

## Notes From Zoom Presentation on Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> March 2021 on the 7<sup>th</sup> Edition Laws

1. I attended the Chiltern Academy Zoom meeting on the 7<sup>th</sup> Edition Laws presented by Cliff Jones. The 'record' facility was deactivated as concerns have arisen with regard to the General Data Protection Regulations [GDPR]. Consequently, I offer the notes below.

### 2. Critical / Non-Critical Strokes

This is the major change. All it is really saying that if you are about to make a critical stroke then accidentally touching the ball, more likely if you are a 'caster', counts as the stroke. This is due to the fact that replacing the ball with absolute accuracy may not be possible. In such strokes a very small change in ball position may affect the shot outcome materially.

In all likelihood, the striker will be checking with his opponent to confirm whether or not the stroke is critical. If the shot is critical but does not necessarily warrant a referee then all the striker has to do is to 'mark the ball'. This simple procedure has the important effect of making the shot non-critical as, now, the ball could be replaced accurately.

### 3 Laws Lacuna re Critical Strokes

Richard Wood, amongst others, has noted that the rewrite has, inadvertently, omitted a couple of crucial words at Law 8.5.2 / 3:

**8.5.2 NON-CRITICAL STROKES** In a non-critical stroke accidental contact between the mallet and a ball before the striker intended to strike the striker's ball does not of itself constitute playing a stroke. After such accidental contact, Laws 8.5.2.1 to 8.5.2.3 apply.

1. 8.5.2.1 The striker must, if aware of the accidental contact, attempt to avoid any further contact between the mallet and the striker's ball during the striking period.
2. 8.5.2.2 Nevertheless, if there is a further contact between the end-face of the mallet and the striker's ball in the swing in which the striker intends to strike it, the stroke is played. Any prior accidental contact is ignored for the purposes of determining whether a fault was committed but is otherwise treated as part of the stroke.
3. 8.5.2.3 If Law 8.5.2.2 does not apply, the stroke is annulled. Any balls moved must be replaced and the striker may start a new stroke and striking period, except that the new stroke may not be any critical stroke that could have been an alternative to the annulled stroke.

This lacuna, effectively, means that any error committed in an annulled stroke is ignored. This is, obviously, unintended and it is anticipated that the Commentary will correct.

### 4. Faults Laws 29

Note the new 'Exemptions & Limitations' on Law 29.1 et seq.

#### **Law:**

29.1.1 touches the head of the mallet with a hand, or slides the mallet along the striker's foot or leg to guide it (for exemptions see Laws 29.2.1 and 29.2.2);

#### **29.2 Exemptions and Limitations**

29.2.1 The fault of touching the head of the mallet in Law 29.1.1 is committed only if the striker touches the mallet head **during the final swing** of the mallet towards the ball.

#### **Law:**

29.1.2 rests the shaft of the mallet or a hand or arm on the ground, an outside agency, or any part of the striker's legs or feet (for exemptions see Law 29.2)

Law 6<sup>th</sup> Edition said:

**8.6 Law 28(a)(3) - 'rests the shaft of the mallet or a hand or arm directly connected with the stroke against any part of his legs or feet'**

## Exemptions and Limitations

29.2.2 A fault is not committed under Laws 29.1.1 or 29.1.2 if the touching, resting or sliding occurs after the striker has completed the swing in which the stroke was played.

**BUT:** the new law omits the caveat 'directly connected'. This means you may no longer, for example, play a shot one-handed with the other hand supporting you on the ground.

### Law:

29.1.6.1 to contact the striker's ball more than once in a croquet stroke, or continuation stroke when the striker's ball is touching another ball (for exemptions see Law 29.2.4 and for limitations see Law 29.2.5); or

## Exemptions and Limitations

29.2.5 A multiple contact between the mallet and the striker's ball is a fault under Law 29.1.6.1 only if the striker or a referee or other person asked to adjudicate the stroke, aided by nothing more than spectacles or contact lenses, sees a separation between mallet and ball followed by a second contact between them.

Comment: No using a 'slo mo' camera to record the shot! But the caveat means, re 'aids', that the referee must be absolutely sure the requirements to call a fault are unquestionable. [Still tricky!]

The Exemptions and Limitations carry this 'aids' point on in 29.2.6. & 29.2.7

### Law:

29.1.12 touches any ball with any part of the body;

6<sup>th</sup> Edition Laws – 28.16 Law 28(a)(13) 'touches any ball with any part of his body or clothes'

And the Commentary said: Note the definition of 'clothes' in Law 28(c). This includes a clip, so woe betide the striker whose clip falls off his pocket and hits a ball during the striking period.

**As 29.1.2 omits the word 'clothes'** the infamous clip dropping off your apparel and hitting a ball is no longer a fault!

## 5. Close Positions

The new laws give firm instruction on how close situations should be adjudged and there is a new Table to assist.. To clarify – you may still call a referee if striker and opponent disagree.

**NB.** The ball on or off situation allowed for the ball to be declared 'on' where the linesman had 'sneezed' and caused a very definite 'kink' in the boundary line. This is no longer the case. Law 4.3, Boundaries, is much expanded to clarify which 'edge' when several line markings are visible and, importantly requires the on / off decision to be based on the definition highlighted below:

### 4.3 BOUNDARIES

- 4.3.1 The boundaries must be clearly marked. Where more than one boundary marking is visible and it is not obvious which one should be used, the most recent defines the actual boundary or, if that cannot be determined, the innermost defines the actual boundary. Exceptional cases may be dealt with under the overriding law (see Law 63). **If the boundary marking is not straight, the actual boundary at any point is the straight line which best fits the inner edge of the boundary marking in the vicinity of that point.**

## 6. Lifts

When a ball is lawfully lifted and placed on the yard-line it may be placed in contact with another ball and croquet taken. Croquet may only be taken from the ball it touches on initial

placement. This may be important if a ball is lifted when the balls, already on the yard line, are in corner 1 or 3, in contact, on the A or B Baulk yard line with the second ball, north or south respectively. The lifted ball may only be placed in contact with the ball on the baulk yard line. The balls may be re-arranged for the canon shot, but croquet can only be taken from the ball on the baulk yard line.

## 7. Using a Ball that is an Outside Agency Law 33

Law 33 deals with a striker using a ball belonging to the double-banked game. It is straightforward. However, after defining the situations, note what law 33.1.2 says:

33.1.1 This interference occurs if it is discovered before the limit of claims that the striker has struck, or otherwise included in the game subject to the exclusions in Law 33.1.2, a ball that is an outside agency because it is:

33.1.1.1 a ball not belonging to the game; or

33.1.1.2 a ball of the game that has not yet become a ball in play; or

33.1.1.3 a ball of the game that has been pegged out and removed from the court.

**33.1.2** Law 33.1.1 does not apply to any attempt to roquet a ball from a game that is double-banked on the court, nor to any croquet stroke played with the objective of roqueting a ball from that double-banked game in the next stroke.

Having just missed the deadline for laws suggestions I contacted Ian Vincent, the UK Rep on the World Croquet Laws Committee on the subject and his response is below and was endorsed at Saturday's meeting:

From: Ian Vincent <ian.vincent@cantab.net>

Sent: 06 October 2020 22:57

To: Chris Donovan <chris@navonod.plus.com>

Subject: Re: AC - Deliberately Playing a Ball of the other Game when Double-Banked

Dear Chris,

You are right that this situation is not covered by the current, 6th Edition, Laws, which is why it is confusing and that inconsistent rulings are given. **I think the ruling usually given is the one you describe: that the striker has played a valid stroke and (if the double-banked ball is roqueted) suffered interference from it, with no replay available.**

The proposed 7th Edition attempts to improve on this by treating the situation as an additional type of interference.

Law 30.1 was carried forward from the 6th Edition and is intended to prevent e.g. an opponent kicking a ball just before the striker is about to roquet it. It is not intended to disable the new Law 33.

I am currently proof-reading the commentary for the new Edition, and will suggest that this situation is included as an example.

Best wishes, Ian.

## 8. Interferences

Discussion on interference by a double-banked ball hitting balls in the other game was discussed. This followed the discussion on critical / non-critical strokes. The agreed, far from perfect, remedy for when this happens is to guesstimate where the errant ball would have ended-up and the struck ball is replaced as accurately as memory allows. Often this is most unsatisfactory. This is not to ignore the possible replay laws but, more often than not, it is the Double-banked ball striking a stationary ball. Unsurprisingly, the meeting concluded that the best rule is 'if in doubt mark it' because we all know 'if something can go wrong, it will'.

## 9. Time Limited Games -Precedence

The Laws now state who takes precedence when double-banked games get in each other's way. A welcome clarification:

### 59 **DOUBLE-BANKED GAMES**

59.2 **PRECEDENCE** Except when a ball in a critical position may interfere with play in the other game as specified in Law 59.3.2, precedence should normally be given to players in the following order:

59.2.1 to a player who will not require balls from another game to be marked and moved;

59.2.2 to a player who is most likely to get clear of the relevant area first;

59.2.3 to a player who is making a break;

**59.2.4 to a player of a game that is time limited and has less than 15 minutes remaining; if both games are in that state, to the player whose game has less time remaining.**

## 10. Restoration of Time

Again, much more detail. Does a 'call of nature' constitute "becoming unable to play owing to illness..." in older players? Answers on a post card please!

61.4 **SUSPENSION OF TIME** Unless otherwise specified in tournament regulations or event conditions, time is suspended only if play ceases for any of the following reasons:

61.4.1 **REFEREEING** a refereeing event such as resetting equipment or repairing damage, but not normally for testing for wiring nor merely when a referee is called to watch a stroke;

61.4.2 **LOST BALL** a lost ball being searched for or replaced;

61.4.3 **PLAYER UNAVAILABLE** a player having been called away on official tournament duties or becoming unable to play owing to illness or injury;

61.4.4 **ADJOURNMENT** the game being pegged down or the players taking a meal break;

61.4.5 **OTHER DELAY** any other event or situation, including weather and disruption by double-banking, that leads to a delay of at least 5 minutes.

It was agreed that 61.4.3 applied when a playing referee was called away and did not return when his turn otherwise started.

## 11. Equipment – Hoops

Law 5.2 Hoops, is much expanded at 5.2.3 on hoop adjustment. It is now specific that protruding 'carrots' that may impede a stroke may be corrected, i.e. knocked in. It is perfectly acceptable that, to preserve the initial hoop setting carrot are left slightly protruding above ground level if the passage of the ball through the hoop is not impeded. However, a tight shot affected by protruding carrots can be remedied if striker requests. Usual caveat re other ball positions etc still stand.

### Closing Remarks

I regret written explanation takes so much longer than face to face discussion but, I hope, the above is helpful. There is much to be put into an A6 Laws Booklet and it will be interesting to see how thick it is! The Commentary is hoped to be published simultaneously.

Chris Donovan  
Chairman Sidmouth CC

8 March 2021