

# Taking Extra Strokes in Golf Croquet (GC)

## Strategies:

- (a) **use extra strokes to win hoops**, not just to prevent your opponent doing so
- (b) don't waste extra strokes but **use them early** to keep up/get ahead of your opponent. This keeps pressure on oppo, and encourages mistakes/bad shots, which are effectively additional extra strokes...
- (c) if possible, **keep one back as a threat** (but don't lose a game, with unused extra strokes)
- (d) **be patient** – you won't stop your opponent getting some hoops [see (a) above]
- (e) **plan to use your extra strokes** – sometimes you have to react to what you've just done/not done, but it is usually better to decide beforehand to use an extra stroke, so that you can play your first shot accordingly to then clear or jawse.

## Tactics (in rough order of priority):

- 1 after running a hoop, immediately take an extra stroke to be **first to the next hoop** (especially if the next hoop is H2, H3, H4, H8, H9, H10 or H13. This can work on the other hoops, but consider if your oppo is likely to clear since these hoops are closer). Check for oppo offside balls before taking the extra stroke...
- 2 **jawse the hoop**, providing that your opponent isn't able to clear your ball or isn't in position or capable of jumping over your ball. This is better on odd numbered hoops, since you will get first go at the next hoop. Don't go through the hoop – its easier to jawse from an angle rather than from straight ahead. Practice!
- 3 **take position in front** of the hoop - a very good option if the opponents balls are a long way away. However, if the opponent's next ball to play is close, or his other ball is close and you are unlikely to be able to clear it, using an extra stroke to take position is a waste.
- 4 **clear the opponent's next ball to play** is a good idea if your partner ball is in position to run the hoop, and you can clear the opponent to a position from which they are unlikely to clear you. Clearing your opponent is also worth doing if you can play a stop shot and retain hoop running position yourself
- 5 **clear both the opponent's balls** – use your first turn to clear their next ball to play, then use an extra stroke to also clear their second ball (and ideally be in a position to run the hoop!). This gives you control of the hoop (if you clear far enough)
- 6 **block/stymie the opponent's next ball to play** - this is often the best line against a very strong opponent. If you manage to get your ball a couple of millimetres away from the opponent's ball, blocking or even hampering their shot, it is very difficult for them to do anything.
- 7 **promote your partner in front of the hoop**. This can be very strong if the ball next to play is a long way away or alternatively if you have a lot of extra strokes and can see an easy opportunity to promote partner in front then take a second extra stroke and clear the next ball to play a long way away or block it.
- 8 **hit to behind the hoop & clear your opponent from the jaws**. This is defensive, but it is necessary if your opponent already has 6 hoops.

## Remember:

- **calculate extra strokes using GC Rule 19.2 (Singles) or 19.3 (Doubles)**
- you **use an extra stroke to hit the same ball that you last used** (ie two shots in a row with that ball, with the extra stroke second). You can use more than one extra stroke in a row, but that is very inefficient - avoid if at all possible
- the aim is for each extra stroke to get you a hoop, but you will inevitably stuff some up – **accept this & don't panic!**
- you **cannot score a hoop for your side** while playing an extra stroke
  - if you hit one of your balls through, the balls stay where they end up, but no hoop is scored (ie you “run” the hoop but don't score it)
  - however if you hit an opponent ball through, they do score the hoop
- **plan ahead** – sometimes you have to react to what you've just done/not done, but it is usually better to decide before hand to use an extra stroke to maximum effect. Don't try to clear, miss and then have to use the extra stroke from wherever you happen to have ended up....
- you can decide to take an extra stroke until the moment that your opponent hits their next ball, but it is very **bad etiquette** to wait that long (and you may get an official warning under Rule 16)
- **stop play** if you want to consider whether to use an extra stroke. Many opponents play on quickly, and may not realise that you are considering an extra stroke, so be clear & assertive
- you can **change your mind** after announcing that you are using an extra stroke (before playing it), but once you announce that you will not use one, that is final
- extra strokes are intended to **allow you to play a better game**. If you don't place well, an extra stroke allows you to correct to a better position. If you can't clear from distance, an extra stroke allows you to roll up beside the target ball and then hit it away (using 2 shots instead of a single long distance shot)
- remember “**first ball in, second ball clears**” **also works using extra strokes** – if oppo's yellow ball can run the hoop, but their red cannot, you are likely to be better to put your blue into a hoop running position instead of clearing yellow immediately. Then use black to clear yellow using an extra stroke – this works even if red has just hit you the length of the court, provided you can return close enough to yellow. The goal is to have a runner ready, after you clear the ball that plays before it, so the extra stroke wins you the hoop....
- after a wrong ball you can only play an extra stroke if oppo decides to replace & replay. If they ball swap, you can't take an extra stroke.
- if a player decides to play an extra stroke after they have faulted, all balls must be replaced after the fault. Once balls are replaced, the striker cannot then decide not to play the extra stroke.
- there are exceptions to every rule (except the 2 immediately above)...

## References:

- <http://clarkecroquet.com/login/index.php>  
(you need to register on this website, but it's free & excellent value for both GC & AC)
- <http://www.croquetvic.asn.au/clubs/monash/CoachingNotesJV5.pdf>

# Defending Against Extra Strokes (GC)

## Strategies:

- (a) **play your game** - they have been given extra strokes to reach your level, so play well and it will be an even contest. The corollary is – when you lose a handicap game – be honest in examining whether you played as well as you could (it is probably not their extra strokes that made the difference);
- (b) **don't give up** – you may not be playing well, and/or their careful use of extra strokes has put you behind, but they will run out of extra strokes eventually. You should then power back as the better player, so hang in there....

## Tactics:

- (a) **keep both your balls in front of the hoop** - an isolated ball is vulnerable to being cleared using an extra stroke. Having both your balls there makes it harder for them to secure the hoop, so resist chasing their ball(s) if that will pull one of your balls away from the hoop;
- (b) **play deep** – if they then use extra strokes on you, they will then be shooting for the hoop from further out than they are comfortable with. If they instead try and play inside you, you should be able to control them (but be wary of them using an extra stroke to approach & then jawse, while you are back from the hoop);
- (c) **jawse as often as possible** - this puts pressure on the opponent to waste extra strokes defending the hoop. They may get you out, but they are unlikely to follow you through and you will still be in front of the hoop. If they don't react, you get to head down to the next hoop first....
- (d) **take your chances and run hoops** (“attack GC”) – every hoop you win is one more towards your victory, and one less for oppo;
- (e) as in level games, **work on getting 2 hoops in a row**. Jawse, glance, or run hoops cleanly down to the next hoop....
- (f) note that **your stymies will be less effective**, since they can hit their blocked ball clear of your blocking ball, and then use an extra stroke to attack your other ball. However – since they can't score a hoop on an extra stroke – a stymie will cause any consequent extra stroke to be defensive, and they are likely to be hampered from getting to an ideal position from where to take the extra stroke.

Good luck!