

Nottingham Croquet Club: Double banking protocols and etiquette

From August 24th 2020 onwards we expect to have only lawns 1 to 5 in service. This could lead to more double banking (sharing a lawn between two games, one using first colour balls, the other using second colours) so here are some guidelines, which will be a reminder to some and new information to others.

Don't attempt to have GC and AC on the same lawn – it doesn't work out well. Also in AC, singles games are better for sharing a lawn than doubles games.

Equip yourself with at least 2 plastic ball markers. There is a pot of these in the pavilion. Never use metal markers or coins; they sometimes get forgotten, dropped or lost and can cause huge damage to a lawn mower.

During play, when starting your turn, always stop before you step onto the lawn to check that you are not walking across the path of a person in play in the other game. Be aware of the other game whilst in play too. It is easy to become so engrossed in your game that you become oblivious to the other game and inconvenience them.

If a ball from the other game is at risk from your next stroke, you may either wait for them to move that ball in the normal course of their game, or obtain permission from the person in play to "mark" it (that is, to mark its position and then temporarily remove it). If in any doubt as to whether a ball is at risk, err on the side of caution; balls do not always go where you intend. If permission is not forthcoming (e.g. because the ball is in a critical position), either wait, or – if that would hold up your game too much – it may be agreeable for it to be marked and replaced very carefully, preferably by a referee.

When marking balls, do so accurately; e.g. by using two markers, one on either side of the ball, and checking the view from directly above. People who have been on referee courses will know other accurate methods.

Replace any marked balls before you play your next stroke and let the players from the other game know.

Which game has precedence? If one game can play on without marking and moving balls from the other game, that game goes first. Otherwise the order of precedence is: (1) the player more likely to get clear of the area first; (2) a player who is making a break; (3) time-limited games with under 15 minutes left – or if that applies to both games, the game with less time remaining.

If, despite all the above, one of your balls does collide with a ball from the other game, apologise, then try to replace their ball where it was by agreement with their players, and then try to place the ball from your game where it would have gone by agreement with your opponent.

Further details on Double Banking can be found in the Laws of Association Croquet (7th Edition) LAW 59.

(Text partly based on an online article by Julie Horsley of Sidmouth Croquet Club)