

SOUTH WEST FEDERATION OF CROQUET CLUBS

LEAGUE RULES (ASSOCIATION CROQUET)

(Incorporating changes made at the 2016 AGM)

1. LEAGUES AND ENTRIES

- a. The Federation shall organise a number of leagues, in which teams from Member Clubs may play matches against one another. The leagues currently supported are:
 - (1) the Federation League;
 - (2) the 'B' League;
 - (3) the Intermediate League;
 - (4) the League for Advanced Play.
- b. The Federation League, 'B' League and Intermediate League (the "Handicap Leagues") shall each consist of two or more all-play-all blocks. The number of blocks in each league and the allocation of entrants to those blocks shall be at the discretion of the League Secretary, except that in a league containing 20 or more entrants that league shall be structured in a minimum of four blocks.
- c. The League for Advanced Play (the "Advanced League") shall comprise three divisions: Division 1 shall contain five teams, but the number of teams in each of Divisions 2 and 3 shall be at the discretion of the League Secretary. Each division shall normally consist of a single all-play-all block; however, should a block in a division contain fewer than five teams then each team shall play all of the others twice, once at home and once away. A team shall remain in the same division from season to season, subject to:
 - (1) any promotion or relegation under 14a(2) at the end of a season; and
 - (2) its application for a place in the League under 1d for the following season.
- d. The Federation Secretary shall invite applications from clubs in the Federation for places in the leagues for the following year when notifying them of the agenda for the Annual General Meeting (AGM).
- e. A team that has conceded two or more matches in the most recent season shall, in the following season, be refused entry to the league in which it has defaulted unless the League Secretary can be convinced that there were extenuating circumstances which prevented the matches in question from being played.
- f. The deadline for entries shall be fourteen days after the AGM.
- g. The entry fee for all leagues shall be the same.

2. FIXTURES AND VENUES

The fixtures and their venues for each season shall be laid down by the League Secretary, who shall send out notification to each club of its league fixture commitment for the following season no later than one month after the AGM.

3. FIXTURE DATES

- a. It shall be the duty of all clubs concerned to arrange the dates for their fixtures and submit them to the League Secretary by 1st February. Appendix 1 is to act as a checklist for club tournament secretaries / team captains.
- b. No fixture shall be arranged for a date later than the appropriate date below.
 - (1) HANDICAP LEAGUES. The penultimate Sunday in August.
 - (2) ADVANCED LEAGUE. The second Sunday in September.
- c. It shall be the duty of the League Secretary to publish a full league fixture list, with details of dates and venues, in the South West Area Newsletter (SWAN).
- d. Once SWAN has been published, a fixture date may only be changed in exceptional circumstances with the agreement of both clubs and subject to immediate notification to the League Secretary.

- e. If two teams from the same club are in the same block in a League then those teams must play the fixture(s) between them before any other game for either of those teams.

4. ELIGIBILITY

- a. Only current playing members of a club shall be eligible to represent that club. Each player shall play off his/her correct handicap.
- b. In any given league, no player shall play for more than one team during a season, except as specified below.
 - (1) A club entering a team in more than one division of the League for Advanced Play must declare each team squad to the League Secretary before the first game of the season. Players not so nominated shall be assumed to be members of the squad of that team for which they first play.
 - (2) For each club in (1) above, no member of the Division 1 or 2 squads may play in a lower division, and no member of a lower division squad may play more than one match in a higher division.

Note that this rule does not preclude a player from participating in more than one league during a season, or from playing for another club in a different league.

- c. On the day any match is played, each player shall comply with the appropriate handicap restriction from the following.
 - (1) There is no handicap restriction in the League for Advanced Play.
 - (2) Players with handicaps of 14 or below may play in the Federation League matches. In addition, a team may field one player whose handicap is 16 or 18.
 - (3) Subject to (d) below, players with handicaps within a range of 9 to 18 may play in the Intermediate League matches. In addition, a team may field one player whose handicap is 20 or 22.
 - (4) Subject to (d) below, players with handicaps within a range of 16 to 24 may play in the 'B' League matches.
- d. If a player has played for an Intermediate or 'B' League team throughout the season and is still eligible to play for that team when it plays its final block match then, if the team qualifies for the play-offs, that player shall be allowed to participate if his/her handicap is within, or not more than one step below, the range for that league.
- e. Where a player has a Croquet Association (CA) handicap different from his/her club handicap, the CA handicap shall be the one referred to for the purposes of (c) and (d) above.
- f. A CA handicapper, who is a member of a team, may not alter the handicap of a member of the opposition without that player's consent.

5. SIZE OF TEAMS

- a. The size of teams for any given fixture is a matter for agreement between the opposing clubs, subject to (b) and (c) below.
- b. The minimum team size shall be three players.
- c. Subject to (b) above, where teams cannot agree on the team size the lower of the two suggested figures shall be used.
- d. Nothing in (a) to (c) above shall restrict a club from substituting new players in a later session of the match.

6. MATCH FORMATS

- a. Whatever the team size, the match shall be arranged so that one side must win (except as provided in 11b).
- b. Subject to 5a and 6a above, and the number of lawns it has available, the home club shall choose the match format. Appendix 2 lists the possible match formats.

- c. A match shall consist of a minimum of five games. One-lawn clubs may play two afternoon sessions (see 8a(4) and 8b(2)) or, except in the 'B' League, triple-bank.
- d. Where a club has two or more lawns available, the visiting team captain shall choose the lawns for each session of the match, avoiding double-banking where possible.

7. GAME FORMATS

- a. **ADVANCED LEAGUE.** All games shall be played according to the CA Laws for Advanced Play on full- or near to full-size lawns.
- b. **FEDERATION AND INTERMEDIATE LEAGUES.** All games shall be played according to the CA Laws for Handicap Play on full- or near to full-size lawns.
- c. **'B' LEAGUE.**
 - (1) All games shall be either:
 - i. 26-point games played on half-size lawns; or
 - ii. 14-point games played on full- or near to full-size lawns.
 - (2) The choice in (1) above shall rest with the home club, which may decide to play some games in the match on full-size lawns and other games on half-size lawns.
 - (3) All games shall be played according to the CA Laws for Full Bisque Handicap Play, using a Base Handicap of 11½.
 - i. 26-point games shall use the calculated bisque allocation modified, in accordance with published Schedules, for half-size lawns.
 - ii. 14-point games shall use the calculated bisque allocation modified, in accordance with published Schedules, for 14-point games.

Appendix 3 specifies the allocation of bisques.

8. TIME LIMITS

- a. **ADVANCED, FEDERATION AND INTERMEDIATE LEAGUES.**
 - (1) The time limit for any session shall be 3, 3¼ or 3½ hours, to be determined by the away club. Other time limits may be imposed by the agreement of the two captains.
 - (2) Time taken for stoppages (for tea, coffee, etc.) shall be added to extend the time limit.
 - (3) Notwithstanding (1) and (2) above, where the home club has only one lawn and wishes to play three games in one session, the away club may decide that all or some of the singles games in that match shall be limited to 2½ hours.
 - (4) In the Federation and Intermediate Leagues, where the home club wishes to play two rounds of singles in one session, any singles game in that session may be given a 2-hour time limit and, in that case, shall be played as an 18-point game, starting at Hoop 5, with the number of bisques reduced accordingly.
- b. **'B' LEAGUE.**
 - (1) Any doubles game and any singles game not covered by (2) below may be given a time limit of 2½, 2¾, 3, 3¼ or 3½ hours, to be determined by the away club. Other time limits may be imposed by the agreement of the two captains.
 - (2) Where the home club wishes to play two rounds of singles in one session on half-size lawns, any singles game in that session may be given a 2-hour time limit and, in that case, shall be played as an 18-point game, starting at Hoop 5, with the number of bisques reduced accordingly.
- c. **WHARRAD TURNS.** Games shall be concluded with Wharrad Turns if both captains agree. If the captains disagree a coin shall be tossed and the winner shall decide whether Wharrad Turns are to be used. Wharrad Turns shall be conducted according to CA Tournament Regulation T3 and shall start 1 hour before the end of the agreed time limit. (See Appendix 4)

9. PAIRING OF OPPONENTS

- a. In all leagues it shall be the duty of the team captains to arrange the pairing of opponents for all games of the match prior to the start of the first session.
- b. INTERMEDIATE and 'B' LEAGUES.
 - (1) The captains should first arrange the pairings for the session with the most games (normally the afternoon session) by choosing their doubles partnerships, if any, and then pairing opponents for the singles games by random draw.
 - (2) Games in the other (usually morning) session should then be arranged so that no game is repeated.
- c. ADVANCED AND FEDERATION LEAGUES. As play may be all singles, all doubles or a mixture of both, the following shall apply.
 - (1) Where one or more doubles games are to be played in a session, the captains shall nominate the partnerships; opponents shall be paired in order of aggregate handicaps. For any remaining singles games in that session, opponents shall be paired in handicap order.
 - (2) Where only singles games are to be played in a session, opponents shall be paired in handicap order.
 - (3) Where two or more players in a team have the same handicap the captain shall choose their order, which shall apply for the whole match.
 - (4) Singles players must play different opponents in each session, so the pairings must be adjusted, if necessary, to comply with this requirement.

10. REPORTING OF RESULTS

It shall be the duty of the home club to inform the League Secretary of the match result and provide him with details of the games within seven days of the match.

11. WALKOVERS / ABANDONED MATCHES

- a. WALKOVERS.
 - (1) If a club fails to provide the minimum size of team for any match, the League Secretary shall be empowered to award a walkover win to its opponents.
 - (2) A walkover win shall be scored 3-0.
- b. ABANDONED MATCHES.
 - (1) DEFINITION. A lawn is unplayable if:
 - i. both captains agree it is unplayable; or
 - ii. there is sufficient surface water on any part of the lawn to prevent a ball hit through it from reaching any one of the four boundaries.
 - (2) OPTIONS. If one or more lawns are unplayable, the two captains may:
 - i. choose to continue the match; or
 - ii. agree to abandon the match; or
 - iii. disagree, in which case the match shall be abandoned.
 - (3) If a match is abandoned because one or more lawns are unplayable, every attempt should be made to complete the match at a later date unless one team has already won more than half of the scheduled number of games. Failing this, the match shall be awarded to the team with the most wins in completed games; if the number of wins is shared equally, the match shall be declared a draw.
 - (4) If all the lawns are playable but the two captains mutually agree to abandon the match for some other reason, the match score at the time it is abandoned shall be the recorded score.
 - (5) If all the lawns are playable and one captain wishes to abandon the match but the other wishes to continue, any uncompleted games shall be awarded to the team that is prepared to continue.

12. FINAL BLOCK POSITIONS

- a. In determining the positions in an all-play-all block after all fixtures have been decided, teams shall be ranked in order of match wins achieved.
- b. Where two teams have the same number of match wins:
 - (1) for blocks in which teams play each other once only, the team that won the match between them in that season shall be ranked the higher;
 - (2) for blocks in which teams play each other twice (home and away), the higher-ranked team shall be determined by the aggregate game score in the two matches between those teams; if the aggregate game score is still inconclusive, the teams shall be ranked in order of the average points difference achieved per game in those two matches.
- c. Where more than two teams have the same number of match wins, a mini-block of the matches between the teams concerned shall be examined, and the principles of (a), then (b), above shall be re-applied. If (b) above cannot be applied to the mini-block, the teams shall be ranked in order according to the percentage of games they have won in the mini-block during that season.
- d. Where, following the application of (c) above, two teams are now ranked equally, (b) above shall be re-applied.
- e. Where, following the application of (c) and (d) above, more than two teams are ranked equally, those teams shall be ranked in order of the average points difference achieved per game played in the mini-block during that season.
- f. Where, as a result of (e) above, two teams are now ranked equally, (b) above shall be re-applied.
- g. If (a) to (f) fail to resolve the equality in ranking, lots shall be drawn by the Committee to determine the matter.

13. PLAY-OFFS AND FINALS (HANDICAP LEAGUES ONLY)

- a. After the final block positions for each of the constituent blocks have been determined, then in each block the team with the highest position shall be declared the Block Winner. For each league, the Committee shall arrange such play-offs between the block winners as may be necessary to produce two finalists. Should any block winner be unable to compete in the relevant play-off match or final, the League Secretary may deem the next highest-placed available team in that block to be the block winner. Similarly, should a team win a play-off match and then become unable to compete in the next play-off match or final, the League Secretary may reinstate the last team beaten by the unavailable team.
- b. Play-offs shall be staged at the venues of block winners, and each block that is to provide the host and "Home" club shall be determined on a rotational basis and printed in SWAN. Matches may be played on any date after the penultimate Sunday in August, by arrangement between the clubs involved, but no fewer than seven days before the scheduled date for the relevant final. It is the responsibility of both clubs in each match to inform the League Secretary of the agreed date.
- c. League finals shall be staged at venues (host clubs) and on dates decided by the Committee and printed in SWAN. For each of the finals, the "Home" club shall be determined by the League Secretary.
- d. For each play-off and final, the host club shall:
 - (1) determine the number and size of the lawns; and
 - (2) appoint a referee.
- e. The winner of the Federation League shall represent the Federation in the Secretary's Shield in the following season.

14. OUTCOME AND ENTRIES (ADVANCED LEAGUE ONLY)

- a. After the final block positions for each of the divisions have been determined, the outcome of the league shall be decided as follows.
- (1) The team with the highest position in Division 1 shall be declared the winner of The Parkstone Trophy for that season.
 - (2) Under normal circumstances, in order to allocate teams to divisions for the following season, play-off matches shall be held between the team with the lowest position in each of Divisions 1 and 2 and the team with the highest position in each of Divisions 2 and 3. The "Home" clubs for these matches shall be the winners of Divisions 2 and 3, and the matches shall be staged at those venues. For each play-off match, the winning team shall play in the higher division and the losing team shall play in the lower division. However, the Committee may vary the number of teams promoted and relegated, but a winning team may not decline promotion.
- b. A new entrant to the League shall be assigned to Division 3.

15. MATTERS IN DISPUTE

The Committee shall have the power to resolve:

- any matter not covered by these rules;
- disputes over the interpretation of anything contained within these rules.

16. AMENDMENTS

These rules are subject to amendment at any General Meeting of the Federation by simple majority of those delegates present and eligible to vote.

APPENDIX 1

Step-by-step guide for arranging a League Match

STEPS	RELEVANT RULES
Before 1 February	
1. Once you have been notified of your fixture commitments you should contact your opponents and agree dates for the fixtures.	2, 3a, 3b & 3e
2. Notify the League Secretary of the dates agreed for your fixtures.	3a
As Soon As Possible	
3. Contact your opponents to agree team size.	5
4. The home club should then decide the match format and notify the away club. Where relevant they should also inform the away club of the size of lawns to be used.	6 & 7 See also Appendix 2
5. The home club should notify the away club of any time limits it needs to apply to make a certain match format viable.	8a(2&4) & 8b(2)
6. The away club shall decide time limits for games not covered by 5 above and shall notify the home team of these.	8a(1&3) & 8b(1)
On Match Day	
7. The team captains shall arrange the pairings of opponents for all games prior to the start of the match.	9
NOT LATER THAN 7 DAYS AFTER THE MATCH	
8. The home club shall inform the League Secretary of the match result and the full details of the games on the Association Croquet League Report Form, obtainable from the South West Federation website.	10 & 11

APPENDIX 2

POSSIBLE MATCH FORMATS

The following chart indicates combinations of Doubles (D) and Singles (S) games which will enable a result to be obtained for different numbers of available lawns.

Number of available lawns	ONE		TWO			THREE			FOUR OR MORE		
No. of players	am	pm	am	pm		am	pm		am	pm	
3	1D, 1S	3S*	1D, 1S	3S	3S	1D, 1S	3S	3S	1D, 1S	3S	3S
4	2D	1D, 2S*	2D	1D, 2S	4S	2D	1D, 2S	4S	2D	1D, 2S	4S
5			2D, 1S	1D, 3S		2D, 1S	1D, 3S	5S	2D, 1S	1D, 3S	5S
6			3D	2D, 2S		3D	2D, 2S	6S	3D	2D, 2S	6S
						2D, 2S	1D, 4S	6S	2D, 2S	1D, 4S	6S
						1D, 4S	6S		1D, 4S	6S	
7						3D, 1S	2D, 3S		3D, 1S	2D, 3S	
						2D, 3S	1D, 5S		2D, 3S	1D, 5S	
									3D, 1S	7S	
									1D, 5S	7S	
8						4D	3D, 2S		4D	3D, 2S	
						3D, 2S	2D, 4S		3D, 2S	2D, 4S	
									3D, 2S	8S	
									4D	1D, 6S	
									2D, 4S	1D, 6S	
									1D, 6S	8S	

NOTES:

1. There is no reason why you should not have even bigger teams if you have lawn space, balls and players available.
2. Many of the above formats, of necessity, involve double-banking. In 'B' League matches on half-size lawns double-banking is not feasible but 2 x 2-hour games can be played in a 4-hour session.
3. *These formats require 2 consecutive singles games to be played on the same lawn in the same session, unless triple-banking is used.

APPENDIX 3

FULL BISQUE GAMES – ALLOCATION OF BISQUES

All games in the 'B' League are to be played under the conditions of Full Bisque Handicap Play.

SINGLES

As all games will be played as Full Bisque using a Base Handicap of 11½, each player must first deduct 11½ from his/her CA or Club handicap to find the number of bisques for a full game. This is then reduced according to one of the CA Schedules of Bisque Allocation:

- 26-point games, on half-size lawns, use the Schedule for games played on half-size lawns;
- 14-point games, on full-size lawns, use the Schedule for 14-point games.

The following table is a quick reference indicating the number of bisques to be allocated in any **'B' League singles game**.

Player's CA or Club handicap	Allocation of bisques to this player in a 26-point game	Allocation of bisques to this player in a 14-point game
14 (play-off only)	1½	1½
16	3	2½
18	4	3½
20	5½	4½
22	6½	5½
24	8	6½

NB **Both** players are given bisques in accordance with the above table.

DOUBLES

The same procedure as for Singles is used, except that the initial bisque allocation for each side is half the difference between the side's aggregate handicap and twice the Base Handicap (i.e. 23).

The following table is a quick reference indicating the number of bisques to be allocated in any **'B' League doubles game**.

Side's aggregate handicap	Allocation of bisques to this side in a 26-point game	Allocation of bisques to this side in a 14-point game
28 (play-off only)	1½	1½
30 (play-off only)	2	2
32	3	2½
34	3½	3
36	4	3½
38	4½	4
40	5½	4½
42	6	5
44	6½	5½
46	7	6
48	8	6½

NB **Both** sides are given bisques in accordance with the above table.

APPENDIX 4

CA TOURNAMENT REGULATION T3 (T2 is included for clarity as it is referred to in T3 — full Tournament Regulations are available on the CA website).

T2 Expiry of Time Limit

a. GENERAL PROCEDURE.

1. When a time limit has been imposed on a game, the players should arrange for an independent person or, failing that, one of themselves to be responsible for announcing audibly that the time limit has been reached.
2. 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, in the last stroke of his turn:
 - A. strikes a ball;
 - B. commits a fault;
 - C. starts a stroke in which the mallet misses or does not reach the ball; or
 - D. plays the stroke by declaring that he will leave his ball where it lies, which he may do only after any balls moved by previous strokes have come to rest and any balls in hand have been placed in lawful positions.
3. After time has expired, play continues for an extension period in which the striker completes his turn and the adversary plays one subsequent turn.
4. At the end of the extension period, the side that has scored the greater number of points is the winner. If each side has scored the same number of points, play again continues and the side for which the next point is scored is the winner (any points scored subsequently in the stroke are ignored).

b. HANDICAP GAMES.

1. No half-bisque or bisque may be played at the end of either of the two turns which comprise the extension period. If play continues after the end of the extension period, under (a)(4) above, any half-bisque or bisque may then be played.
2. For the purpose of this Regulation, a half-bisque or bisque is played when the first stroke of that turn is played. Accordingly, if a player indicates that he intends to play a half-bisque or bisque but does not play its first stroke before time is called, the half-bisque or bisque is deemed not to have been played and the adversary's turn is deemed to have begun before time was called.

- c. **RESTORATION OR ADJUSTMENT OF TIME.** This Regulation is subject to AC Law 53(g)(2) and Regulation R2(c)(3).

T3 Limit on Number of Turns

- a. **APPLICABILITY.** As an alternative to a one-hour time limit imposed under Regulation T1(b), or to the final hour of a time limit imposed under Regulation T1(a), the Manager may limit instead the number of further turns to twelve (exclusive of any bisque turns) to be played by each side. The general procedure is as described in Regulation T2(a), with the following provisions.
- b. **START.** The additional turns shall start after the end of the extension period defined in Regulation T2(a)(3). Regulation T2(b) shall not apply.
- c. **END.** If the game has not ended before these turns are completed, the side that has scored the greater number of points is the winner. If each side has scored the same number of points, play again continues and the side for which the next point is scored is the winner (any points scored subsequently in the stroke are ignored).