are along the yard-line (see diagram).



## OPENINGS

It surprises beginners that croquet players do not start the game by shooting at hoop one. However, the hoops are narrow and the chances of running one from the boundary are small. If the ball does not run the hoop and bounces off it, then this leaves a ball near hoop 1. The second player has a good chance of roqueting this, and then making the hoop.

So, the opening strategy is for the first player to put their first ball so that it is too far for the opponent to roquet it. The first player has an advantage as they can put their two balls together, giving them an easy roquet when all four balls have been played onto the lawn.

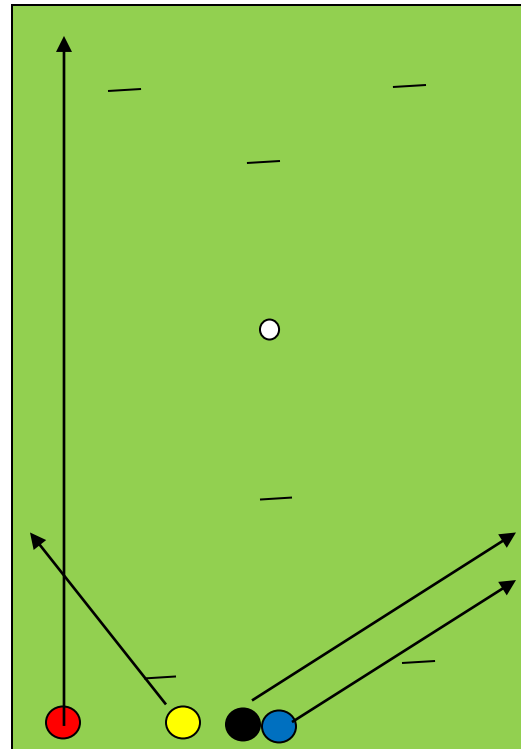
The second player puts their first ball where it can be roqueted by a good shot. The first player then has to decide whether to try and roquet the opponent ball – if they miss they lose all advantage of going first – or to join up with their first ball. If they decide to join up with their first ball, then the second player will aim at their own ball, and if they hit, they get an advantage.



## THE STANDARD OPENING

There is an opening called 'The Standard Opening' which is very common. In this, the first player puts their first ball over the east boundary, somewhere near hoop 4. It is then marked in on the boundary line. The second player puts their ball over the west boundary opposite hoop 1. The first player can then aim at their own ball on the east boundary, or aim at the opponent ball on the west boundary.

The drawback on this opening for beginners is that the balls finish up a long way from hoop 1, and it takes a long time before any hoops are made. (for more information on the Standard Opening, go to [www.oxfordcroquet.com/coach/intermediate/5.asp](http://www.oxfordcroquet.com/coach/intermediate/5.asp))



## BISQUES

AC has a system of bisques, like GC, with the number of bisques depending on the difference in handicap.

In AC a player can take a bisque when his/her turn ends. Play must continue with the same ball. After a bisque is taken, all balls are live again, and can be roqueted. A hoop can be scored using a bisque.

In AC the lower handicaps go down in halves, from 5 to 4½, 4½ to 4, and so on. This means that in some games there are half-bisques available. These are similar to full bisques, except that the player cannot score a hoop (or any other point) after taking one. For AC, your handicap starts at 24, and is reduced as your play improves. In NSW there are four grades in croquet: handicaps 14 to 24 are 'bronze', 9 to 12 is 'silver', 5 to 8 is 'gold', and 1 to 4.5 is 'platinum'. Below 1 is outside the grading system.