

A Guide to Establishing and Maintaining Correct Handicaps Croquet Clubs – GC, with reference to AC

(Consolidating and Developing the Handicapping Regulations - CNZ Yearbook 2025/2026 pages 259 to 263)

Important Note: **Association Croquet** AHS Cards record scores from singles games
 Golf Croquet AHS Cards record scores from both singles and doubles games

The following procedure applies to all Croquet Auckland (CA) Clubs and Tournaments.

1 Appoint a Club Handicapper

Identify an experienced full Club Member who plays (or has played) competitively, supported by a Handicapping Sub-Committee comprising Handicapper/Captain, and 2/3 independent, experienced Club members (minimum: 2 - for membership numbers up to 40; 3 -for membership numbers up to 70; 4 for – membership numbers over 71). Any Club unable to identify sufficient experience or expertise within their membership should approach the CA Handicapper for advice – such expertise may be forthcoming from other clubs which should inform the Association Handicapper of their willingness to assist.

2 Establish Regular Handicap Review Meetings – the purposes of which are to:

- a) check all members AHS Cards, ensuring that recent index points and associated Handicaps are correct. Cross-reference these with the Handicaps and Trigger Points at the top of the front face of the card, and check some game score calculations.
- b) Discuss each player's skill level, agreeing an adjustment down to a lower handicap if appropriate. This can be to the next Trigger Point/handicap level or a number of index points beyond (moving *closer* to the next Handicap level). Take care not to overlook the Rapid Improver; seeking advice from the Auckland Handicapper when it is judged that there is a significant difference between a player's performance and current handicap.
- c) Record changes by signing and dating the AHS card on the front page and in the Tournament section where "Review and Revision" must be added. Initial the most recent index score.
- d) Pay particular attention to new members, acknowledging when starting handicaps should be adjusted promptly for those who play regularly. A starting handicap of 14 should be improved to 12 between 6 and 12 months.

NB *It is recommended that where possible players' handicaps be overseen every 3 months (sometimes conveniently coinciding with Tournaments, when the card will automatically be checked by Tournament Manager (TM)).*

Individual Club Handicap Review Meetings should be held at least annually and any changes to the database recorded before June each year.

3 Automatic Handicapping (AHS Cards Used)

At the start of a Tournament, the TM checks all players' AHS Cards

During any Tournament, when a player's index points accumulate to the level where a handicap change is triggered – this should be confirmed by the TM who must update and sign the AHS card prior to the next game being played. The change must be noted on Tournament games' schedules

and applied to all future games within the tournament and on the player's Club's database by either the TM or the Club's Handicapper.

NB *In a graded Tournament, if a player's handicap improves to a lower handicap (to the extent that the player improves to a lower grade (e.g. Primary to Intermediate)) on or after the entry closing date, they may continue to play in the Grade they originally entered for the duration of that Tournament.*

4 Non-Automatic Handicap Changes - Manual Changes (refer No.2)

a) **Downward** When it becomes evident that a player's game is improving rapidly to the extent that their AHS card score cannot keep pace with that improvement, they should be assessed at a Special Meeting by 2 members of the Handicapping Sub-Committee (as an exception to the annual Handicap Review) and if agreed, awarded an improved handicap of one level. Request advice from the CA Handicapper if the Club Handicapping Committee recommend further improvement, which may be up to a maximum 3 handicap levels (e.g. GC 11 to 8). Complete and sign the AHS Card as above, record the change on the database and notify the Association Handicapper.

b) **Upward** When a player's game is diminishing, an upward handicap move may be considered, although best practise is to allow natural progression to take place for which the automatic-handicap system is a preferable option. This topic requires sensitive handling and is often a subject raised by the player themselves. *Although rarely occurring, this situation will be discussed with the CA Handicapper.*

NB

- ii Within the scope of manual adjustments, the Club Handicapper is entitled to award index points (2b).*
- iii Players with a handicap of +3 and below (GC) will seldom require manual handicap adjustments, but if so, this will be the responsibility of the Association or CNZ handicapper.*

5 Three Times Round Test (GC) This simple test may be used by handicappers, contributing to the assessment of a member's handicap. A player runs hoops 1 to 6, 3 times in succession, the total number of strokes noted by the scorer. The suggested handicap from the combined totals may be found on p.82, table A in the GC Rule Book (6th ed. 2022). Encourage players to take this test independently; it leads to greater self-awareness of basic playing skills.

6 Club Tournaments and Progression (AHS Cards may be used)

Aim to establish a periodic graded club singles Tournament for all players with experience of playing for 15 months and beyond. Record scores, either on a Club Score card or on AHS Cards. Establish a separate Tournament for less experienced players who have been members for approximately 3 to 15 months. Seek Sponsorship to encourage participation and award prizes and/or a shield, trophy or certificate.

7 Identifying and Resolving Inconsistencies in Tournament Play (refer No.4)

Despite recognising that all players have days of 'brilliance' when they play exceptionally well and conversely days that are not so good, there are occasions when a player may be identified as a rapid improver, playing consistently above the level expected of their current handicap, in both AC and GC. For example, a player on a GC 10 handicap is *regularly* winning games because their standard of play is beyond the level indicated by their handicap, and that of their opponent on the same handicap. But points gained by the wins are insufficient to trigger an automatic Handicap change, therefore *their true handicap level* is not reflected. Consequently, the opponent can be disadvantaged, loses index points and their handicap may increase due to the inconsistencies.

NB *This paragraph refers to the rare exceptional circumstance, not the ups and downs of standard competitive play, reinforcing the importance of ensuring that we are all playing on the correct handicap!*

Procedure: If concerned, the opposition player should feel confident to discuss their concerns with the TM

The TM will watch the exceptional player, check his/her AHS card and if anomalies are identified, notify the Club Handicapper from the winning player's club. It is their responsibility to investigate and take remedial action as required.

NB A player's GC Handicap may only change *during a Tournament* if consistent with no. 3 (Automatic Handicap System) and it will not be subject to a manual adjustment based on visual assessment by: their opponent, nor another player nor a Manager concerned with that Tournament, during that tournament.

In Association Croquet Tournaments, the TM may make manual adjustments to players' handicaps at the end of a game – any alterations will be referred on to the Player's Club Handicapper or Captain.

“TWO OPPOSING PLAYERS ON THE SAME HANDICAP IN A LEVEL SINGLES GAME SHOULD HAVE AN EQUAL CHANCE OF WINNING WHEN THEY PLAY EACH OTHER” CNZ Rule Book

Enjoy the Game!

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