

## Golf Croquet - Rules, Tips and Tactics No 7

### The Golden Hoop

It may seem strange to concentrate on the 13<sup>th</sup> and final hoop, but you have enjoyed a nip and tuck game and you want to win! The score is 6 -5 to your opponents. Apologies because this is a bit complicated, so please read and think, and try to follow it slowly.

Keep the top surface and faces of your mallet clean.

Hoop 5 or 12 is the hoop in the middle with the red top.

Hoop 13 is also hoop 3 or 10. You will play it from tennis court side.

If you are in a position to run hoop 12 with your next shot, consider tactics with your partner before he plays.

Your partner may be able to hit an opponent ball and send his own ball beyond halfway towards hoop 13, thereby gaining a lot of distance whilst remaining onside when you run the hoop.

**BUT BEWARE!**

A miss hit could put your opponent's ball into a position behind hoop 12 from where he could clear your ball from the hoop.

A miss hit could also send your opponent's ball beyond halfway towards hoop 13 where he would then be onside when you ran the hoop. If this should happen, you could deem instead of running the hoop at your turn, if it were safe to do so. In which case the opponent ball would have to come back to half way or less, in order to avoid an off-side penalty when you run the hoop at your next turn.

Before you run hoop 12 assess how hard you need to hit your ball to be sure to have a clear line to 13 and not be obstructed by the wires of hoop 12.

When playing towards hoop13:

DO NOT stop short of hoop 13 when trying to set up in front. It is better to go out of bounds beyond hoop 13 if you are in doubt. It is a long way and needs a firm shot.

DO NOT hit the back of hoop 13 when trying to set up in front. A wasted shot at this stage is likely to be fatal.

The advice below may be useful. I am sorry but I am unable to show the colours of the balls but the dotted lines show the shot described in the direction of the arrow.

**Don't leave a promotion**

When contesting hoop 12, at 6-5 up, it is vital to avoid leaving the opponent with the opportunity to promote themselves to hoop 13. Here Blue plays across to a point short of the halfway line but should have played much further across so that Red couldn't take advantage.

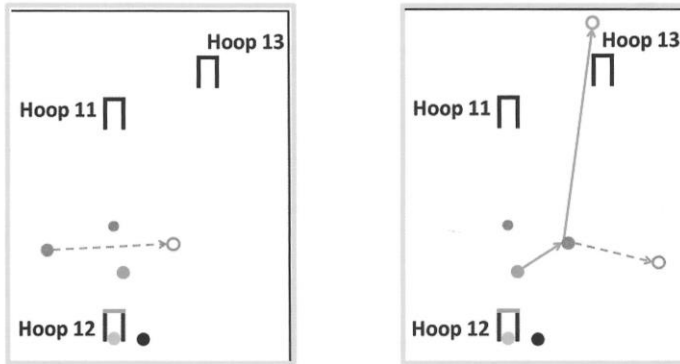


Figure 44: Leaving a ricochet promotion

To avoid this mistake, it's often a good policy in this situation to play off the east boundary, using the halfway marker as a guide. This leaves a good position for the approach to hoop 13 and cannot be exploited, or blocked, by the opponents.

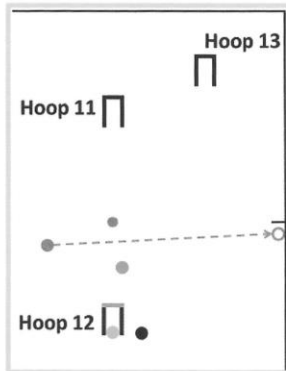


Figure 45: Play off the east boundary for safety

Next time "To deem or not to deem", that is the question.

Good luck! Graham