



CCC Rules for 9-Wicket Croquet

Based on the United States Croquet Association–Rules of 9Wicket Croquet
(www.croquetamerica.com) and USCA 9-Wicket Group-Home of Backyard
Croquet (www.9wicketcroquet.com)

04/30/2011

Backyard Croquet: Basic Rules

What You Need to Play

The Court

Diagram 1

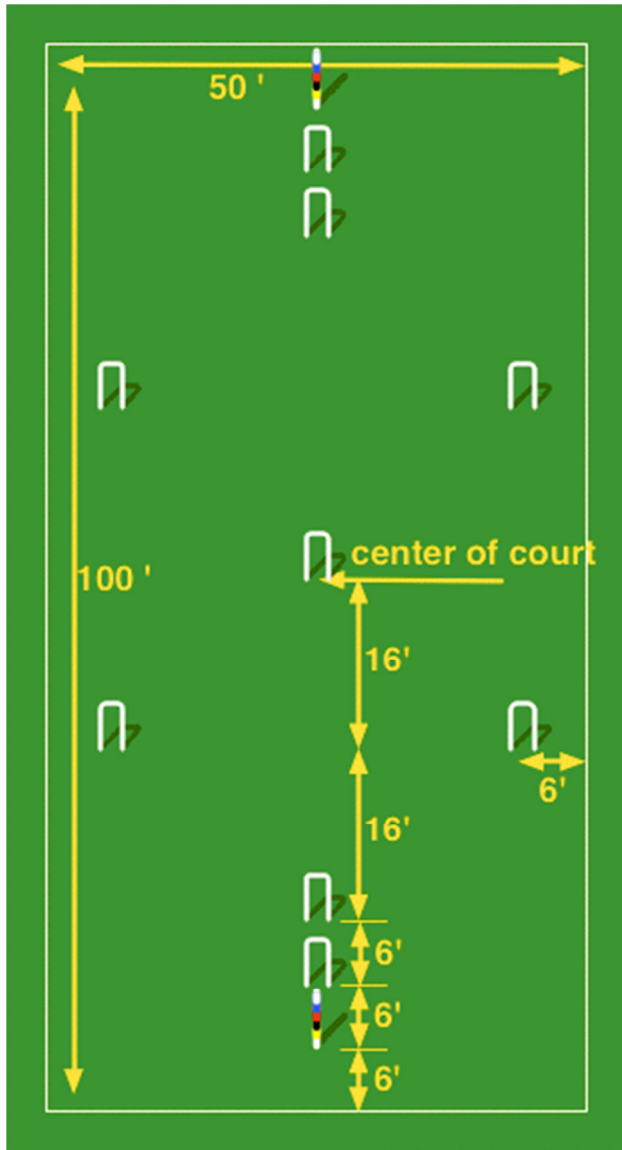
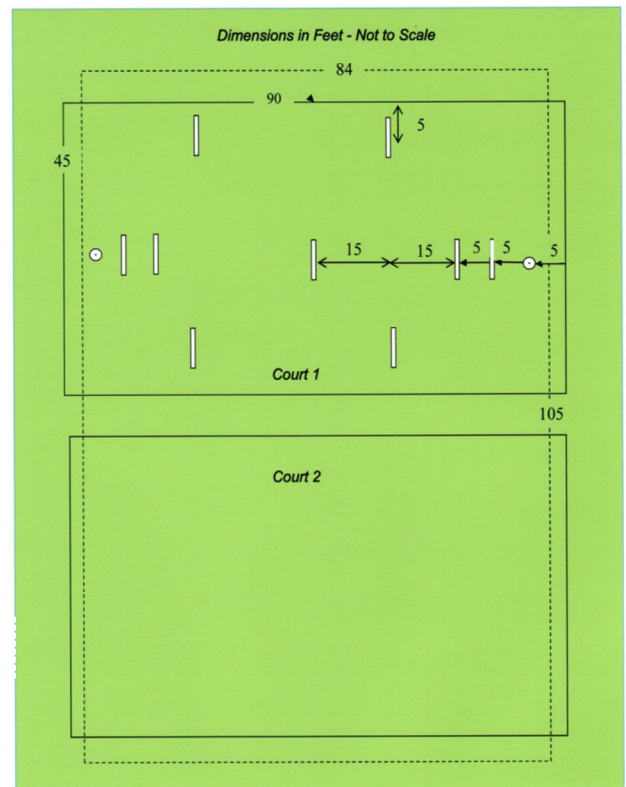


Diagram 1A

Conversion of a 6-Wicket Lawn Court to Two 9-Wicket Lawn Courts



A 9-Wicket croquet court doesn't have to be a perfectly manicured lawn, but short grass provides the best playing surface. A full-size court is a rectangle, 100 feet long by 50 feet wide. You can adjust the size and shape of the court to fit the available space.

Most of the CCC lawn courts are slightly larger than a full sized 6-wicket lawn court (105 X 84 feet) Accordingly the lawn court can be divided into two 9-wicket lawn courts with an overall dimension of 90 feet long by 45 wide as illustrated in Diagram 1A. (The resultant dimensions shown in Diagram 1 are changed in Diagram 1A as follows: 6 to 5 and 16 to 15)

The Wickets and Stakes

The nine wickets and two stakes are arranged in a double-diamond pattern as shown in the diagram. If you are playing on a smaller court, the distances shown should be scaled down in proportion to the length and width of the court. The wickets should be firmly planted in the ground, and the width of the wickets should be uniform throughout the court.

The Balls

For a two- or four-player, two-sided game, you need four balls. The colors used are blue, red, black, and yellow. One side (with one or two players) plays with blue and black, and the other with red and yellow.

The Mallets

Each player uses a mallet. Only the striking (end) face may be used to strike a ball.

Optional Accessories

Colored clips or clothespins may be used to mark the next wicket a ball must go through. The clip is picked up when a wicket is scored, then placed on the ball's next wicket at the end of the turn.

Object of the Game

The object of the game is to advance the balls through the course by hitting them with a mallet, scoring a point for each wicket and stake made in the correct order and direction. The winner is the first side to score the 14 wicket points and 2 stake points for each of its balls, unless the game is played to a time limit and time runs out before that happens, in which case the team with the most points at the end of the time period wins.

The players take turns, and only one plays at a time. At the beginning of a turn the player (called the "striker") has one shot. After that shot the turn ends, unless a bonus shot is earned by scoring a wicket or stake or by hitting another ball. The turn ends when the player has no more bonus shots to play or has finished the course by scoring the finishing stake. The striker may directly hit with the mallet only the ball he or she is playing in that turn (the "striker ball").

Shots

Turns

If a player plays out of turn, there is no penalty. Any ball moved during the out-of-turn play is replaced to its position prior to the error and play recommences properly. If an out of turn is initially condoned (not discovered) but then later discovered, only the last ball played out of turn is replaced and the correct ball then proceeds. Example: if red plays, then blue plays, then yellow plays, yellow is replaced, and then red plays correctly.

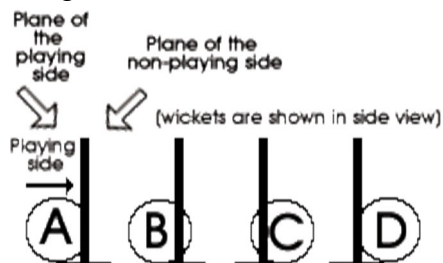
If the striker takes a swing at his/her ball and misses entirely, the miss counts as a shot and the turn ends, unless the striker had a second “bonus” shot.

If the striker’s mallet accidentally hits another ball other than the striker ball, the shot must be replayed, but with no loss of turn.

Scoring Wicket and Stake Points

Each ball can score wicket and stake points for its side only by going through a wicket or hitting a stake in the proper order and direction. Going through a wicket out of order or in the wrong direction is not counted as a point gained or lost. A ball caused to score its wicket or stake during another ball’s turn earns the point for its side, but no bonus shot is earned as a result.

Diagram 3



Scoring a wicket: A has not started scoring the wicket; B has started scoring the wicket. C has not finished scoring the wicket; D has finished scoring the wicket.

A ball scores a wicket point only if it comes to rest clear of the playing side of the wicket. If a ball passes through a wicket but rolls back, it has not scored the wicket. An easy way to determine if a ball has cleared a wicket is to run the side of the mallet head down the plane of the playing side of the wicket. If the mallet head touches the ball on the way down, it has not cleared the wicket; if the mallet head does not touch the ball, it has cleared the wicket!

Bonus Shots

The striker earns one bonus shot if the striker ball scores a wicket or hits the turning stake. The striker earns two bonus shots if the striker ball hits another ball (a “roquet”). However, the maximum number of bonus shots earned by a striker is two; there is never a time when a striker is allowed three shots. (See the “Exceptions” section below for examples.)

If two bonus shots are scored by striking another ball, the first of these two shots may be taken in any of four ways:

From a mallet-head distance or less away from the ball that was hit (“taking a mallet-head”).

From a position in contact with the ball that was hit, with the striker ball held steady by the striker’s foot or hand (a “foot shot” or “hand shot”).

From a position in contact with the ball that was hit, with the striker ball not held by foot or hand (a “croquet shot”).

From where the striker ball stopped after the roquet.

The second bonus shot after a roquet is an ordinary shot played from where the striker ball came to rest, called a “continuation shot”.

Bonus shots may not be accumulated. Upon earning a bonus shot by scoring a wicket, hitting the turning stake or roqueting another ball, any bonus shot previously earned is forfeited. For example, if a ball roquets a ball and in that same stroke the striker ball hits another ball, the second ball hit is not a roquet and remains where it comes to rest (with no deadness incurred on that ball).

EXCEPTIONS: Two extra shots are earned when the striker ball scores two wickets in one shot. If the ball also hits the turning stake after scoring two wickets, two strokes are earned, not three. Conversely, if the striker ball scores the seventh wicket and hits the turning stake in the same shot, it earns two shots. After the striker ball roquets another ball, it does not earn any extra shots for hitting it again in the same turn before scoring the next wicket in order. However, there is no penalty for hitting the ball again.

Wicket and Roquet

When the striker ball scores a wicket and then in the same shot hits another ball, only the wicket counts and the striker has earned only the one extra shot for scoring the wicket. The striker may then roquet any ball to earn two extra shots. When the striker ball roquets another ball and then goes through a wicket, the wicket has not been scored but the striker earns two extra shots for the roquet.

The Boundaries

Whenever any part of a ball crosses a boundary, it is brought inbounds and placed one mallet length (or 36 inches) into the court. The ball should be placed 90 degrees inbounds and perpendicular to the line and not diagonally from the line. (Exception: When the striker ball has just roqueted (hit) another ball, the striker may choose to place it in contact with or up to a mallet-head from the ball that was roqueted.) All balls are also immediately brought in a mallet length from the boundary when they are less than that distance from the boundary, except for the striker's ball when the striker has an extra shot.

On a smaller court, the distance from the boundary for placing balls is reduced to nine (9) inches (Challenging Option 3), but whatever the distance chosen, balls must be brought in the full distance from the boundary.

If more than one ball crosses the boundary on the same spot, the striker may measure any ball inbounds first and then place the other ball(s) a mallet-head's length away from it on either side.

Rover Balls

After a ball scores all of the wickets in the course, its player may choose to keep it in the game as a "rover" to help advance that side's remaining balls and to prevent the opposing side from advancing. During the rover balls turn, it may hit any other ball only once per turn, gaining extra shots accordingly, but it does not earn any extra shots or wicket points for running a wicket.

Any player may put a rover ball out of the game by causing it to hit the finishing stake with a roquet, croquet or foot shot. The rover's side earns the point for the stake, and the order of play continues without the staked-out ball.

Time Limit Game

If time does not permit a game to be played to the stake, a time limit may be set beforehand. When the time limit is reached, the ball in play is in its last turn, and the remaining balls in the game are entitled to one turn each. If neither side has won by staking out both balls at the end of this final round of turns, the winner is the side having scored the most points. In case of a tie, play continues in full rotations, beginning with the ball that was in play at the end of the time limit, until one side stakes out or has more points at the end of a full round of turns. If time does not permit to have last turns for each ball, the game can end with no ball having a last turn. This is known as "sudden stop". If the score is tied in the "sudden stop" format, the ball closest to its contested wicket gets an extra point for the win. In a time limit game, players must play expeditiously and teams should not take excessive amounts of time in discussions.

The preceding Rules will be used to introduce 9-Wicket Croquet to CCC members. CCC tournaments and event may incorporate any of the USCA Challenging Options provided below. Normally the Challenging Options that are to be included will be decided by the tournament (event) director and communicated to the CCC Clubs prior to the event.

Challenging Options

Any combination of options (none to all) may be chosen

Option 1. Using Deadness

Deadness occurs after a roquet is made and the striker is unable to score his/her wicket. The consequences are that the striker is not allowed to roquet the ball(s) again until scoring the wicket. Once the wicket is scored, the striker becomes 'alive' and is able to roquet the ball(s) again. If a striker roquets a ball he/she is dead on, all balls are replaced to their positions before the shot, and the turn is over. Deadness carries over from turn to turn.

Option 1a. Special Relief of Deadness

A side may clear one of its balls of deadness when the opponent makes the first wicket after the turning stake (the 8th wicket) so long as that side is behind in points (not tied).

Option 2. Out of Bounds Play

A) If a striker croquets any ball (including the striker's) over the boundary, the turn ends with the boundary balls measured in bounds. Other balls remain where they come to rest on the court.

B) If a striker roquets a ball out of bounds, the turn is over with no deadness incurred (if Option 1 is in effect). All balls remain where they come to rest with boundary balls measured in.

C) If a striker hits his/her ball over the boundary, the turn ends with the ball measured in. If a striker roquets a ball that does not go out of bounds but the striker ball goes out of bounds, the turn is not over but the striker must place his/her ball in contact with the roqueted ball or put it one mallet head's length or up to 9 inches away from it and then receives two shots.

Option 3. Measuring Balls in from the Boundary

The striker shall measure all balls in from the boundary a mallet-head length instead of a full mallet length. A mallet head is normally nine inches. A head that is longer than nine inches should have a nine inch mark on it.

Option 4. Restriction from Roqueting Partner Ball for Bonus Strokes

The striker is not allowed to roquet his/her partner ball to gain bonus strokes.

Option 5. Removal of Sequence of Play (Blue, Red, Black, and Yellow)

The striker may choose to play any of his/her side's balls at the beginning of the turn, but must continue play with that ball for the duration of the turn. For instance, blue could be played in consecutive turns. However, the players (in doubles and triples) must play in order (i.e., Mary, John, Mary, John, etc.).

Option 6. Poison

A poison ball is one that has scored all the wickets but hasn't hit the finishing stake. A poison ball may hit any opponent ball and have it removed from the game. Conversely, if an opponent ball hits a poison ball, the poison ball is removed from the game. If a poison ball fully passes through any wicket in any direction, it is removed from the game. A poison ball does not earn bonus shots for hitting other balls.

Option 7. Rover Play

A rover may hit all balls once per turn; however, once the rover is dead on a ball(s), it must go through any wicket in any direction to clear its deadness on that ball(s). The rover does not get an additional (bonus) shot after going through this clearing wicket.

Option 8. Blocking

If an opponent causes the striker ball to be blocked by a wicket or stake (wired) when the striker wishes to shoot at a ball it is alive on, the striker may move his/her ball a mallet head's length or 9 inches in any direction from its wired position to enable an open shot on that ball. The striker is not obligated to shoot at a ball from this new position and may take any shot he/she wishes. This optional rule does not apply if the striker's side placed the striker ball in its current position, only if the opponent placed it there.

Option 9. Starting Deadness

Used in conjunction with Option 1 regarding deadness, all balls are dead on each other until both the striker ball and the ball to be roqueted have both cleared a certain wicket (e.g. the first, second or third wicket, depending on the size and lay-out of the court).

Option 10. Blocked at a Wicket by a Dead Ball

If an opponent causes a ball to be blocked from scoring its wicket by a dead ball(s) for two consecutive turns, the blocked ball becomes alive on the blocking ball(s).

The opponent must be responsible for the block, not the side claiming a block. A block must be confirmed by the blocking side in order to be counted as a block, in order to avoid disputes. In addition, the proposed wicket shot that is claimed to be blocked must be possible to make to count as a block.