



Golf Croquet Course
Stage 2 – Intermediate

Stephen Custance-Baker

Version 3A

April 2025

About the course:

This Golf Croquet course, which is at three levels, is not a course on how to coach GC. Its purpose is to provide coaches and players with advice, guidance and material to help the learning process.

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The author would appreciate feedback on the content or recommendations on additional material required.

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1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose

1. This course is aimed at Golf Croquet players who are familiar with the basics of the game and wish to improve their stroke play and tactics. It is addressed to the player but is also intended to act as a guide for coaches.
2. The discussion of the Wrong Ball rule has been updated to correspond to Edition 6 (2022) of the GC Rules.

1.2 Terminology

3. In this course, the abbreviations SB, PB, OB1 and OB2 refer to Striker's Ball (the next ball in sequence after the one just played), Partner's Ball, Opponent's Ball (next to play) and Opponent's Ball (just played).

4. Terms

Declare: (The new name for 'deem'). Stating that your stroke has been played, without actually striking the ball.

Jawsing: Deliberately getting a ball to stop in the jaws of a hoop.

Jump: Getting the ball to rise into the air to pass over another ball (or obstacle).

There are several shots in which the striker's ball is deliberately played to hit another ball. The name used for the shot depends on its purpose:

Bombard: Hitting your ball onto another so that it strikes a third ball.

Clearance: Removing an opponent's ball from its current position.

Peel: Hitting another ball through the next hoop in order.

Ricochet: Hitting another ball so that SB travels to a particular position.

Rush: Hitting another ball into a specific position, e.g. hitting PB in front of the next hoop.

Split Shot: Hitting another ball so that both travel to specific positions.

Stop Shot: Hitting another ball a long way whilst the striker ball stays near the impact position.

5. Croquet is one of the few sports played equally by men and women and any references in this manual to 'he', 'him' and 'his' should be taken to imply 'she', 'her' and 'hers'.

1.3 Previous Courses

6. This coaching course follows on from the TDCC GC Stage 1 Course for Beginners, which covered the topics of:

i. Part 1 The Basics

- Hoop order
- Basics of the game
- Stance and grip
- The swing and follow-through
- Stalking
- Hoop approach
- Hoop running
- The basic rules
- Handicaps, Advantage and Extra Strokes

ii. Part 2 Shot Types

- Clearance shots
- Stop-shots
- Blocking shots
- Split shots

iii. Part 3 Basic Etiquette

- Noise
- Pace of Play
- Positioning
- Double-banking
- Self-refereeing

iv. Part 4 Thinking Ahead

- Tactical Planning
- Partner Play

v. Part 5 Exercises

- Skills
- Tactics

7. A subsequent course for Advanced GC players looks at more difficult shots and tactics.

2 Using Extra Strokes

2.1 Handicap Golf Croquet

8. Handicap systems exist so that players of different levels of ability can enjoy a game together with an equal chance of winning. Analysis of competition results has shown that this is true for a wide range of handicap differences.
9. There are two recognised systems for playing handicap GC: Extra Strokes of Advantage. This section concentrates on the Extra Strokes system; it has been in use for many years and has proved to be successful.
10. The more recent development, Advantage, is still in the process of being tested and some of its parameters are not yet settled. Its principle is simply to give the weaker player a head start of a number of hoops. The actual start scores are derived from a look-up matrix for all possible combinations of handicaps from -6 to 20.

2.2 Why you have extra strokes

11. Some players don't like extra strokes. They find them distracting and either fail to use them or use them up quickly in order to be rid of them. Doing this makes it much harder for them to win against a better player. With correct use of their 7 extra strokes an 11 should have a 50:50 chance of beating a 4.

2.3 How many extra strokes?

12. This is very straightforward in singles in the standard 13-point game; it is just the difference between the players' handicaps. Only one player will get extra strokes.
13. Doubles is rather more complicated but still based on simple rules.
 - i. The handicap of the highest handicapper is compared with that of the lower handicapper on the other side. The high handicapper receives half of the difference between their handicaps. If this is not a round number then it is rounded up.
 - ii. This is then repeated for the other two players.
14. For example, if a team with handicaps 6 and 12 are to play a team with handicaps 10 and 11 then:

The 12-handicap player will get 1 extra stroke as $(12-10)/2 = 1$

The 11-handicap player will get 3 extra strokes as $(11-6)/2 = 2\frac{1}{2}$, which is rounded up to 3
15. This means that, depending on the handicaps, there may be 0, 1 or 2 players with extra strokes. If 2 players receive extra strokes they

may be on the same or opposite sides, but the lower handicapper on a side will not receive extra strokes when the high handicapper does not.

16. The extra strokes may only be used by the player to whom they have been awarded and are therefore specific to a particular ball colour.
17. More than one extra stroke may be used in succession.

2.4 Time-limited games

18. You should make sure that any extra strokes are used before expiry of the available time, particularly if you are behind in the game. The rule is that no extra stroke may be used after the time is finished and during the play of the 8 additional turns (2 by each ball).
19. However, after that period any unused extra strokes may be used if the game has to continue to a finish. This means that if you are ahead or level and using an extra stroke is highly unlikely to gain you a point then save it. It may be the key to winning if the 8 additional turns do not create a result.

2.5 Notifying opponents before using an extra stroke

20. There are two times for notifying an opponent. In either case make sure that you have been heard.
 - i. Before taking your main turn, warn your opponent that you are thinking of using an extra stroke after the shot.
 - ii. Immediately after playing, forestall the opponent's shot by saying 'I'm thinking of taking an extra stroke'.
21. If you've said that you are going to take an extra stroke you can change your mind even at the last moment but if you have indicated that you are not going to take one, you can't then change.

2.6 When to use an extra stroke

2.6.1 Benefit of attack over defence

22. A purely defensive extra stroke, which removes an opponent from a hoop-running position, will not give you a point. It simply means that the opponent now has a 50:50 chance of the hoop instead of 100%. An attacking extra stroke, which puts you (or your partner) into a strong position to run a hoop, should give you an 80% chance.
23. A combination of defence and attack is often possible. Stop-shotting OB1 away from a hoop-running position to leave SB in position and wired from OB2 is good, if the clearance is sufficiently far.

24. Similarly, a clearance that puts your ball into the jaws is good but never forget that you can't score with your extra stroke so the shot into the jaws needs to be controlled. Also, remember that a good opponent can jump, so simply jawing a ball will not necessarily win you a hoop.

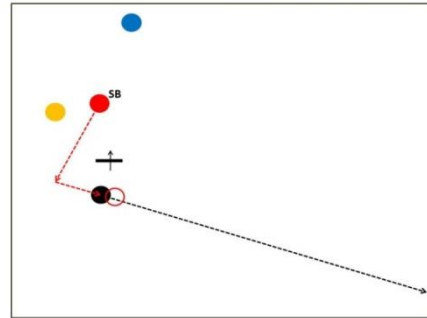


Figure 1 Extra stroke stop-shot

2.6.2 How your choice should depend on the number you have

25. Using one of your extra strokes to gain an early lead is good if you have a number available, perhaps 4 or more. The first player should therefore be prepared, if their opening shot is good enough, to take an extra stroke and put it into an easy hoop-running position.
26. This is a good reason for the player with extra strokes to play first when partnered with a player without extra strokes. Otherwise it is better for the low handicapper to play first.
27. If you only have one or two extra strokes then keep them for a moment when you can guarantee gaining a hoop. There is no point in improving a 50% hoop-running chance to 90%, wait until you can improve 0% to 90%.
28. However, it is very important not to let the time run out without using them because you are looking for the 'perfect' moment. You should therefore be aware of the passage of time in the game so that you can start to use them up before the bell goes. Remember that they cannot be used during the 8 turns after time.
29. If, in a time-limited game, it is required that the game continues until a winner emerges then play continues after the 8 additional turns until a 'golden hoop' is scored. In this case any unused extra strokes may now be used.

2.7 The Opening Shots

2.7.1 First player

30. If one of the partnership has several extra strokes then that player should play first with the intention of using an extra stroke immediately to set up an easy run through hoop 1.
31. If neither partner has many extra strokes then the lower handicapper should play first in order to get the best opening position.
32. In general it is better to hit slightly too far rather than too short. This

is because an opponent's ball that is set up in front of the hoop can be cleared into the open court rather than towards the much closer West boundary.

2.7.2 Second player

33. The best tactic for the second player depends on the position of OB2 (the ball that was played first).
34. If OB2 has been perfectly placed in front of the hoop but not actually in the jaws then:
 - i. With lots of extra strokes available, SB should be played just past OB2 to give a stop-shot across the lawn with an extra stroke, leaving SB in a hoop-running position.
 - ii. With few extra strokes available, SB should be played to clear OB2 with a hard shot. No great harm is done if SB misses as it will be on the West boundary.
35. If OB2 has been left with a chance of running the hoop but at an angle then send SB behind the hoop into a tactical position to clear the hoop if OB2 fails to get through.
36. If OB2 is actually in the jaws of the hoop then :
 - i. With lots of extra strokes available, SB could be played behind the hoop and clear OB2 to the South boundary. This is a defensive extra stroke and may not be worth using. However, if SB gets into a perfect position behind the hoop then it might also go through to a hoop-running position.
 - ii. With few extra strokes available SB should be played to the half-way line between hoops 1 and 2. It would be beneficial if it could be placed to obstruct OB2's run to hoop 2.
37. Similar logic applies for Hoops 3 and 9 where the approach is from a significant distance from the side.

2.7.3 Your choice should depend on your opponent's ability

38. If your opponent is a very low handicapper then you can expect to be cleared from a considerable distance and also to be jumped from an angled position. You should take this into account when deciding whether to use an extra stroke but remember that even very good players are capable of missing.

2.7.4 Using an extra stroke to benefit your partner

39. It is frequently overlooked that your doubles partner running the hoop is just as good for your team as doing it yourself.
40. Removing OB1 from a hoop-running (or jumping) position when PB is

well placed to score is an attacking and not a defensive shot. Just be sure that the clearance is either sufficiently far for safety or to such a position that PB is safe.

2.8 How to use an extra stroke

2.8.1 When to decide to use one

41. It is nearly always better to decide to use an extra stroke before playing your main turn. You can always change your mind if your main turn is either far better or far worse than you intended.
42. If you play a long shot down to a far hoop and finish close to it but to one side then take the extra stroke.
43. If you finish in a reasonable position, don't waste the extra stroke as you might run it next time anyway.
44. If you finish straight behind the hoop or far off to one side, don't waste the extra stroke because there is a good chance that you won't get into a perfect position.

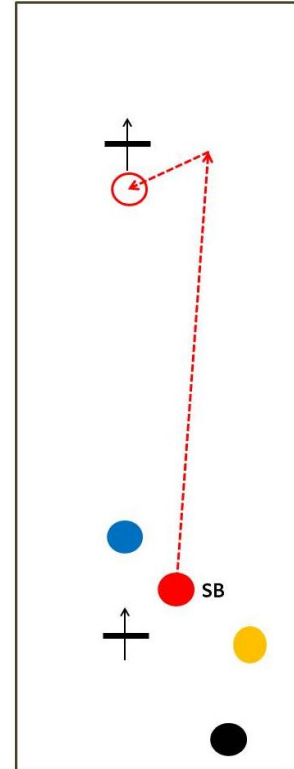


Figure 2 Using an extra stroke at a far hoop

45. If you leave your decision until after your main turn you will probably be playing from the wrong position or playing a purely defensive or hampered shot. In this example, decide before playing SB that you will take an extra stroke and tell the opponents.
46. When stop-shotting OB1 away from a hoop-running position to leave SB in position with PB in a position to protect it or to run the hoop, it is necessary to play SB carefully to ensure the best geometry for the stop shot.

47. If you play SB (red) across the hoop then the stop shot will only clear OB1 (black) towards the corner and it will also be difficult to stop SB in front of the hoop. If SB is hit to a position beside the hoop then the stop shot might ricochet onto PB (yellow) and remove it. Pick your spot and try to stop on it.

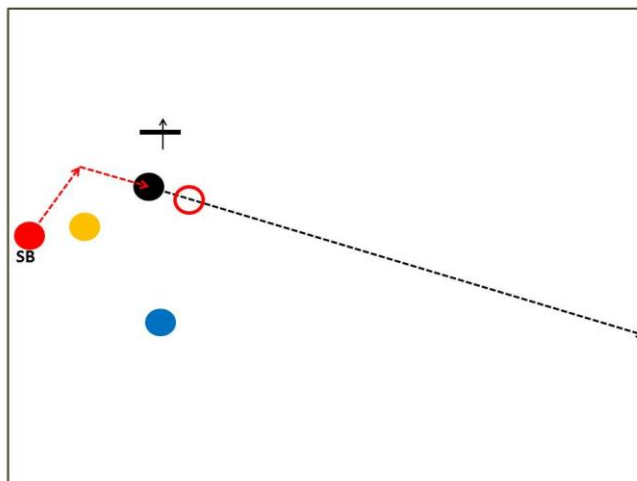


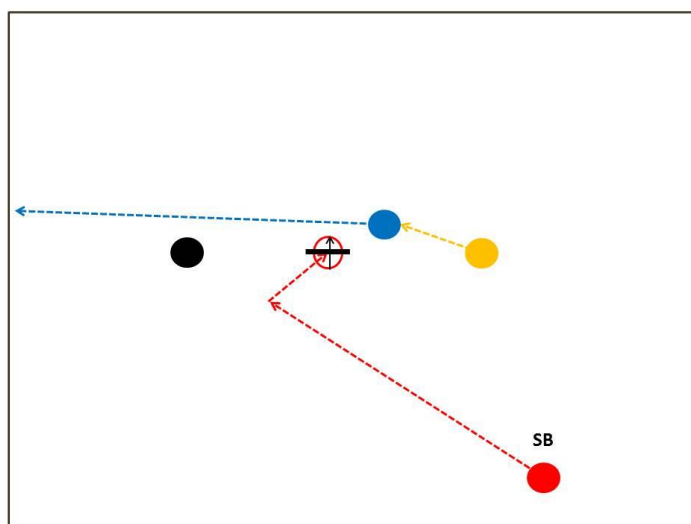
Figure 3 Maximising the benefit of your extra stroke

48. You can use multiple extra strokes so it may sometimes be necessary to accept that the first one failed and use another to re-position your ball. This should only be done if a true advantage can be gained

2.8.2 Positioning your ball in preparation for an extra stroke

49. Get SB into the jaws when OB1 is not in a position to jump or remove it and PB is in a position to protect it.
50. If you are planning to jaws the ball then you will find it much easier to do so from an angle rather than from straight in front of the hoop.

51. In this example, OB1 (black) is beside the hoop and would be unable to clear a ball in the jaws. OB2 (blue) could clear the ball but PB (yellow) plays before it and will send it to the side line.



52. Therefore play SB (red) towards the hoop and slightly to one side, giving a 30° to 50° approach angle. If this doesn't work then don't use the extra stroke.

Figure 4 Setting up an angled approach to the jaws

53. You should always take account of the positions of all of the other balls. In this example, if PB could be cleared by OB1 then there is no point in jawsing SB because it will simply be removed by OB2.

2.8.3 Using an extra stroke to support your partner

54. Because your partner's ball is just as important as your own, any shot you play that guarantees a hoop for your partner is an attacking shot.
55. Therefore to use an extra stroke to remove an opponent that threatens your partner's hoop run is a valid attacking move.

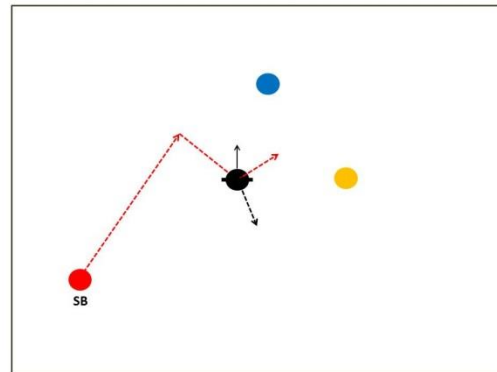
2.9 How to Waste Extra Strokes

56. There are many ways to waste an extra stroke, some being in the design of the turn itself, some in the shot played and some because of an oversight. Ways of wasting an extra stroke include:

- i. Saving an Extra Stroke for the 13th hoop and losing 5-7 as a result.
- ii. Running a hoop or peeling your partner through a hoop. A point cannot be scored for your side with an extra stroke.
- iii. Insufficient clearance

Knocking OB1 back through the hoop by only a small distance, so that it can probably run it anyway. If the setup shot is out of position, change your plan and don't use the extra stroke.

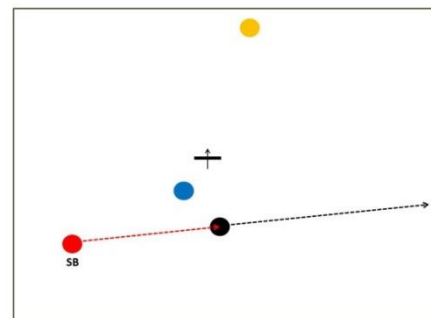
Figure 5 Insufficient clearance



- iv. Pointless clearance

Hitting OB1 away when OB2 is in a hoop-running position and PB can't clear it.

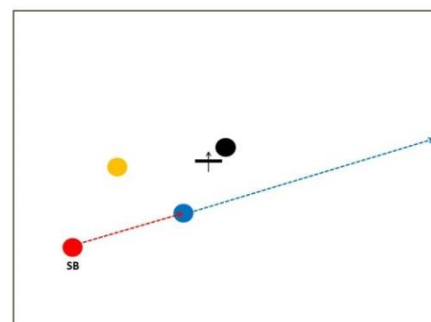
Figure 6 Pointless clearance



- v. Oversight

Hitting OB2 away when there was a good chance of PB doing it without using an extra stroke.

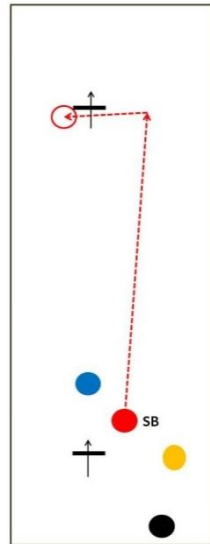
Figure 7 Oversight



vi. Poor shot

Attempting to lay up close to a hoop and over-running the approach.

Figure 8 Laying up too close to the hoop



3 Using the Half-Way Rule

3.1 Introduction

57. The Half-way Rule only applies when a ball has run a hoop. Until that moment a ball can be considered to be in an off-side position, but it is not actually off-side. This part of the course is about exploiting the rule to your own advantage.

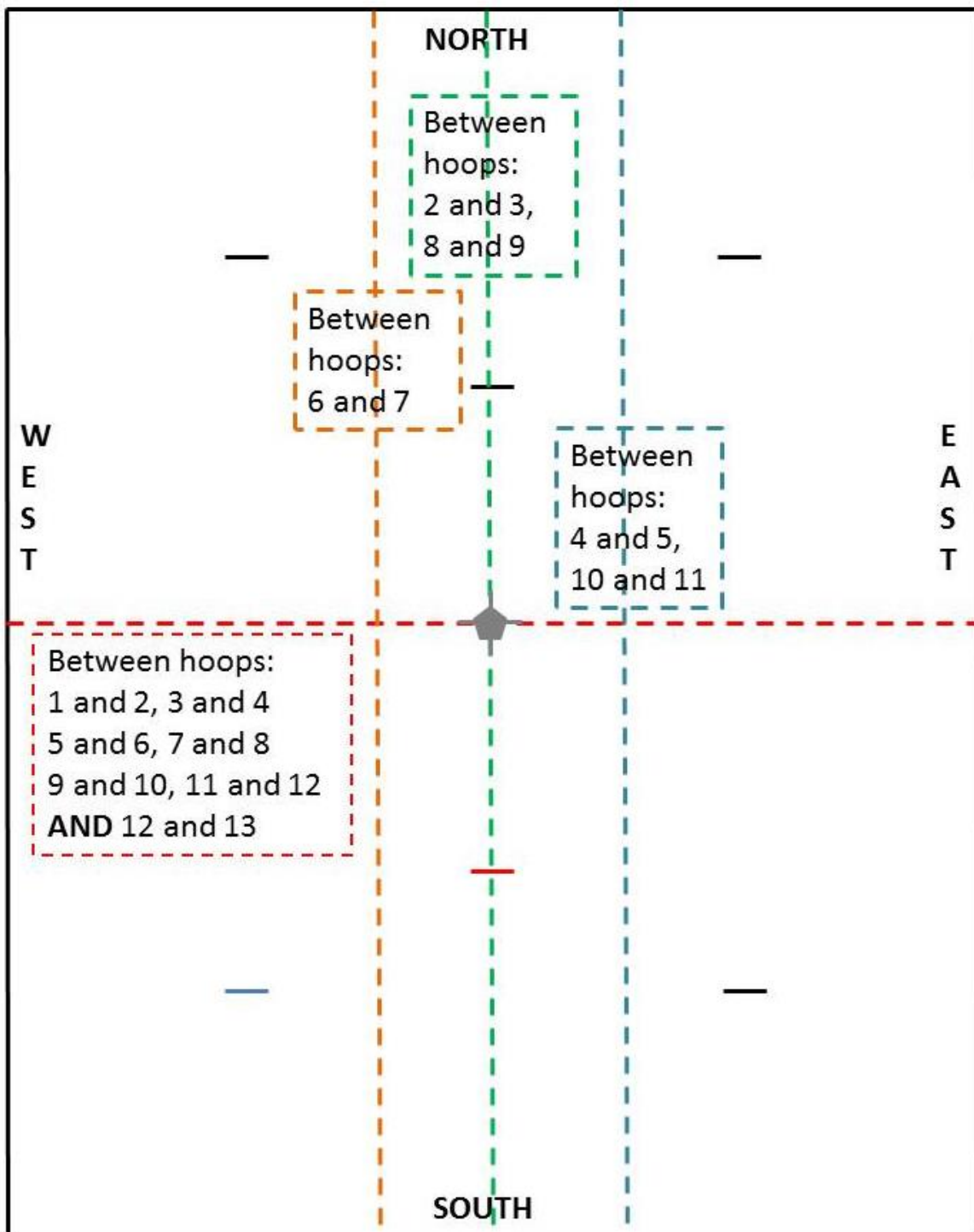


Figure 9 Half-way lines

58. As soon as a hoop is run then any ball that is clearly past the line (shown on Figure 9) is off-side unless it arrived in its current position:
- By the shot that ran the hoop.
 - After touching an opponent's ball at any stage, unless it was initially touching the opponent's ball and was hit away from it.
 - By the agency of a shot by the opponent, (e.g. Red hits Black which hits Blue into an off-side position; Blue is not off-side).
 - Because it had already been sent to a penalty area.
59. When a hoop is run you should notify the opponents if you believe your ball is offside. If you don't, and you or your partner then play a ball, your opponents can ask for any ball that has been moved to be put back and any relevant penalty to be applied.
60. One case that often causes confusion is when hoop 12 is run when one or more balls are still near hoop 11. As these are past the half-way line from hoop 12 to hoop 13 they are in an offside position, including the ball that ran hoop 11.

3.2 When to Consider the Rule

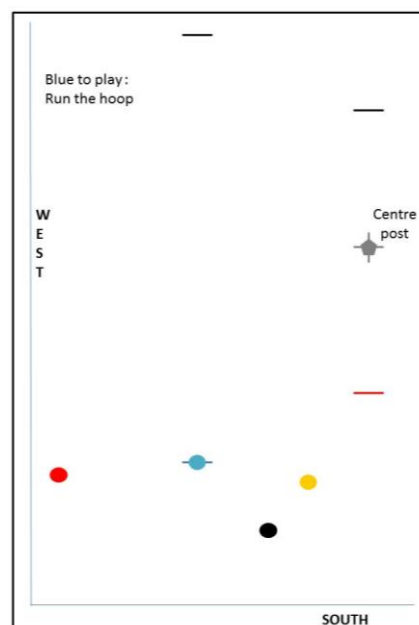
3.2.1 Alternatives

61. Although the rule only applies after a hoop is run it is important to consider its implications before the hoop run occurs. There are three main situations:
- SB is about to score the hoop
 - PB is about to score the hoop
 - OB1 or OB2 is about to score the hoop

3.2.2 SB ready to run hoop

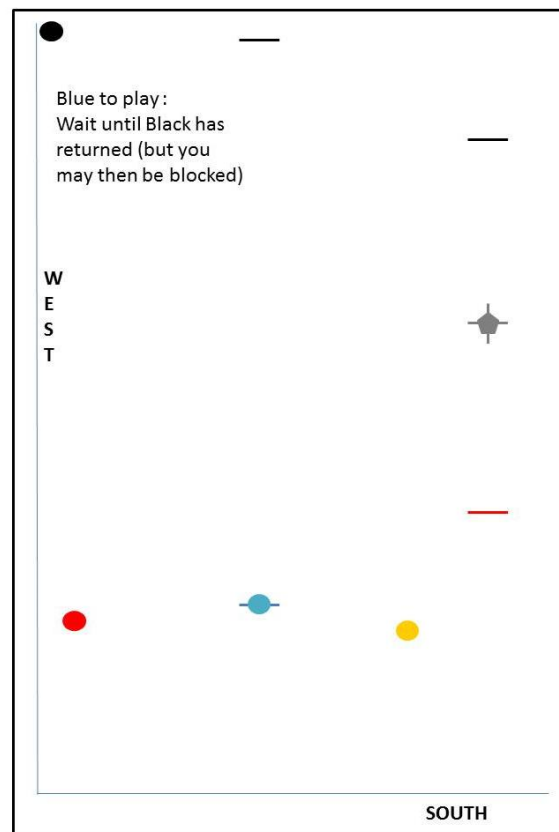
62. The first of these is the simplest. If SB can score the hoop, (Figure 10), it should do so in normal circumstances and run as far as possible towards the next hoop.

Figure 10 SB Ready to run the hoop



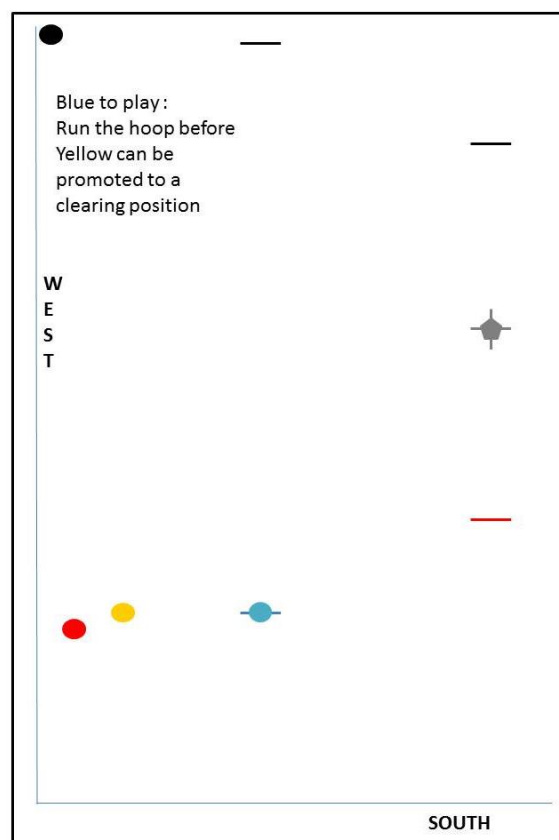
63. If, however, PB is in an offside position (Figure 11), it may be worth 'declaring' SB, without actually playing it, so that PB can come back on side.

Figure 11 PB off-side



64. This does not apply if there is any danger of the opponents clearing SB away.
65. Figure 12 shows an example of this; if Blue delays running the hoop then Red will promote Yellow into a position to clear Blue from the hoop.
66. Therefore, accept that Black will be off-side and run Blue to the next hoop.

Figure 12 Danger of clearance



3.2.3 PB ready to run hoop

67. If your partner ball is certain to get the hoop then you have a number of alternatives. The first and simplest is to play up to the half-way line to minimise your next approach shot (Figure 13).

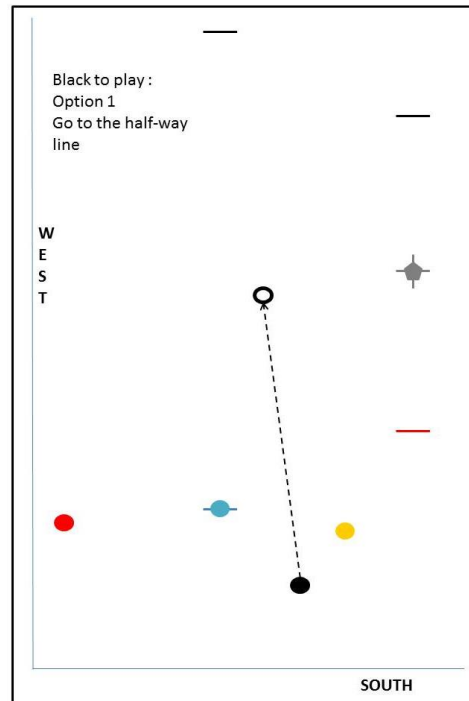


Figure 13 Go to the half-way line

68. Alternatively, place SB so that OB1 can neither go to the half-way line nor block or obstruct PB (Figure 14).

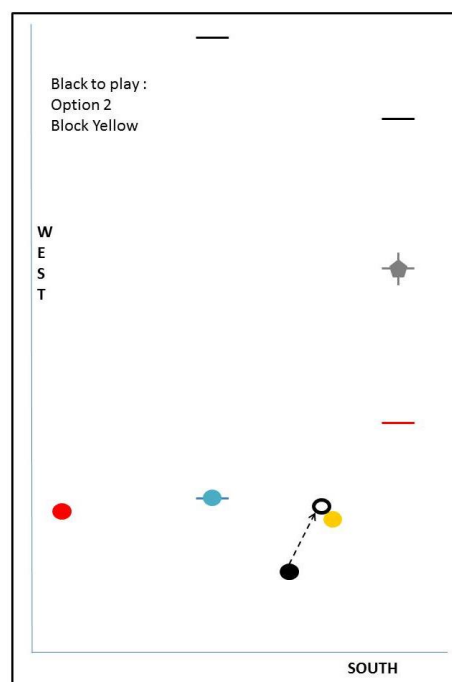


Figure 14 Block OB1

69. Play to ricochet off either OB to get to the next hoop (Figure 15). This should be the preferred action if the geometry allows it.
70. This is not an easy shot to play accurately but, with practice, it can get you a second hoop or, at least, a dominant position near it.

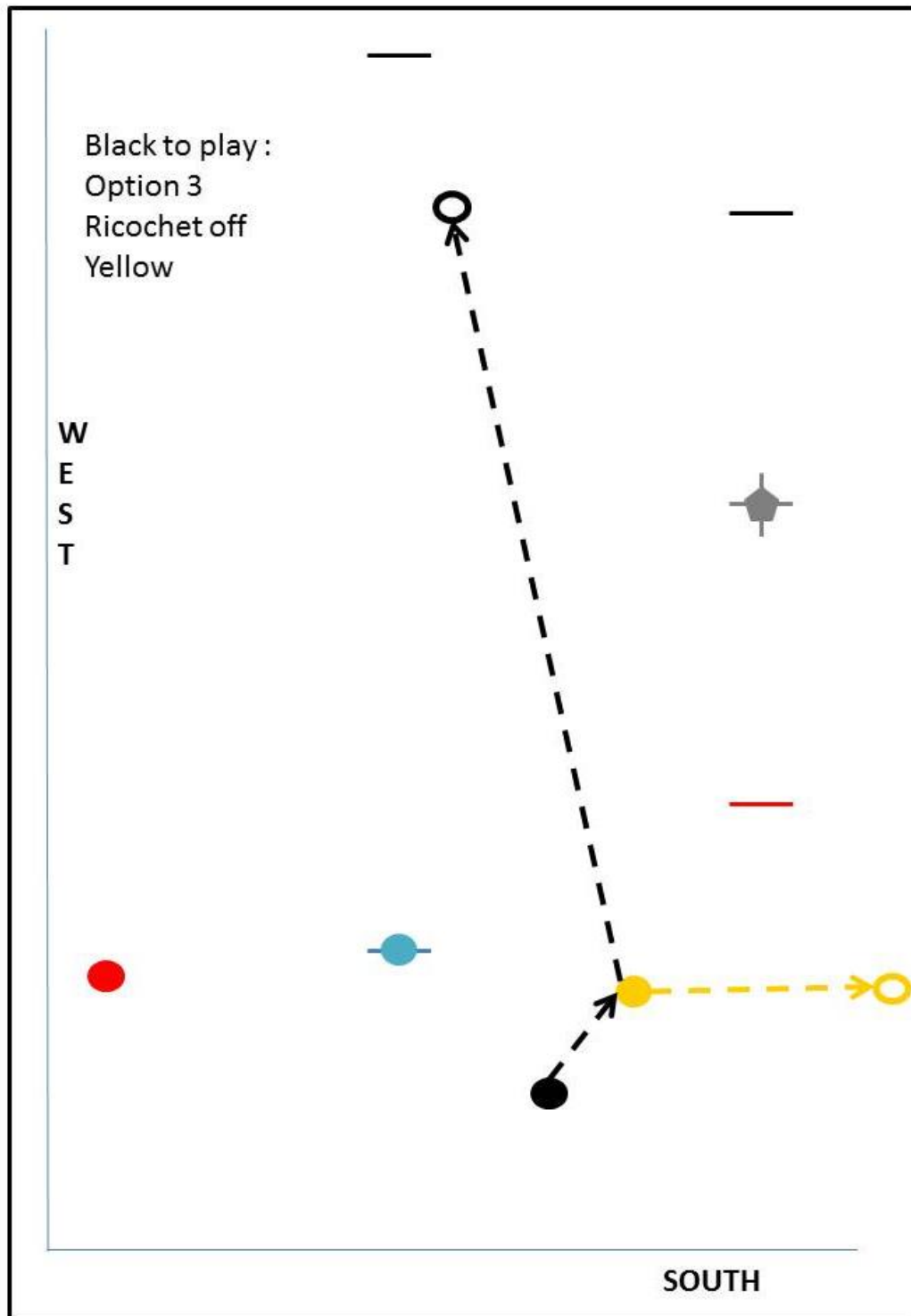
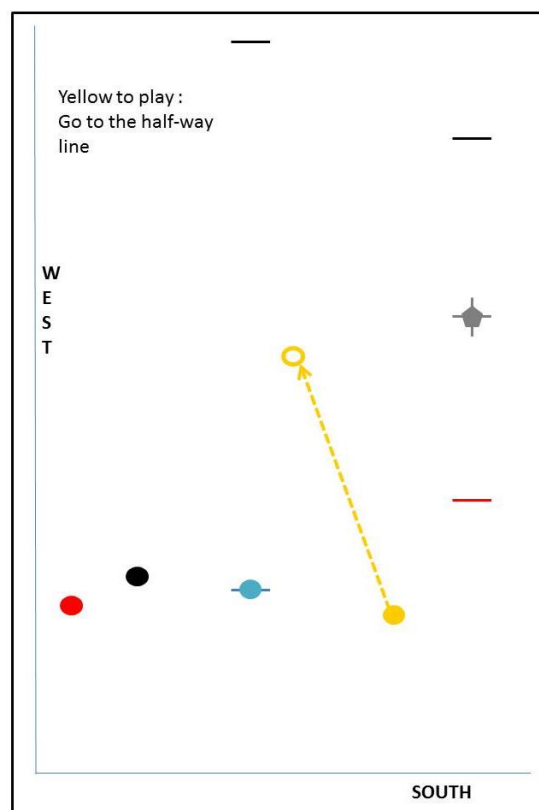


Figure 15 Use a ricochet shot

3.2.4 OB ready to run hoop

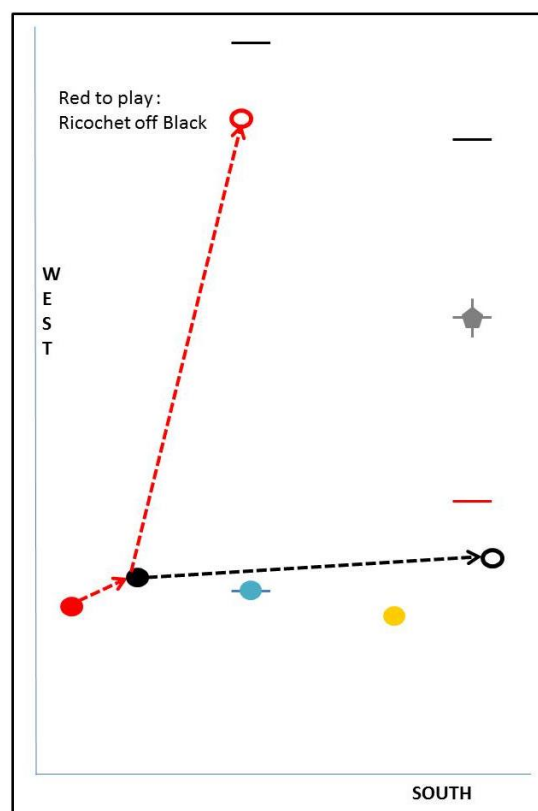
71. If the opponent is ready to run the hoop then you can go to the half-way line. This is the only way that Yellow can use the rule in the situation shown in (Figure 16).

Figure 16 Go to the half-way line



72. However, if Red is SB in the same situation then you can ricochet off OB1 and run to the next hoop (Figure 17).

Figure 17 Ricochet off OB1



73. This should be the preferred option whenever possible but, in the case shown, Yellow must get into position behind the hoop so that Blue is forced to run the hoop or be cleared.
74. Otherwise, Blue will declare and Red will have to come back past the line.

4 Jump Shots

4.1 Introduction

- 75. This section covers the use of jump shots for hoop-running or clearing an obstacle. The purpose of jump shots is discussed, when to use them and when there is a better alternative.
- 76. Various techniques and grips for jump shots are shown and will be demonstrated.
- 77. Faults that are likely to occur are described, together with the ways to avoid them.
- 78. Some examples of actual jump shots are shown.

4.2 Who scores the hoop?

- 79. If more than one ball passes through the hoop then the point is awarded to the ball that is closest to the hoop before the stroke.
- 80. This is one reason why it is often advisable not to attempt a difficult jump shot if there is any alternative that might save the point.

4.3 What is a jump shot for?

- 81. The most common use of a jump shot is to gain a hoop when it is obstructed by an opponent's ball, either in the jaws or in front of the hoop.
- 82. The other main uses are:
 - i. To clear OB1 from the front of the hoop when OB2 (or PB) is in the way.
 - ii. To go to the next hoop when a ball has been interposed or a hoop is in the way.
- 83. An additional, and very advantageous, use of a jump shot is to avoid moving an opponent's ball that is in a hampered position. If, for example, Red is perfectly positioned to run a hoop and Black is against the back of one of the uprights then Red should be jumped through the hoop. It could run straight through, moving Black as it does so, but by leaving Black in place Red will go further and Yellow will be first to the next hoop.
- 84. Just because a jump shot is possible does not mean it is the best option. If PB is in a reasonable position to run the hoop it is often better to clear OB1 rather than trying to jump it.
- 85. If a jump shot is possible but difficult it may be better to give up the point and either peel the opponent so that they do not have an easy shot to the next hoop or set up a rush for PB.

4.4 Grip and Stance

86. There are many alternative grips for jump shots, as with normal shots. The three usual grips, Standard, Irish and Solomon are all used, and the mallet may be held high or low.
87. The first three examples assume that the striker is standing just behind the ball with their feet on either side. The player stands much further forward for a jump shot, with the mallet angled forward so that the mallet head is directed down onto the ball.



Figure 18 High and low Standard grips for jump shots



Figure 19 High and low Irish grips for jump shots



Figure 20 High and low Solomon grips for jump shots

88. This stroke is also often played with a side stance, usually using the standard grip.



Figure 21 High and low Standard grips for side stance jump shots

89. Another method can be used but is rarely seen. With the Hammer stance the striker stands in front of the ball and plays back between the legs.



Figure 22 Hammer stroke for jump shots

4.5 Stroke Angle and Force

90. The actual shot can only be learned by a lot of trial and error. All jump shot practice should be done off the lawn as there is a high likelihood of damage occurring before the stroke can be played safely and confidently.
91. The angle for striking the ball should be shallow if the ball is to travel a long distance and steep if it is to rise sharply to clear a close ball or obstacle.

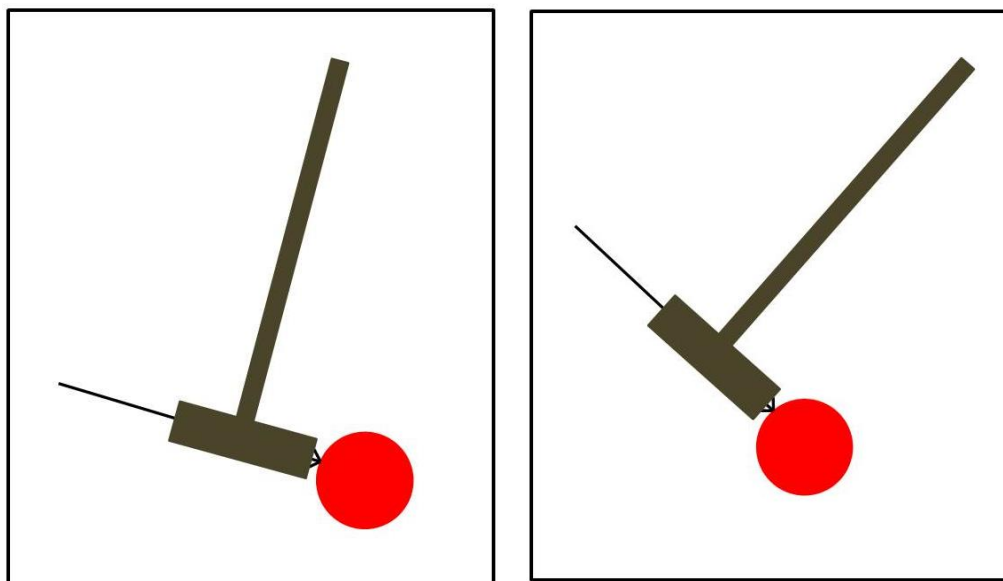


Figure 23 Shallow and steep strike angles for jump shots

92. In both cases the shot should be sharp with a minimum of follow-through. As the mallet is travelling downwards there is little space for follow-through without causing damage (see Section 4.7).
93. A common fault when learning jump shots is to put the mallet at the correct angle and then to play a stroke that does not travel down that line. One way to visualize the stroke is to imagine a tent peg through the ball at the angle that the ball is to be struck. The approach of the head of the mallet should be along the line of the tent peg.
94. The force required is greater if the ball needs to go a long way in the air but care must be taken not to apply too much force. Apart from the difficulty of controlling the aim with a hard shot it is easy to over-hit so that ball rises too much and strikes the crown of the hoop.

4.6 Practising

95. All jump shot practice should be done **off** the lawn. Start by jumping one ball over another with a separation of about 2 feet. Don't use a hoop, as the purpose at this stage is to identify the grip that suits you and to get confidence in your ability to get the striker ball to jump.
96. When you are sure that you can make the ball jump then place two sticks in the ground about 4 inches apart to give a hoop-sized target but without a top. This practises the accuracy of the swing and strike.
97. Then set up a hoop (off the lawn) and practise the real thing with different ball separations and distances from the hoop.

4.7 Common Faults Committed

98. The jump shot is often played with a fault. If this occurs then no point can be scored, for either player, but the opponent has the option of having the balls replaced, or left where they finished, before playing their shot.
99. The most common faults are:
 - i. Damage. If the ball is struck too low or with too much follow-through then there will be damage to the ground. A slight graze is not important but if the damage is serious enough to cause a ball rolled over it to be diverted then a fault has occurred. (Do not repair any damage until it has been inspected by the opponent or a referee.)

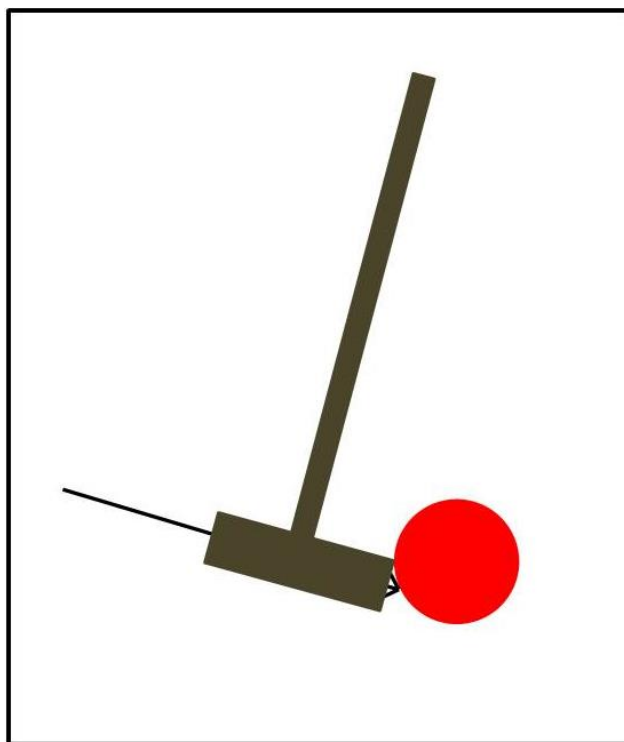


Figure 24 Hitting too low

- ii. Double tap. This is usually thought of as a fault committed when playing close to another ball but it also applies if a ball is driven down into the ground at a steep angle. Any strike at over 45° from the horizontal will certainly be a double tap and a shot at over 30° may be ruled to be a double tap.

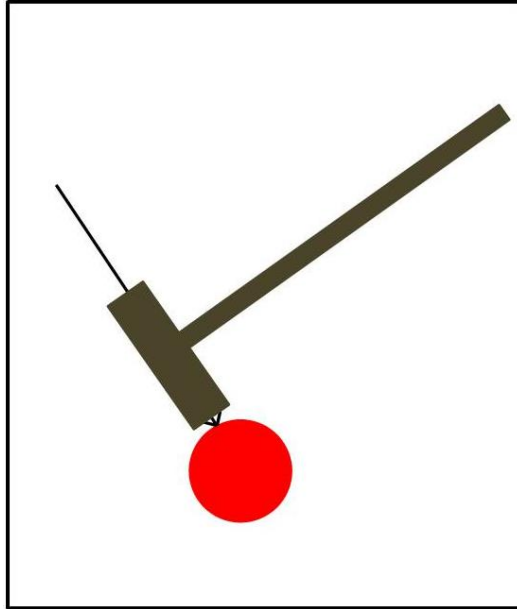


Figure 25 Double tap jump shot

- iii. Hitting a Foot. If a ball comes back off the hoop it can easily hit a foot or the striker can tread on another ball when trying to avoid it. Both are faults.
- iv. Bevel Edge. If the stroke is hampered by another ball, a hoop or the centre post and the ball is struck with the bevel edge rather than with the face of the mallet then a fault has occurred.

4.8 Examples

4.8.1 Short-range jump

Note that there is no follow-through.

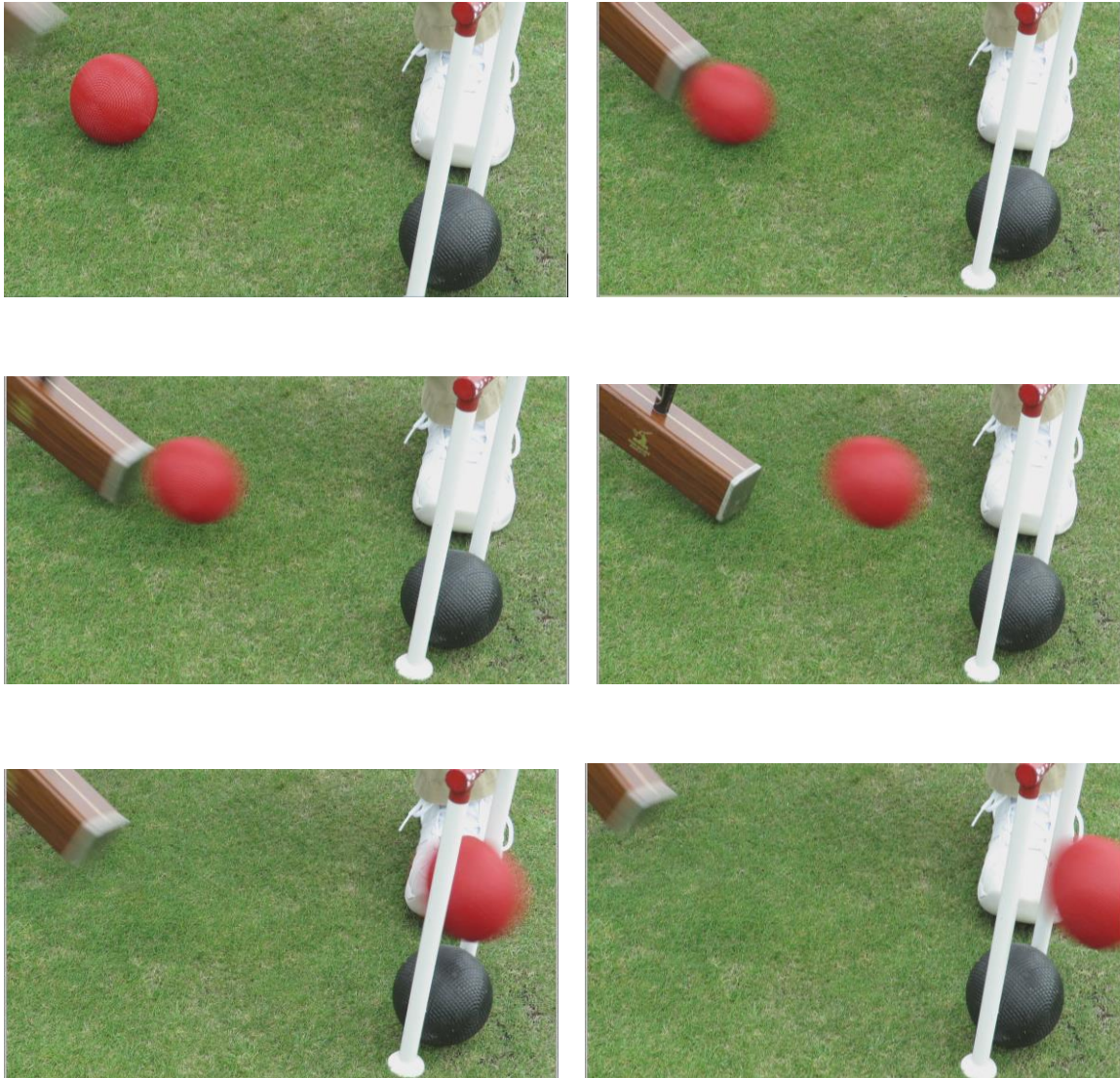


Figure 26 Short-range jump shot demonstration

4.8.2 Long-range jump

100. Distance is not a problem. This example is about 8 feet but jump shots can even be played from the boundary. (Long-range jumps are done with a bounce, the 'Barnes Wallis' jump shot.)

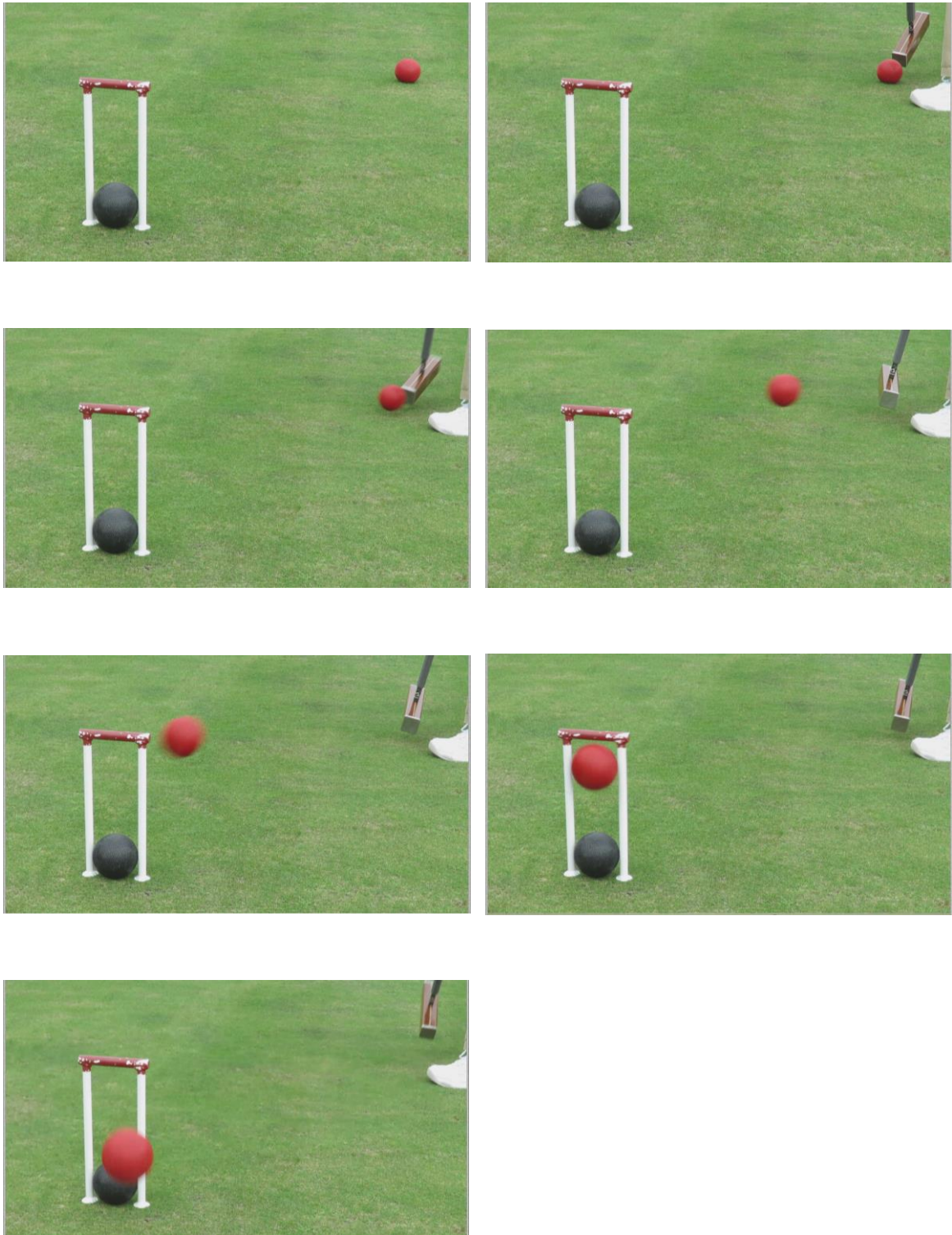


Figure 27 Long-range jump shot demonstration

5 Angled Hoops

5.1 Introduction

101. This section looks at different techniques for running a hoop when SB is at an angle from the hoop. This covers the stance and swing and shows different ways of visualizing the approach.
102. An angled hoop approach is one that is sufficiently acute as to reduce the apparent opening significantly.
103. The two essentials are to strike the ball so that it does not touch the near upright and in such a way that it acquires spin when it hits the far upright. The purpose of careful lining up is to ensure that the ball goes as closely as possible to the near upright so that there is minimum wastage of the available opening. The spin enables the ball to pass through the hoop even though it appears to have been stopped by the far upright.

5.2 Lining up and visualization

5.2.1 Side-sighting

104. This method involves sighting along the side of the ball and mallet. Align the mallet so that it is aimed just inside the near upright.



Figure 28 Side-sighting seen from behind the mallet

Figure 29 Side-sighting seen from behind the ball



105. When the alignment is satisfactory, move the mallet sideways to align with the centre of the ball, keeping the angle unchanged.



Figure 30 Centring the mallet position

5.2.2 Centre sighting

106. The ball is $3\frac{5}{8}$ inches in diameter and the hoop is $3\frac{3}{4}$ inches wide (for the standard club setting), which leaves $\frac{1}{8}$ inch to spare.
107. There is a point over which the centre of the ball needs to travel so that the ball **just** misses the near upright. The point is just more than the ball's radius from the upright. This is therefore half the hoop's width ($1\frac{7}{8}$ ") from, and perpendicular to, the upright.

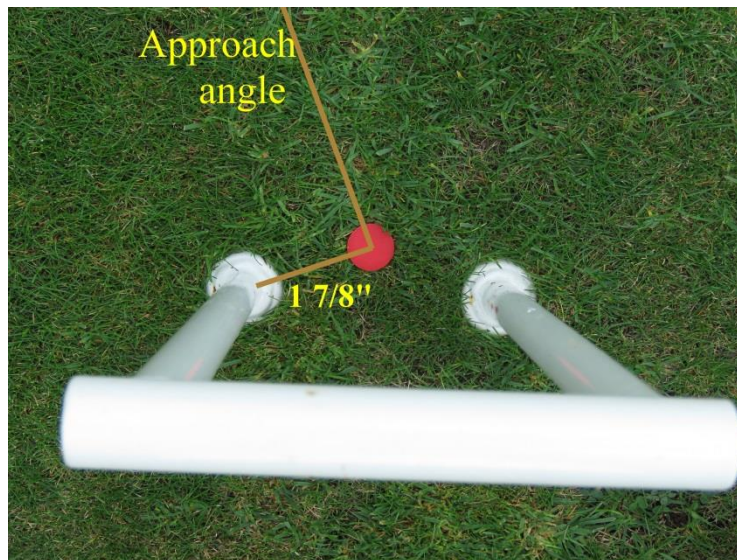


Figure 31 Plastic marker pin for centre sighting

108. Visualise the position of the marker pin and hit the ball so that its centre will pass over the point. If it is played accurately then the ball will **just** miss the near upright and have an optimal chance of going through.

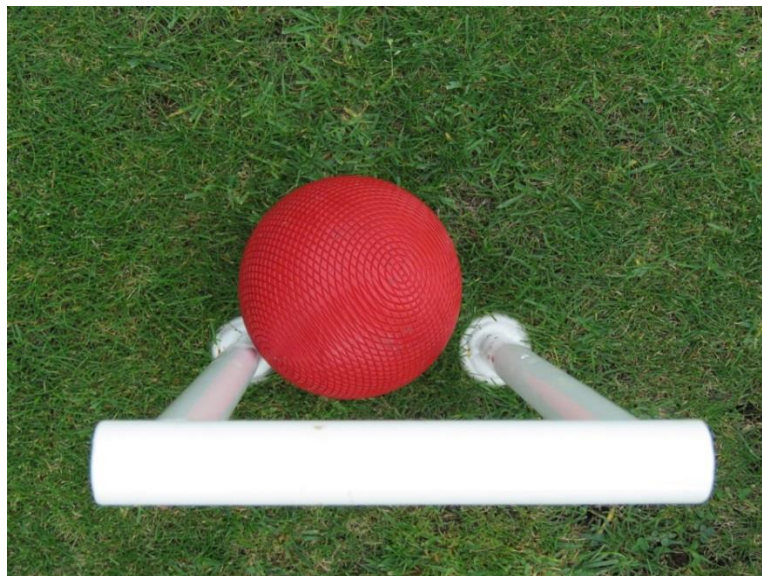


Figure 32 Just missing the near upright

5.2.3 Stroke

109. The stroke should be played in one of two ways, both along the exact direction that has been lined up:
- i. Like a jump shot, i.e. downwards onto the ball.
 - ii. Like a stop-shot, i.e. upwards at the ball and played with force. (A stop-shot does not give SB any rotational movement but when it hits the hoop the forward motion is converted to side spin, thus helping it through the hoop.)
110. In both cases the ball is more likely to complete running the hoop after hitting the inside of the far upright than with a shot played with a level mallet.

5.2.4 Avoiding push-shots

111. There is a danger with angled hoops of the striker 'steering' the ball by keeping the mallet in contact with the ball for too long. This is likely to occur if the ball is very close to the hoop and the shot is played too gently.
112. The likelihood of a push shot is reduced if the stroke is played with very little follow-through.

6 The Wrong Ball Rules

6.1 Introduction

113. These are notorious as being difficult to understand but, in fact, they can be reduced to a quite simple set of alternatives.
114. **Any** player or referee should forestall **any** wrong ball before it is struck and **any** player or referee should stop the play after **any** wrong ball has been struck.
115. **Any** should be interpreted as 'any involved in the game, match or tournament' rather than including bystanders.

6.2 The striker

116. The first and most important consideration is to define the Striker:
**THE STRIKER IS THE PLAYER OF THE NEXT BALL IN SEQUENCE AFTER THE PREVIOUS BALL PLAYED
EVEN WHEN THE PREVIOUS BALL WAS A WRONG BALL**
117. When this has been established then one of the following sets of rules applies, depending on who played the last shot.

6.3 The Consequences

When a wrong ball play has occurred, the sequence of actions should be:

Stop play until the correct action is decided.

Identify the players of the last two turns.

Identify the correct strikers in the last two turns.

Decide the category of the last stroke, which could be 'Played by the Striker', 'Played by Striker's partner' or 'Played by an opponent'.

All of the consequences are the same in singles and doubles. 'Partner ball' refers to the ball belonging to the striker's side that is not the current striker's ball. As you will see, the Partner Ball plays a bigger role in the decision-making than it did before. (This is because it was the playing of the partner ball that could lead to a Gift Hoop with the old rules.)

If a wrong ball play does occur, there are five possible actions. We'll look at the actions first and then the situations in which they occur.

Annulled

All balls moved are replaced and the stroke is treated as though it never happened. This means that the previous stroke is re-instated as the 'last' stroke.

Carry on play

All previous errors have been condoned.
Play continues with the next ball in sequence.

Replace and replay

Last stroke is discounted.
No points are scored.
All balls are replaced.
Striker plays the correct ball.

Ball swap

Last stroke is valid.
All points scored are counted for the side owning a ball that ran the hoop.
All balls remain where they finished except that the positions of the last ball played and its partner are exchanged.
Play then continues with the ball following the one that should have been played.

Penalty Area Continuation

All four balls are to be played from a penalty area.
The sides toss and the winner will play first, with either ball. The loser decides which penalty area is to be used.

We will now go through a number of examples of wrong ball play, discussing each, and then try to resolve them into the simple rules shown on these decision trees.

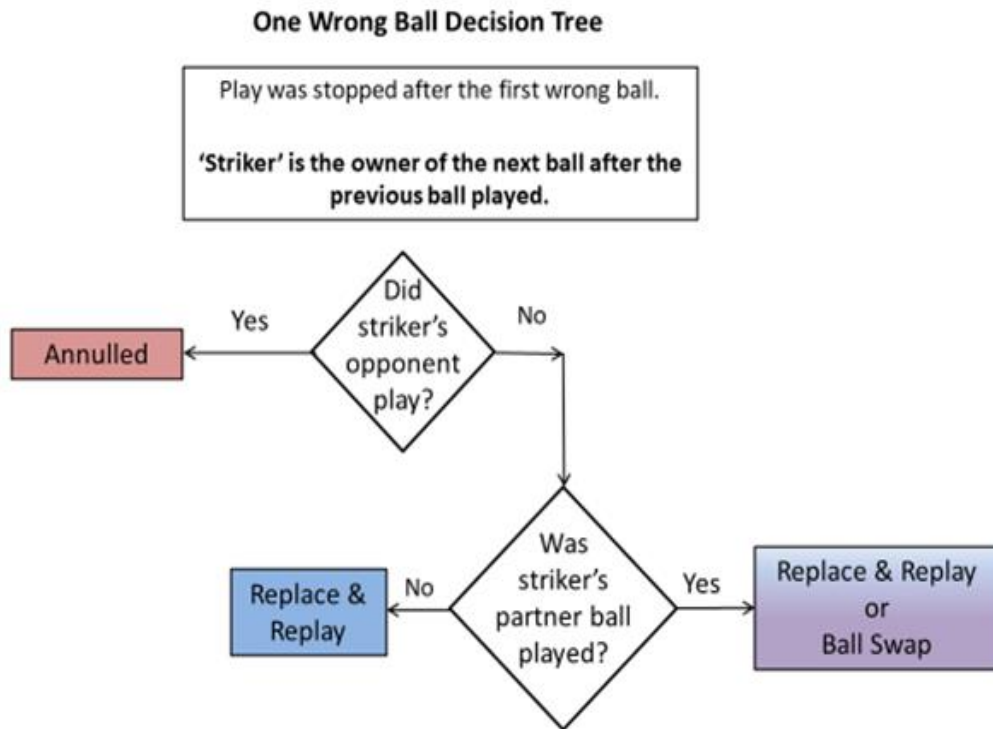


Figure 33 Decision Tree after one wrong ball

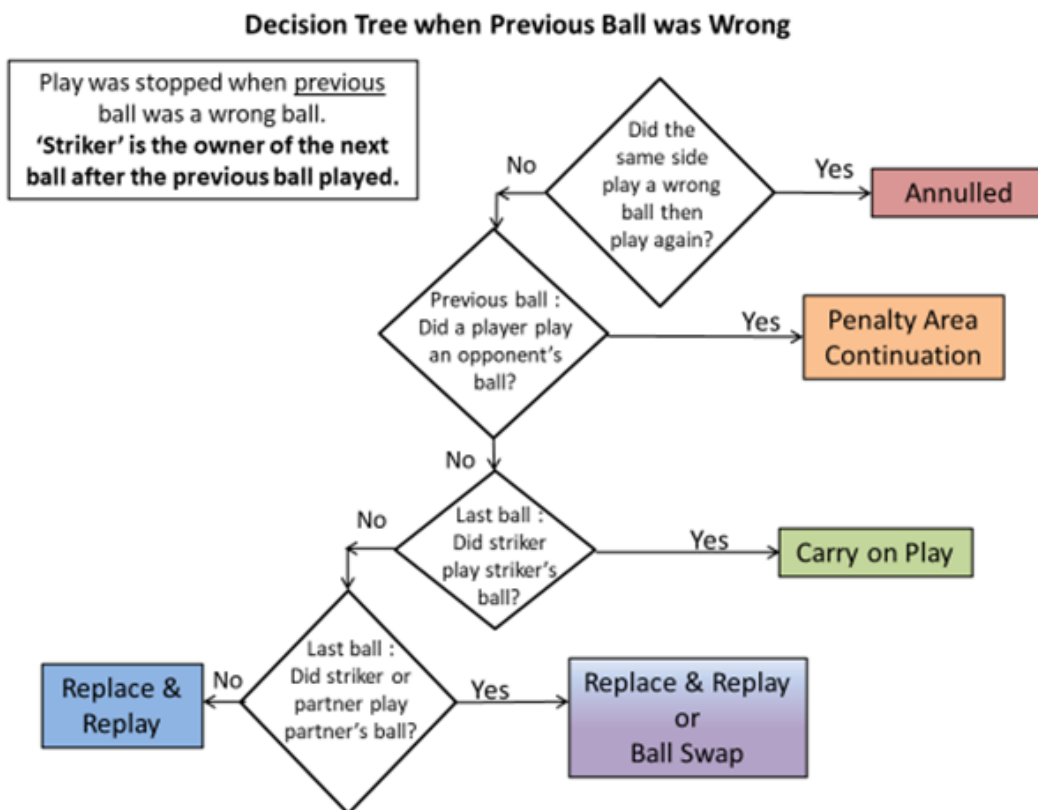


Figure 34 Decision Tree after previous ball was wrong

6.4 Crib Card

118. The two sections on this page are designed to be printed out back-to-back to make a two-sided crib-card for a player to carry.

Annulled	Stroke is treated as though it never happened. Balls are replaced; correct shot is taken without penalty.
Replace and Replay	No points scored. Balls are replaced; correct shot is taken without penalty.
Ball Swap	All points count. Balls remain but striker and partner balls are exchanged. Play continues in sequence following the one that should have been played.
Penalty Area Continuation	Sides toss; loser selects a penalty area; winner plays first with either ball; others play in correct sequence from the same area.
<u>Faults</u>	Touch mallet head in stroke, Not end-face, Double-tap, Touch other ball, Crush, Damage, Push, Mallet hits hoop and moves ball, Ball touches clothes
<u>Action after Fault</u>	If balls are replaced then no points are scored for either side. If balls are left then points are scored for non-offending side.

THE STRIKER IS THE OWNER OF THE NEXT BALL AFTER THE ONE JUST PLAYED

One wrong ball played, follow this sequence:

Opponents played – Annulled

Striker's side played Striker's partner ball? – Replace & Replay or Ball Swap

Striker's side played any other ball? – Replace & Replay

Wrong ball, then any other ball; follow this sequence for last two strokes:

Same side played a wrong ball then played again – Annul the last stroke then review the wrong ball

Previous ball played by the wrong side – Penalty Area Continuation

Striker played last stroke with Striker's ball – Carry On Play

Last ball played was Striker's partner ball – Replace & Replay or Ball Swap

Otherwise – Replace & Replay

7 Making the Most of a Hoop

7.1 Introduction

119. This session covers two similar situations. In both cases there is a ball that is either in the jaws of a hoop or is so close that it is certain to make the hoop and cannot be cleared.
120. The difference between the cases is that the ball may be Partner's Ball (PB) or an Opponent's Ball (OB). Each of these is divided into two sections, one covering odd-numbered hoops and one covered even-numbered hoops.
121. This difference is very important as the next hoop may be straight ahead (odd-numbered) or to one side (even-numbered) and the possibilities open to the ball in the hoop are very different.
122. Not all of the options shown will be possible but it is very important to be aware of the alternatives and to look for them.
123. As with all tactical decisions, the key is to visualize what the other balls are going to do for their next shots as well as to plan your own.

7.2 Partner's Ball in the Jaws

7.2.1 Outline

124. When PB is in the jaws and it is your turn to play you need to decide:
- i. Whether you are able to peel your partner (i.e. hit them through the hoop).
 - ii. Whether you should peel your partner.
 - iii. What other actions are available to you. This may involve blocking, hampering or ricochet shots or setting up a rush.
125. Peeling is probably not useful for even-numbered hoops unless you can promote yourself in the same shot but may be the best option for odd-numbered hoops.
126. Your decision should be based on:
- i. The difficulty of the shot.
 - ii. Which option will give the best chance of getting the next hoop.
 - iii. What will the opponent do?

7.2.2 Odd-numbered hoops

127. In the cases shown, Red is in the hoop and Yellow is to play. Neither of the opponent's balls is in a position to remove Red.

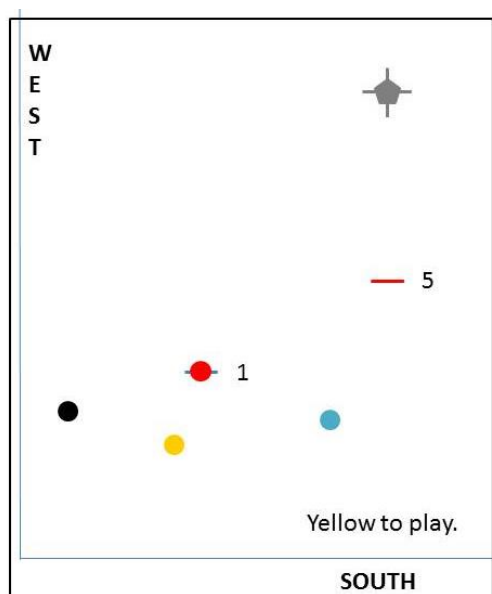
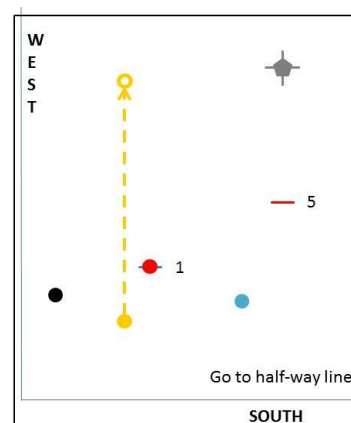


Figure 35 Odd-numbered hoop, partner ball in the jaws

128. The options shown are:

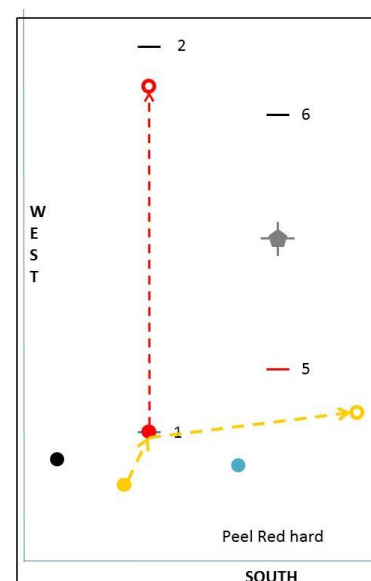
- i. Go to the half-way line, being sure not to get in PB's way. This is the easiest shot, if played with care, but gives least benefit.

Figure 36 Go to half-way line



- ii. Peel PB hard so that it goes as far up the lawn towards the next hoop as possible. This reduces the opponent's options for hampering, blocking and peeling.

Figure 37 Peel partner to next hoop



- iii. Place SB in front of OB2 (Black) so that it does not have a clean shot towards the next hoop. This is good as it means that both PB and SB will be close to the next hoop before the opponents. Note that there is no point in blocking OB1 (Blue).

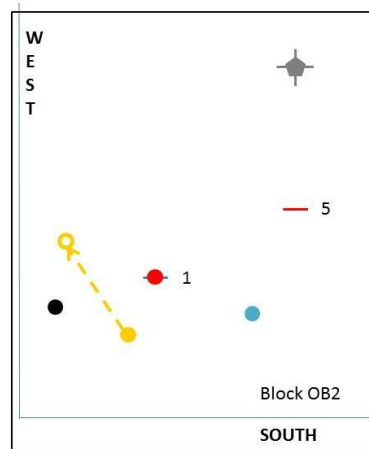


Figure 38 Block OB2 from the next hoop

- iv. Clear OB1 (Blue) so that it can't hamper, block or peel PB.

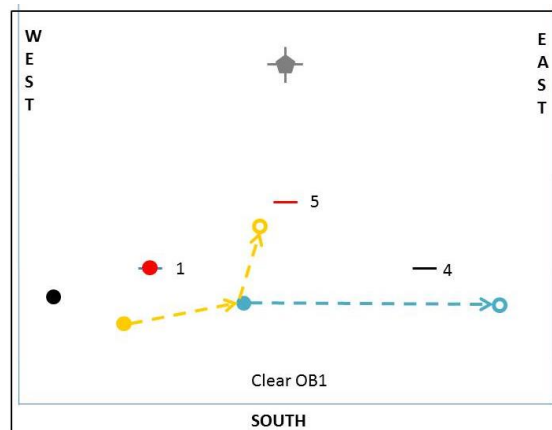


Figure 39 Clear OB1

7.2.3 Even-numbered hoops

129. In these examples Black (SB) is to play. Blue (PB) is in hoop 2 and will definitely score the hoop as Yellow is too far to the side to jump. What should Black do? Your main options are: to peel Blue gently, to peel Blue hard, to go to the half-way line or to set up a rush.

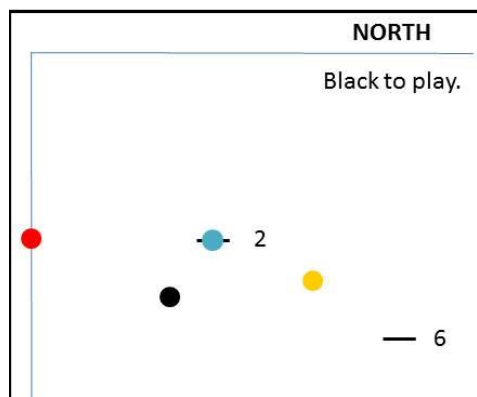


Figure 40 Even-numbered hoop, partner ball in the jaws

130. For example, comparing the four options :

- i. The gentle peel is easy and gets the hoop but contributes nothing towards the next hoop. The opponent will simply send OB1 (Yellow) to hoop 3.

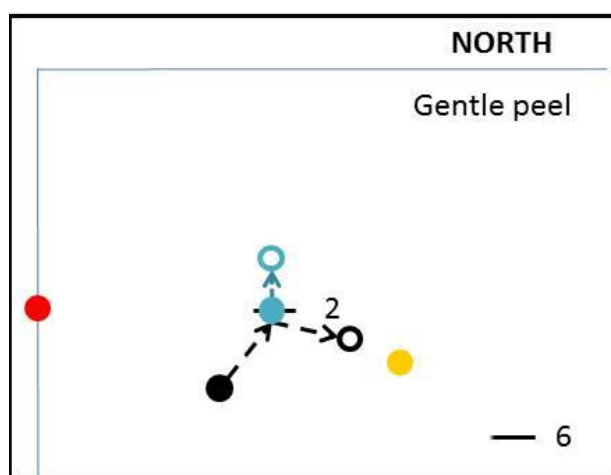


Figure 41 Gentle peel

- ii. The hard peel is more difficult but could, if played correctly, make the next hoop very easy. The opponent will send OB1 (Yellow) to hoop 3 but SB will already be there.

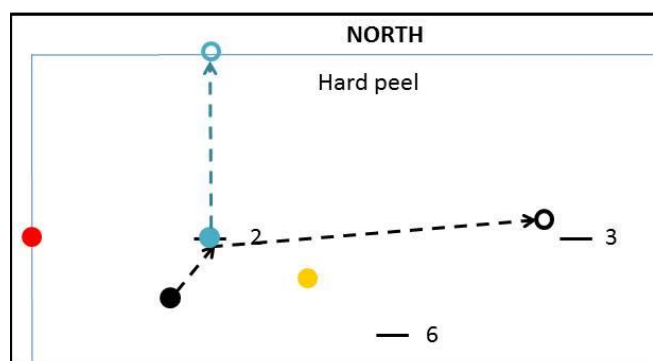


Figure 42 Hard peel sending SB to next hoop

- iii. Going to the half-way line is easy, with care, but doesn't help much on the next hoop as OB1 (Yellow) can do the same and OB2 (Red) will be first at the next hoop.

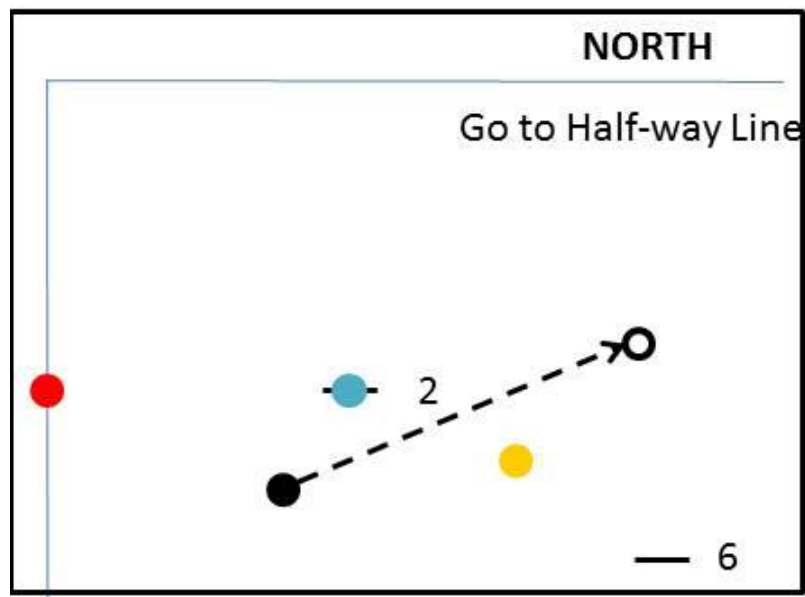


Figure 43 Go to half-way line

- iv. Setting up the rush is quite easy and gives a good chance of getting PB (Blue) across to hoop 3. OB2 (Red) will be there first but, if the rush is good, then Blue will be able to clear it.

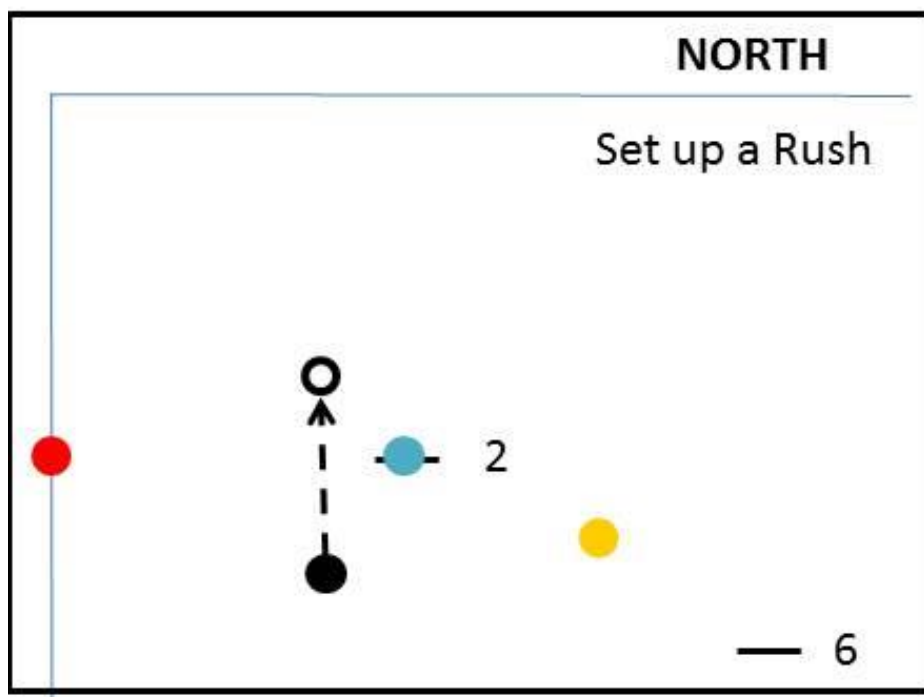


Figure 44 Set up a rush for SB on PB

- v. When Blue is sent through the hoop it should be sent just far enough to give Black a straight rush to hoop 3.

7.3 Opponent's Ball in the Jaws

7.3.1 Outline

131. When it is the opponent that is about to score the hoop your thinking should be about the next hoop, not just for yourself and your partner, but to make it difficult for your opponent.
132. When OB2 is in the jaws and it is your turn to play you need to decide:
 - i. Is there any way to stop them scoring the hoop? If a jump shot is not possible then the only way is to hamper OB2 so that it commits a fault.
 - ii. If you can't save the hoop then concentrate on playing to optimize your chance of getting the next hoop.
133. Peeling is probably not useful for even-numbered hoops unless you can promote yourself in the same shot but may be the best option for odd-numbered hoops.
134. Your decision should be based on :
 - i. The difficulty of the shot.
 - ii. Which option will give the best chance of getting the next hoop.
 - iii. What will the opponent do?

7.3.2 Odd-numbered hoops

135. In these examples, Red is in the jaws and Black is to play.

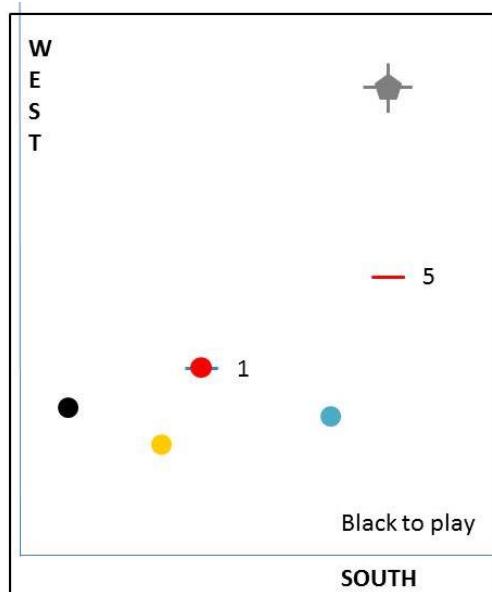
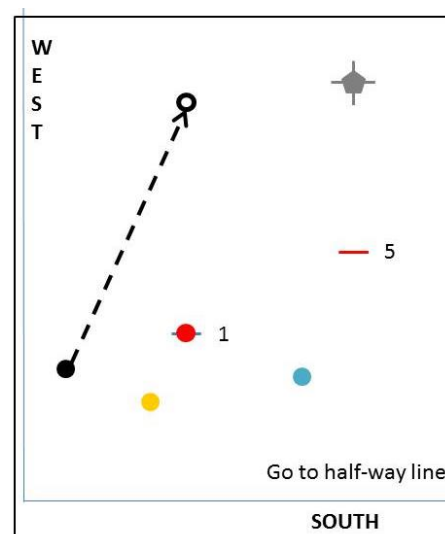


Figure 45 Opponent in the jaws, odd-numbered hoop

136. The options shown here require you to think about the other balls and what they will, or can, do.

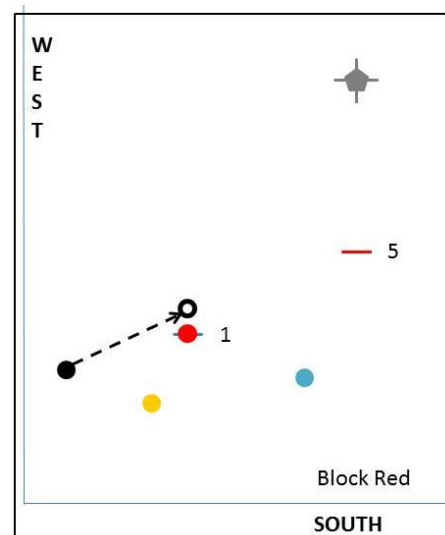
- i. If you hit SB to the half-way line then try to get it exactly on OB2's direct line to the next hoop. This will stop him going straight up to a hoop-running position.

Figure 46 Go to half way on OB2's line



- ii. Put SB just in front of OB2 so that a hard hoop-run will promote SB towards the next hoop.

Figure 47 Block OB2



- iii. Clear OB1 away from the area so that it can't peel OB2. This leaves PB with the option of hampering OB2.

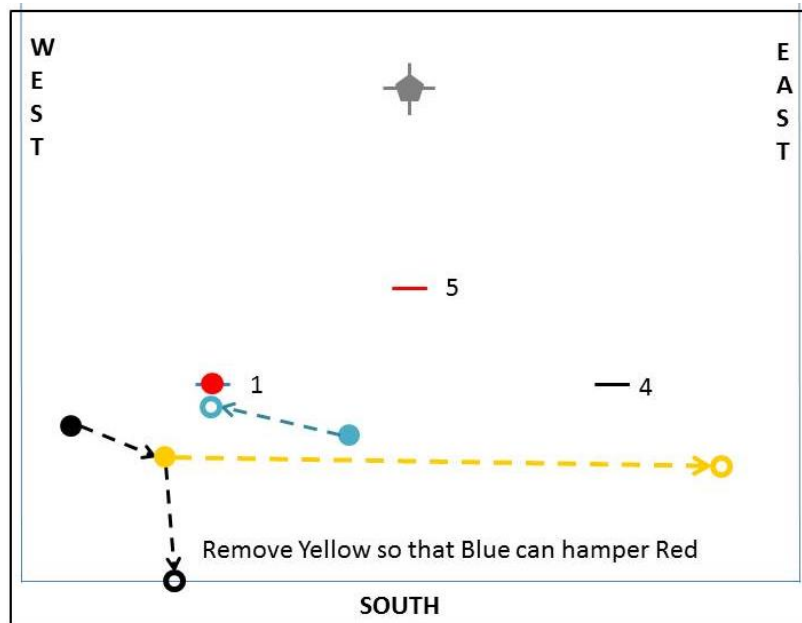


Figure 48 Clear OB1 so that PB can hamper OB2

- iv. Deliberately peel OB2. This must be played at a gentle pace so that SB is clear of the hoop but OB2 is hampered in its next shot.

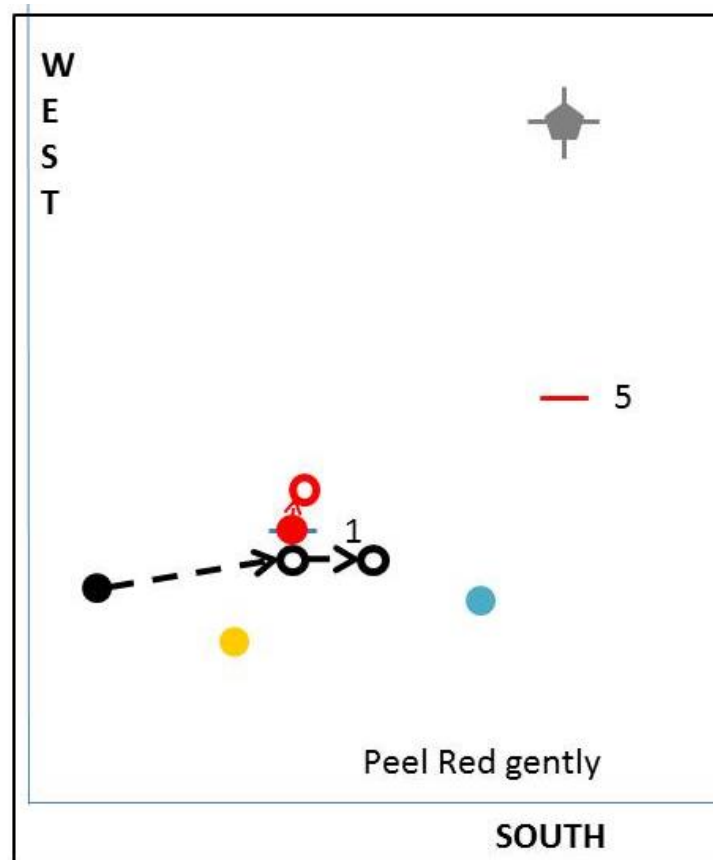


Figure 49 Peel OB2 to leave it hampered

7.3.3 Even-numbered hoops

137. At an even-numbered hoop there is no benefit in peeling the opponent. That tactic applies to the odd-numbered hoops where the ball in the hoop can go straight up to the next hoop and peeling it could hamper this.

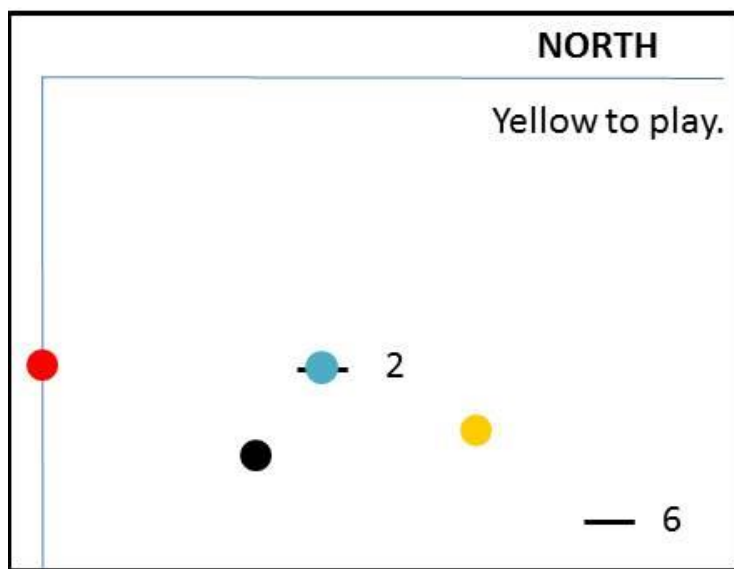


Figure 50 Opponent's ball in the jaws, even-numbered hoop

138. The alternatives now are: go to the half-way line, nestle up to OB1 (Blue) or set up a rush for PB (Red).
- Going to the half-way line is easy, with care. This will help on the next hoop as PB (Red) will be there first, followed by OB2 (Black) and SB (Yellow) may be close enough to clear Black.

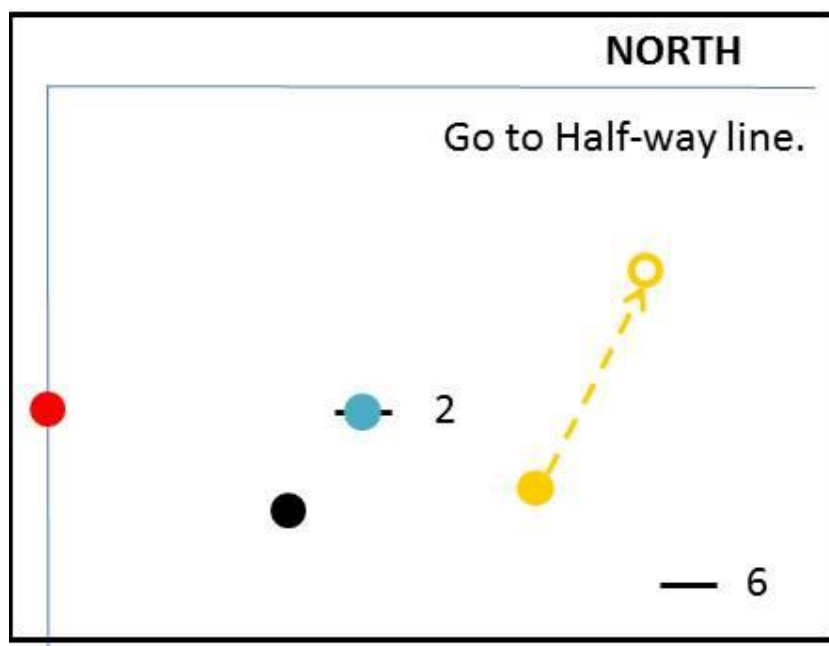


Figure 51 Go to half-way line

- ii. Nestling up to OB1 (Blue) is usually very difficult but, if successful, hampers OB1's next shot and possibly causes a fault. In the case shown, OB1 would probably declare, to avoid committing a fault and rely on OB2 (Black) to peel it on the next turn.

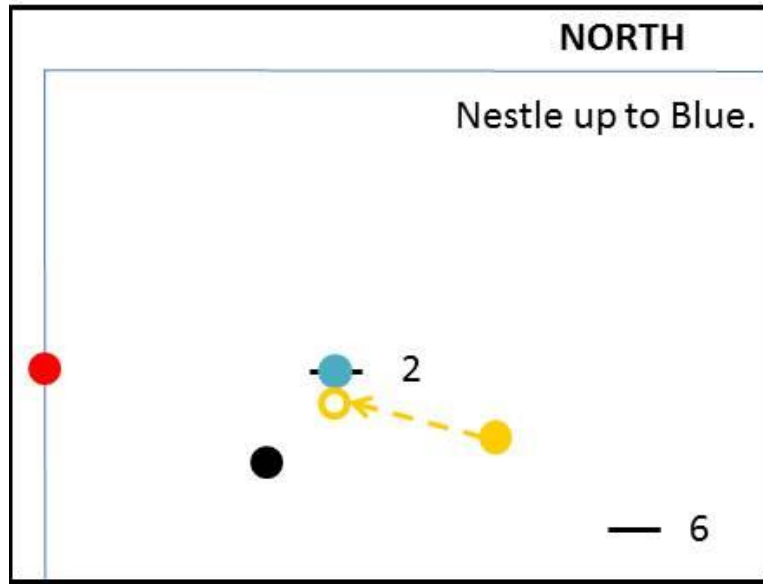
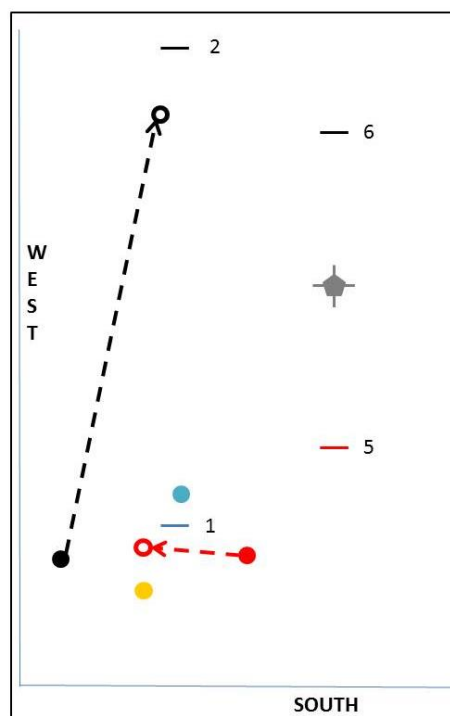


Figure 52 Nestle up to OB1

- iii. Setting up the rush can be difficult, depending on the geometry, but is often the best action as it means that SB will be first to the next hoop.

144. What will happen if, instead of hitting Red down to hoop 2, you play it across to sit in front of Yellow? Black will be sent down to hoop 2 (Figure 54) and, hopefully, will use an extra stroke to set up in front of the hoop.

Figure 54 Setting up the delayed approach



145. Yellow now rushes Red down to hoop 2. With a perfect rush Red might even be in position to run the hoop.

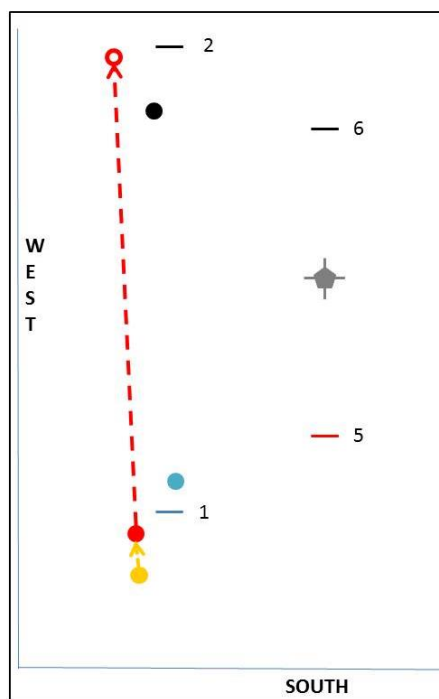


Figure 55 Completing the delayed approach

146. Blue is hampered and can only play sideways and Red can either run the hoop or, as in Figure 55, clear Black, leaving Red in position to run the hoop.
147. All of this assumes that you can play a good rush shot, for which the positioning of Red in front of Yellow is key.

8.2 How to Set Up a Rush

148. There is no point in trying to rush a ball accurately unless it is close to the striker ball. Rushes with a long separation between the balls are very difficult to achieve and usually result in both balls going off in different (and useless) directions.
149. If you are planning to use a rush shot then the preparation is vital. The ball to be rushed should be played to lie between PB and the position it should finish in. Its separation from PB should be not more than 1 metre and preferably much less.
150. If it is placed too close to PB (less than 6 inches) then two problems can occur:
- i. If it is slightly out of position then a cut rush is needed and these can be difficult to judge.
 - ii. If the rush is to be a long one then there is a danger of a double tap when the rush is played.
151. The setting up depends on whether the ball to be rushed is SB or PB. Some examples were illustrated in Section 7.
- i. When the opponent is about to run a hoop and cannot be stopped. You should play SB into position to be rushed by PB's next shot.
 - ii. At an even-numbered hoop it will be able to rush PB on its next shot, (Figure 44 on page 36).

8.3 How to Play a Rush Shot

8.3.1 The straight rush

152. A straight rush is used when the two balls are exactly lined up in the direction that PB should go.
153. For maximum distance, the shot should be played with the mallet head parallel with the ground at the moment of impact. However, if the balls are close together and follow-through must be avoided then play a stop-shot.
154. It is important to avoid any jumping by the striker ball as this will take much of the power out of the shot and PB will not move as required.

8.3.2 The cut rush

155. Most rushes involve a certain amount of 'cut' as they are rarely lined up perfectly. It takes a lot of practice to learn how to send PB at an angle to the strike direction but there are techniques that can help. These are covered in more detail in the Advanced course.

156. The most useful technique involves an 'imaginary ball'. To practise this, set up SB and PB about 2 feet apart and aligned so that PB is to be sent about 45° off the straight line. Now take a third ball and place it in contact with PB on the opposite side to the planned direction of travel. This indicates where SB should impact on PB.
157. Now remove the third ball but remember exactly where it was; this is the 'imaginary ball'. Hit SB so that it passes exactly through the position of the imaginary ball. If this is done correctly then PB will travel in the desired direction. In Figure 56 the imaginary ball is shown in purple.

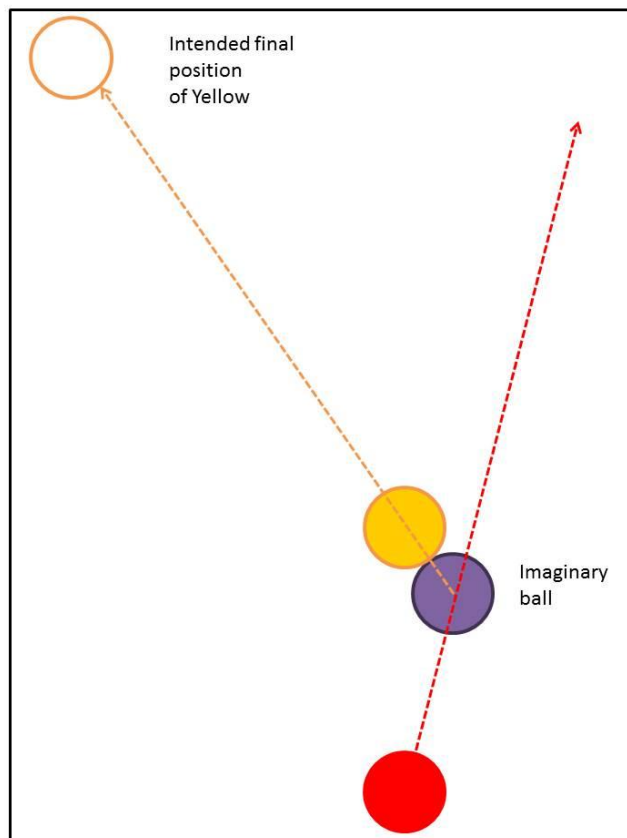


Figure 56 Placing the imaginary ball

9 Exercises

9.1 Using Extra Strokes

9.1.1 Overview

158. Most of the useful exercises are the same as those for normal shots. However, there are some that are more specific.
- i. Running a ball into the jaws without sending it through.
 - ii. Sending a ball into a specific position relative to another in order to give the maximum possible clearance.
 - iii. Sending a ball into a specific position relative to another in order to clear it to a wired position.
 - iv. Putting a ball the correct distance in front of the hoop from the side or from behind the hoop.
159. For these you will need plastic marker pins.

9.1.2 Jawsing

160. Place a ball about 2 feet from a hoop and 30° to one side and hit it at such a pace that it stops within the hoop. The most important factors are:
- i. Don't hit hard enough to send it through.
 - ii. Don't let the ball touch the nearside upright.
161. Gradually increase the distance.
162. Gradually increase and decrease the angle.

9.1.3 Precise placing for clearance

163. Put a ball about 3 metres away and mark a position about $\frac{1}{2}$ -metre from it.
164. Hit your ball so that it finishes on top of the marker. If you can do this reliably then you can select a position for using an extra stroke to clear an opponent with maximum effect.
165. Try from greater and greater distances.

9.1.4 Precise placing for hoop running

166. Place an opponent's ball about 6 feet behind a hoop. Put a marker in the ground about 2 feet in front of the hoop and wired from the opponent.
167. Hit your ball so that it finishes on top of the marker. If you can do this reliably then you can use an extra stroke to prepare your ball for hoop running whilst wiring it from an opponent's clearance shot.

168. This situation would occur if, for example:

- i. OB2 has cleared PB a long way and finished 2 metres behind hoop 1.
- ii. SB then clears OB1 from hoop 1 down to hoop 2 with a stop shot, also finishing behind hoop 1.
- iii. SB then takes an extra stroke to get into a hoop running position, wired from OB2.

9.2 Using the Half-way Rule

9.2.1 Striker ball in the hoop

169. In pairs, as Striker and Partner, place one ball in an odd-numbered hoop and define it as the Striker ball. Put the other balls randomly around the hoop and decide whether there is any good reason not to run straight down to the next hoop.

170. Repeat this with PB in an offside position in a far corner.

9.2.2 Partner ball in the hoop

171. The half-way rule is likely to be more relevant in this case. Define the ball in the hoop as PB and see whether SB can usefully exploit the rule.

172. In particular, look for ricochet shots off an opponent that would get SB up to the next hoop without being offside. Set up such positions and try the shots.

173. Repeat this for an even-numbered hoop.

9.2.3 Opposition ball in the hoop

174. There are fewer options for exploiting the half-way rule in this situation but the most powerful is the ricochet shot off OB1.

175. Set up the scenario shown in Figure 17 and practice the ricochet shot and also the follow-up shot by PB to get behind the hoop.

9.3 Jump Shots

9.3.1 Outline

176. The purpose of this exercise is to give you confidence in your ability to get a ball to jump in a game situation. **However, this exercise should always be done off the lawn.**

9.3.2 Achieving a jump

177. Place a low barrier (about 4" high) 2 feet in front of a ball and try various different grips, stances and styles of stroke to find the one that gives you most likelihood of getting the ball to go over the barrier.
178. Don't concern yourself with accuracy or distance. The sole purpose of this exercise is to give you total confidence that you can get your ball off the ground.
179. Watch each other from the side to see whether the mallet is travelling down the 'tent-peg' line or is rotating so that it strikes the ball too horizontally.

9.3.3 Accuracy

180. When you can consistently jump the ball over the barrier without damaging the surface then put two sticks in the ground behind the barrier and jump the ball between the sticks.
181. Try this from different ranges.

9.3.4 Elevation

182. Put a hoop in the ground with a ball in the jaws and repeat the exercise.
183. Try from different ranges to see the angle of strike that is needed to get the ball to rise enough but not too much.

9.4 Angled Hoops

9.4.1 Side sighting

184. Place the ball about 2 ft from the hoop and 45° to one side. Stand the mallet upright behind the ball so that its side is lined up with the outside of the ball and the inside of the near upright, as shown in Figure 28.
185. Check the lining up by going behind the hoop and looking through it then move the mallet across to the centre of the ball and play the shot with a downward stroke.
186. Repeat at exactly the same position and play the stroke as an upward shot.
187. Try different distances and angles, using both types of stroke in each case to find which suits your style.

9.4.2 Centre sighting

188. Place the ball in the same position as for the side-sighting practice.
189. Put a marker pin in the ground in front of the hoop and half a hoop width from the near upright so that the line from the hoop upright to the pin makes a right angle with the line from the pin to the centre of the ball.
190. Play the stroke so that the centre of the ball goes exactly over the pin. Try using downward and upward strokes from the same position.
191. Try different distances and angles, using both types of stroke in each case to find which suits your style.

9.5 Wrong Ball Rule

9.5.1 Using a crib-card

192. Take one of the crib-cards and, using the 'Wrong Ball' side, create a situation for each of the actions described.

193. Identify the Striker, the error and the outcome.

9.5.2 Practical

194. Singles:

A. RAY plays Yellow, BAB plays Black

B. RAY plays Red, BAB plays Blue, RAY plays Yellow

195. Doubles. Designate each player with a colour and get each to play the correct ball in sequence (not bothering with consequence). Then go through the sequences below and ask the others to identify the correct ruling, given that Blue is the striker, when:

C. Red plays Blue.

D. Blue plays Black.

E. Black plays Blue.

F. Blue plays Black and Black then plays Yellow.

G. Blue plays Red and Red then plays Yellow.

H. Black plays Blue and Red then plays Red.

I. Black plays Blue and Red then plays Yellow.

J. Blue plays Black and Red plays Yellow.

196. The correct solutions are:

A R&R or Ball Swap (RAY decides).

B BAB's error is condoned. R&R or Ball Swap (BAB decides).

C Annulled.

D R&R or Ball Swap (RAY decides).

E R&R.

F Black's stroke is Annulled. Blue's error is R&R or Ball Swap (RAY decides).

G Penalty Area Continuation.

H Carry On Play.

I BAB's error is condoned. R&R or Ball Swap (BAB decides).

J R&R.

9.6 Making the Most of a Hoop

9.6.1 Outline

197. As with most of the exercises in this coaching series, the aim is to get you to:
- i. See the possible actions (for yourself and your partner).
 - ii. Place your ball precisely in order to optimise your chance of winning the next hoop.

9.6.2 Seeing the possibilities

198. Set up the situation shown in Figure 10 (Blue as SB) and decide whether there is any alternative for the ball in the hoop other than simply running all the way to the next hoop. Always remember that an opponent with extra strokes has many other possible actions available to them.
199. Try moving the other balls to different places to see whether this changes the options. Discuss these with your partner.
200. Repeat this, but with the SB being Black rather than Blue.
201. Repeat it again with the SB being Yellow.

9.6.3 Positioning

202. In each of the above cases, having decided on the preferred action, put a marker on the lawn to show where each ball should finish after your shot.
203. Play the shot to see how accurately you can achieve the result you intended.

9.7 Rush Shots

9.7.1 Straight rushes

204. These fall into two categories, Stop-shot and Drive but in both cases the most important factor is the final position of the rushed ball.
205. If the final position of the striker's ball is equally important then the shot is not a rush but a roll or a clearance.
206. Place two balls on a line about 2 feet apart. Play a stop-shot trying to get the target ball as far down the line as possible.
207. Repeat this with a drive shot and notice the difference in the final position of your ball.
208. Repeat the exercise with the balls 4 feet apart. It will be much more difficult to get a straight rush with this separation and using a stop-shot will have little benefit and may make the shot less accurate.
209. Now put the balls only 6 inches apart and try both shots. Note how the follow-through of the drive shot tends to hit the striker ball again. This is a double-tap and is a fault. It is not always easy to hear the double tap but there is a simple test; if the strike is straight and the striker ball travels more than $\frac{1}{8}$ as far as the target ball then it was struck twice.

9.7.2 Cut rushes

210. Place two balls about 2 feet apart and put a marker 20 feet away at a position about 30° off the straight line.
211. Take a third ball and place it in contact with the target ball on the line to the marker but on the opposite side of the target ball, as shown in Figure 56 on page 45.
212. Walk back and stalk down the line to take a stance behind your ball as though you were going to play a straight drive shot on the third ball. Get your practice partner to remove the third ball and play the shot, trying to get the target ball to finish near the marker.
213. Repeat this with different angles and distances to the marker.
214. Go through the exercise again but without a third ball. Imagine its position and always play your shot as a straight drive on the imaginary ball.