EACF Golf Croquet Handicap League Rules – 2026

1. General
   a. All games shall be played under the current CqE-approved Laws of Golf Croquet (NB: new 6th Edition, February 2022) unless specifically modified below.
   b. The start time of the match should be 10.00 am, unless otherwise agreed by team captains.
   c. Any number of courts may be used: but note that the format differs substantially depending on the number available. Standard Courts should be used wherever possible, and all courts must be rectangular, at least ¾ size for both width and length, and at least 2/3 full size by area. All courts should be in adequate condition such that there is a possibility of accurate positioning, and of hitting a ball from one corner of the court to the opposite corner. Court assignments should be equably spread across all available courts.
   d. Where the home club has two or more courts available, then each team shall consist of four players, not necessarily the same players each match. The match shall consist of 2 doubles games and 16 singles games. Each Team member will play 1 doubles game and 4 singles games. Match total 18 games.
   e. The players shall be listed in order, first by lowest handicap and then by highest index. Doubles pairings should be declared prior to start of play. The doubles pairs with the first listed player on each side shall play each other.
   f. A team scores 2 points for a match win and 1 point for a draw.
   g. Where the home club has only one court, then each team shall consist of three players, not necessarily the same players each match. The players shall be listed in order, first by lowest handicap and then by highest index. Doubles pairings shall be the first two listed players.
   h. The match shall consist of 1 doubles games and 9 singles games. The first two listed players in each Team will play 1 doubles game and 3 singles games; the third listed players will play 3 singles games. Match total 10 games. A team scores 2 points for a match win and 1 point for a draw.
   i. Games shall be first-to-7-hoop games with a time limit, excluding stoppages, of not less than 50 minutes plus an extension period of eight further strokes. If scores are tied after the extension period the game continues until one player scores a further hoop point, at which point the result stands. A tied game is not an acceptable result.
   j. Substitutes in matches shall be allowed only by prior agreement between the Team Captains.
   k. No player may play for more than one team in a season. In the event of a violation, all illegal games won by that player shall be forfeit to the opponent with a 0-0 hoop score; all illegal games lost by that player remain valid.
   l. For those Clubs with two teams in the same region, the matches between those teams must be played as the first fixture of the season, otherwise the result of that game will be void.
   m. Teams may wear coloured attire, provided all team members (other than those wearing white) wear the same design. [Comment: This is in line with CqE Tournament Regulation P4(d)(2).]

2. Handicaps
   a. Players must have a valid handicap and play off their current handicap on the day of the match. Handicap range allowed is 12-, i.e. 12 or less with no minimum, unless a player has moved to 14 or 16 as a result of the automatic handicapping system. No more than 1 player may have a handicap of 2 or less. [Comment: This is our third attempt to find a handicap range that (most) people are happy with, and is now to be viewed as the standard following two successful seasons using it.]
   b. Teams of four playing at a home club with two or more courts shall have a minimum aggregate handicap of 20. Teams of three playing at a home club with a single court shall have a minimum aggregate handicap of 15.
   c. Subject to the application of Rule 2a above, where a player's handicap changes less than a week before a match, that player and/or team shall remain eligible in accordance with CqE Tournament Regulations.
   d. Handicap Cards should be handed to opposing Team Captain before the start of play. All handicap cards must be up to date and verified correct by the Team Captain, Club handicapper or Official CqE Handicapper. If a player forgets their card, they should orally declare their handicap, but must provide a copy of the card to the opposing Captain and/or League Manager within 24 hours of the match. If a player's handicap turns out to be lower than that declared on the day, and the change would have been material in establishing eligibility for the individual or the team, then all illegal games won by that player shall be forfeit to the opponent with a 0-0 hoop score; all illegal games lost by that player remain valid. [Comment: Entry to the league is handicap-limited for individuals and/or teams. Eligibility is set out in rule 2(a) above.]
   e. Subject to 2.c, if a team arrives for a match with handicaps outside the allowed range, the following procedure shall be used as a sanction. First, the offending team is listed in handicap order. Then starting with the lowest handicap player, declare that player illegal and calculate the average handicap of the remaining players, and repeat until the average handicap of the remaining legal players is at least 5. Then play the whole match using the standard format and current handicaps, but with all games played by illegal players deemed forfeit with a walk-over to the opponents for the purposes of the league. Handicap cards may still be updated with the actual scores of the forfeited games.

3. Results
   a. The home Team Captain should submit to the League Manager a copy of the completed score-sheet within 48 hours. [Comment: The score sheet must show the club names, location, date, full names of all players, handicaps, and all results. Email is preferred.]
   b. Matches not played by the published cut-off date of the round will be declared void and no points awarded unless a later date has been agreed beforehand by the League Manager. If a team cancels a match unilaterally less than 5 clear days before a scheduled match, then that team forfeits its points and the non-offending team shall be awarded the match and 2 points.
   c. In the case of a tie on points between two or more teams in an Area Group, then the winner will be determined by net games in all matches, then by net hoops; and then by other means determined by the Manager.

4. No-shows and retirements (See the GC league rules commentary for further explanation and clarification.)
   a. If one player on each side fails to turn up then the match is played according to rules 1.g and 1.h for a 3-a-side match. Otherwise:
   b. If a player fails to turn up for an agreed match then the remaining players in that team are listed in handicap order starting from position 1. Then (i) in each singles game with a missing player the opponent receives a walk-over with a nominal 7-3.5 hoop score; and (ii) in each doubles game with one missing player the game is played with three balls in the normal sequence and the missing player's ball remaining unplayed off the court.
   c. If a player has to retire in the middle of a game because of illness or injury then subject to 4.d, the retiree's hoop score at that point is retained and the opponent is deemed to win all the remaining hoops and the game. Any further games the retiree is due to play are awarded to the opposing team with a hoop score of 0–0.
   d. The two team captains may at their discretion agree to waive rule 4.c and treat the unfinished and/or unplayed games as not played instead.

5. Disputes: In the event of a dispute, the League Manager's decision shall be final.

Geoff Johnson
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