

Proposals to SWF AGM 2026

Context

This document records all the constitutional and league rules proposals that were carried at the 2025 AGM and notes the actions that followed.

A huge vote of thanks to everyone who helped implement the new process – with particular thanks to Andru Blewett, Martin French, John Guy, Dave Kibble, Keith Southern and Gill Wheeler, on their work.

The following proposals were carried at the AGM and incorporated into the Constitution and Rules published at the beginning of the season.

C1	To clarify what constitutes a majority vote at a General Meeting
C2	To correct inconsistencies in the constitution relating to numbering structures
P1	That League Rules re re-arrangement of fixtures be amended
P2	That SC rules be amended to simplify access to information re conversion of handicaps
P3	Rationalise handicap bisque base between B-League and Intermediate league
P5	To enable two clubs to enter joint teams into leagues – the suggestion has since been made that the joint team name consists of the name of each club -this will be included in the league entry form – no change in rule is needed
P9	To change the pairing of opponents for Federation league to handicap order
P10	SWF to review handicapping guidance to clubs – an update will be given in the Handicapping officer's report
P11	That SWF consider adding a GC 10+ Level Play league
P12	To reduce to 12 the highest handicap eligible for Federation league without exceptions
P17	Remove reference to refreshments in Appx: Alternative venue play-offs
P18	Host clubs should provide simple refreshments
P19	SWF should pay Host clubs refreshment costs at Finals
P20	That terminology be amended to reflect that used by CqE
P21	Extend guidance on alternative venues to all matches
P22	Provision of basic refreshments at matches
P24	Strike the mention of stoppages from the League rules
P25	The terms Home and Host to be used consistently
P27	Use consistent terminology in relation to League for Advanced play
P29	Improve consistency of wording re play-offs
P30	Relax deadlines for intra-club League matches
P31	Remove reference to National Handicappers powers
P33	To state the action to be taken if it is discovered a player is playing off a handicap lower than they should

Proposals

This is a long document but there are only 16 proposals (compared to last year's 32!)

Unless otherwise stated, proposals are made by SWF Committee in consultation with the working parties.

The numbers in **bold red** are reference numbers for 2026 AGM

The numbers in **bold black** are those used at the 2025 AGM

P 001 P23	That terminology be amended to reflect that used by CqE
NB: P20 was worded in the same way but specifically referred to court and equipment hire which has been amended.	
<u>Part 1</u> The terminology used in League Rules is not consistent with that used by CqE	
Proposed changes • Replace the statement of which Laws/Rules apply in each of the League Rules with: <i>Games shall, subject to the authorised variations in Croquet England's Tournament Regulations section "Approved Laws/Rules Variations" and international or Croquet England rulings, be played under the latest edition of one of the following sets of Laws or Rules:</i> ◦ <i>for Association Croquet, the current Laws of Association Croquet as published by Croquet England, together with any official rulings; or</i> ◦ <i>for Golf Croquet, the current Rules of Golf Croquet as published by Croquet England, together with any official rulings.</i> • Note that the above text is taken from the CqE Tournament Regulations. • In all cases, reference to the Laws/Rules should also say: <i>"together with any official rulings"</i>. • References to "WCF Rules of Golf Croquet" <i>should be to "The Rules of Golf Croquet as published by Croquet England", our governing body, whose Rules (and Rulings) apply to all other Calendar Fixtures in England."</i>	
Vote	

All rules

P 101 P35	That the process of agreeing changes to League Rules is improved
The aim of this proposal was to establish a process for reviewing and, if necessary, re-drafting rules in order that they are clearly and unambiguously written and reflect the decisions made by AGM.	
The rules currently read: Amendments: These rules are subject to amendment at any General Meeting of the Federation by simple majority of those delegates present and eligible to vote.	

Proposed re-wording:

Amendments: These rules may be changed by a simple majority of the votes cast at a General Meeting. A working group may be authorised to compose the exact wording in consultation with members as set out in the accompanying guidance See Appendix Re-wording League Rules

Vote

Proposed Appendix: Rewording League Rules

Setting and developing League Rules can be a complex process sometimes leading to detailed discussions – something that a General Meeting may not manage very effectively.

A General Meeting may therefore make an 'in principle' decision which will be referred to a working group to

- agree the exact wording for implementation at the start of the subsequent season; or*
- reflect on the issues and bring recommendations or proposals to the subsequent General Meeting*

The working group will

- consist of a member of the SWF Committee, a representative of the proposing club/s, others with a particular knowledge or area of expertise*
- keep the SWF Committee and member clubs informed of their work and invite comments*

Additionally, member clubs are invited and encouraged to submit their suggestions to the SWF Committee at any time during the year so they might be shared with other clubs in order they might reflect on the issues raised and make their own suggestions.

Clubs remain free to make their own proposals in line with the conditions set out in the SWF Constitution. All proposals will be formally presented to members in line with the SWF Constitution.

Note

- where minor amendments that clarify or standardise the Rules are deemed necessary by the SWF Committee, these will be made without consultation*
- the SWF Committee may, in exceptional circumstances, change the Rules mid-season. Any such changes will be notified to Member Clubs and will be presented to the next AGM for ratification.*

Vote

P 201 P14 P32	To provide guidance for abandoning a fixture in the event of extreme hot weather To provide guidance when a match is abandoned for reasons other than the condition of the lawns The proposals were amended to: Revise the rules for extreme conditions through a working party
Revised guidance was published in the Rules and the working group has been reviewing this very closely as it became apparent it was not really up to the mark. We are only just beginning to learn how to manage our changing climate and the impact this is likely to have on our play. Also	

there seems to be little evidence that the age of players is decreasing and this needs to be taken into account. We anticipate this will be a recurring topic in the years to come.

We are trying to provide Rules / Guidance to cover a wide range of situations keeping player welfare the key priority, being fair to the teams involved and taking into account the deadlines for play.

Despite the weather, very few matches have been totally disrupted for this reason and team captains must receive the credit for this as they were really flexible in managing dates.

A lot of work and debate has taken place in reaching this point. We decided it is impossible to cover every eventuality so are proposing that the following replaces the current rules with a commitment to review them next year in the light of experience in 2027.

Postponement, Abandonment, Cancellation and Walkover

SWF Leagues are run to provide a competitive and enjoyable environment, and the expectation is that each team will make every effort to ensure that games are played in a sporting spirit and matches organised and completed having due regard to the health and safety of players.

Events may occur that prevent this happening and every effort should be made to re-arrange. This section sets out the actions to be taken if this is not possible.

- *The League Secretary must be informed if a match does not take place on the date stated in the League Fixtures List or is not completed e.g. for the reasons set out below. They will advise on the action to be taken and, where necessary, the score to be recorded.*
- *Reasons why matches may be postponed abandoned or cancelled*
 - *Health, safety or welfare of players is at risk*
 - *We have a duty of care towards ourselves, other players, spectators and visitors – this over-rides considerations about courts or completing matches*
 - *The decision to postpone or abandon a match for these reasons will depend on a number of factors*
 - *It should be made by the team captains in consultation with their teams giving priority to the welfare of their players, and the League Secretary should be informed of the decision or consulted for advice if necessary.*
 - *If an Amber or Red Government Heat Health warning, a Government Severe Weather, Met Office warning or similar is in place for the date and time of the fixture, EITHER of the clubs involved may postpone the fixture*
 - <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/ukhsa-updates-heat-health-alerts-across-england#full-publication-update-history>
 - *Every effort should be made to rearrange the fixture for another date. If this proves impossible the match shall be cancelled and declared a draw and the score recorded as*
 - *3 – 3 for an AC match;*
 - *7 – 7 for an SC match.*
 - *The score recorded for a GC match depends on the number of games agreed to be played. Thus*
 - *9 – 9 for a 20 game match;*
 - *7 – 7 for a 16 game match and*

- *5 – 5 for a 12 game match.*
- *Unplayable courts*
 - *A court is unplayable if:*
 - *both captains agree it is unplayable; or*
 - *there is sufficient surface water on any part of the court to prevent a ball hit through it from reaching any one of the four boundaries.*
 - *Where one or more courts are unplayable, the two captains may:*
 - *choose to continue the match; or*
 - *agree to abandon the match; or*
 - *disagree, in which case the match shall be abandoned.*
 - *Where all the courts are playable and one captain wishes to abandon the match but the other wishes to continue, any uncompleted games shall be awarded to the team that is prepared to continue.*
- *Other reasons*
 - *In the first instance team captains should use their judgment and the League Secretary should then be contacted for advice and guidance.*
 - *In the event of a player becoming unable to continue playing, CqE guidance should be followed*
<https://www.croquet.org.uk/?p=/tournament/regulations#F9>
- *Postponement*
 - *A match may need to be postponed if it cannot be played as arranged for the reasons set out above*
 - *If a request to postpone is made, every effort should be made by both clubs to re-arrange*
 - *If for any reason a match needs to be postponed and the request is made before 30th June, the clubs involved must rearrange the match for a later date*
 - *If this is not possible, the League Secretary should be consulted*
- *Abandonment*
 - *Where a match is abandoned, every attempt should be made to complete the match at a later date.*
 - *If this is not possible, the following will apply:*
 - *If one team has already won more than half of the scheduled number of games, or more than half of the completed games the score at the point of abandonment will be recorded*
 - *If the number of wins is scored equally, the match shall be declared a draw and the score at the point of abandonment will be recorded*
 - *In the event of no games being played, the match shall be declared a draw dependent on the match format*
 - *AC: 3:3*
 - *SC: 8:8*
 - *GC:*
 - *9:9 if the match was 20 games*
 - *7:7 if the match was 16 games*
 - *5:5 if the match was 12 games*
 - *4:4 if the match was 10 games*
- *Cancellation*

- *A match may need to be cancelled if it is impossible to re-arrange and the match shall be declared a draw and the score will be recorded as set out in abandonment.*
- *Walkover*
 - *Where a club fails to provide the minimum size of team for any fixture, the League Secretary may award a walkover win to its opponents*
 - *A walkover win shall be scored as follows*
 - *GC: This will depend on the number of games agreed to be played*
 - *9-0 if the match was 20 games, each game being scored as 7- 4 for block position*
 - *7-0 if the match was 16 games, each game being scored 7 – 4 for block position*
 - *5 – 0 if the match was 12 games, each game being scored 7 – 4 for block position*
 - *AC: 3–0, each game being scored as 26–13 for block position calculations*
 - *SC: 7 – 0 each game being scored as 14-7 for block position calculations*

Vote

P 202 P21	Extend guidance on Alternative Venues to include all block and play-off matches
This was included in the 2026 Rules and the working group has considered two aspects to this: ● whether the Home team should have a veto on the request; ● the clarity of the wording used It was noted that the AGM expressed a strong feeling that the home team should not have a 'veto' on a proposed venue change if the clubs are more than 2 hours apart. The working party deliberated on this at length, and identified significant problems if this were to be enforced, so this aspect of the rule was unchanged for 2025. The situation is clearly unsatisfactory so we are bringing this back to this AGM. When we come to the vote on this particular issue, we ask clubs to consider ● clubs are aware when entering a league that they may well encounter significant journey times and that they should take that into account ● if the away club's request is automatically enacted, this could result in both clubs having to find an alternative venue if they are playing 'home' and away' in a block – more expense for them both and extra demands on a mid-way club ● that the decision to have smaller blocks leads to home and away matches. Larger blocks would mean even more travel. We recognise that significant distances may be travelled and that this can be tiring, time consuming and expensive. The League Secretary does their utmost to minimise travel ● Many matches in the earlier rounds are played as Home and Away, so the travel will be the same for both teams in that season. ● Play-off venues are arranged so that they alternate year-on-year between areas – but if a team fails to reach a play-off one year, they will not directly benefit from this. ● Finals are arranged well before any matches are played, so it is impossible to predict how far finalists will need to travel.	

Apart from the matter of home club veto, the protocols regarding alternative venue applied to all matches, not just play-offs, but not to Finals.

Finals matches are not included - venues for these are arranged at the very start of the season when little or nothing is known about which clubs may be playing. It is important that these venues have adequate facilities to host the final and meet their responsibilities as host clubs. Delaying the selection of finals venues creates its own challenges – availability at a time of year when clubs are holding their own finals, arranging referees and SWF representatives.

Proposed new wording: Appendix Alternative Match Venue

This guidance applies to block and play-off matches. It does not apply to Finals venues.

If the clubs are based a 2-hours or more car journey apart, the Away team may request that the match be played at an alternative venue approximately equidistant between the two locations.

In the block stage, the request to move to an alternative venue must be made early in the season when dates are agreed by the Match Secretaries.

It is the responsibility of the requesting team to find a suitable venue (host club), making all the arrangements with that venue and meeting the cost of any fees charged.

If no alternative venue is available, the match shall be held at the original venue.

Where a charge is made by the host venue for court and equipment hire, the standard Base Rate as defined by Croquet England shall apply, and that charge shall be paid by the away team.

<https://www.croquet.org.uk/?p=CqE/schemes/fees>

For play-offs, the alternative venue the match must be held on one of the three dates offered by the designated home club.

Vote

P 203	Eligibility for play-offs and finals – that eligibility criteria are extended
We have noted that several teams have struggled as a result of changing handicaps and that it would be helpful to extend the conditions under which such a player could continue to play for that team. We are proposing that the current rules regarding eligibility for all leagues: AC, GC and SC, are replaced as set out below. Furthermore, that this should apply to all games, and not limited to play-offs and finals. Proposal That current wording is replaced with: <i>A player who has played two or more matches for a team during a season may continue to play for the team during the season provided their handicap is no more than one handicap step outside the range specified for that league.</i> Vote	

P 204	Determining Block Winners		
The suggestion has been made that that the rules for determining block positions are harmonised between the codes. It is noted that determining winners by nett points in AC handicap games is not permitted under CqE Regulations because it is inherently unfair. However we are proposing that this be used if necessary at the penultimate stage of determining the winner – this is better than tossing a coin! The use of the Scoring Fraction Percentage was introduced by CqE as part of Advantage system of handicapping rather than nett points. The current wording is set out below then proposed amendments – there may be some inconsistency in numbering which will be rectified when any changes are agreed. The following methods are proposed to give a more consistent approach between the codes, and to avoid perpetuating a rule that conflicts with the CqE position.			
<i>AC</i> <i>Final Block Positions</i> <i>a. In determining the positions in an all-play-all block after all fixtures have been decided, teams shall be ranked according to the following hierarchy.</i> <i>i. Match points awarded. (Two match points are awarded to a winning team, or one match</i>	<i>GC</i> <i>Final Block Positions</i> <i>a) In determining the positions in an all-play-all block after all fixtures have been decided, teams shall be ranked according to the following hierarchy.</i> <i>i. Match points awarded. (Two match points are awarded to a winning team, or one match</i>	<i>SC</i> <i>Final Block Positions</i> <i>a) In determining the positions in an all-play-all block after all fixtures have been decided, teams shall be ranked according to the following hierarchy.</i> <i>i) Match points awarded. (Two match points are awarded to a winning team, or one match point</i>	

<i>point to each team in the event of a draw.)</i> <i>ii, 'Who beat whom', using the nett games where teams have met twice.</i> <i>iii Where two or more teams are still equal, then for a mini-block of the equal teams:</i> <i>1) match points awarded; then</i> <i>2) 'who beat whom', using the nett games where teams have met twice; then</i> <i>3) nett games between the teams in the mini-block; then</i> <i>iv Where two or more teams are still equal, they shall be ranked by their nett games in the entire block.</i> <i>v. Where two or more teams are still equal, they shall be ranked by their average nett hoop and peg points per game in the entire block.</i> <i>vi. Should the above measures fail to resolve the equality in ranking, lots shall be drawn by the Committee.</i>	<i>point to each team in the event of a draw.)</i> <i>ii. 'Who beat whom', using the nett games where teams have met twice.</i> <i>iii. Where two or more teams are still equal, then for a mini-block of the equal teams:</i> <i>1)match points awarded; then</i> <i>2)'who beat whom', using the nett games where teams have met twice; then</i> <i>3)nett games between the teams in the mini-block.</i> <i>iv Where two or more teams are still equal, they shall be ranked by their nett games in the entire block'</i> <i>v. Where two or more teams are still equal, they shall be ranked by their Scoring Fraction Percentage averaged over the relevant games in the mini-block</i> <i>vi. Should the above measures fail to resolve the equality in ranking, lots shall be drawn by the Committee.</i>	<i>to each team in the event of a draw.)</i> <i>ii) 'Who beat whom', using the nett games where teams have met twice.</i> <i>iii) Where two or more teams are still equal, then for a mini-block of the equal teams:</i> <i>1) match points awarded; then</i> <i>2) 'who beat whom', using the nett games where teams have met twice; then</i> <i>3) nett games between the teams in the mini-block; then</i> <i>iv Where two or more teams are still equal, they shall be ranked by their nett games in the entire block.</i> <i>v. Where two or more teams are still equal, they shall be ranked by their average nett hoop and peg points per game in the entire block.</i> <i>vi. Should the above measures fail to resolve the equality in ranking, lots shall be drawn by the Committee.</i>
Vote		

GC Rules

P 301 P16	To move current mid-range GC handicap and Level Play (5+) leagues to a level play league combining the CqE B-level and C- level bands
In view of the fact that CqE have not yet agreed their bandings for Class events, the working party recommend that these should remain unchanged for 2027 in SWF Leagues. - Many options for different ranges were discussed but each creates its own problems. - There is already the opportunity for people with a range of handicaps to get a DGrade and to avoid superfluous changes it was agreed that no change be proposed and that this would be kept under review during 2027. - When CqE determines the Grade structure, we can work out how / if SWF harmonises - Note that handicap leagues have been well supported this year and there are no plans to withdraw them.	

P 302 a	That the Level Play 5+ league changes to a Level Play 4+ league.
Proposer	St Agnes CC
Note: St Agnes have submitted 3 proposals to be considered in order: - If P302a fails, move to P302b, & P302c would be withdrawn; - If P302a is carried, P302b is withdrawn, move on to P302c Rationale Accepting that the SWF wishes to limit the amount of changes to GC LP leagues this year pending the potential review by CqE to increase the number of bands to 5, we feel that those clubs at the periphery of the region are likely to have a few members on a handicap of 4 who are missing out. Remoteness makes it difficult to link up with other clubs to make up a Level Play team, which in any case would in all likelihood mean unrealistic travel distances to play other clubs in this league. Rule changes: Change the wording Level Play 5+ League to Level Play 4+ League; in the following Rules: 1)a)ii), 3)a), 10)c), 11)b), 12), 12)i), 16)c), 17)c)i), & 23. Vote	

P 302 b	That the Level Play 5+ league allows 1 player with a handicap 1 step outside the range to play in the team.
Proposer	St Agnes CC
Note: To be withdrawn if P302a is carried Rationale Accepting that the SWF wishes to limit the amount of changes to GC LP leagues this year pending the potential review by CqE to increase the number of bands to 5, we feel that those clubs at the periphery of the region are likely to have members on a handicap of 4 who are missing out. Remoteness makes it difficult to link up with other clubs to make up a Level Play team, which in any case would in all likelihood mean unrealistic travel distances to play other clubs in this league.	

Rule changes:

Current wording:

Rule 11) b) Level Play 5+ League. Players with handicaps of 5 or above, subject to f below.

Proposed wording:

Rule 11) b) Level Play 5+ League. Players with handicaps of 5 or above, with the exception of 1 player with a handicap 1 step outside the range, to play in the team.

Vote

P 302 c	That the Level Play 4+ league allows 1 player with a handicap 1 step outside the range to play in the team.
Proposer	St Agnes
Note: To be proposed if P302a is carried Rationale Accepting that the SWF wishes to limit the amount of changes to GC LP leagues this year pending the potential review by CqE to increase the number of bands to 5, we feel that those clubs at the periphery of the region are likely to have members on a handicap of 3 who are missing out. Remoteness makes it difficult to link up with other clubs to make up a Level Play team, which in any case would in all likelihood mean unrealistic travel distances to play other clubs in this league. Rule changes: Current wording: Rule 11) b) Level Play 5+ League. Players with handicaps of 5 or above, subject to f below. Proposed wording: Rule 11) b) Level Play 4+ League. Players with handicaps of 4 or above, with the exception of 1 player with a handicap 1 step outside the range, to play in the team. Vote	

P 303 P7 P28	Reduce the number of rounds by 1 to encourage untimed games Shorter playing day - to introduce the option for a 16-game match if both teams agree
Consultation with clubs during the summer showed a clear preference for a default of 20 games and that it would be helpful to identify criteria under which 16 games (or fewer) are acceptable. Proposed wording <i>A match shall normally comprise 20 games: 4 doubles games and 16 singles games.</i> <i>Below is the full range of possible criteria that could be used to determine when a 16-game match may be played.</i> <i>A 16-game match comprising 4 doubles games and 12 singles games may be played if</i> • <i>Both teams agree, or</i> • <i>Either team requests it providing</i> ○ <i>At least 2-weeks'notice is given (except in the case of a last-minute emergency).</i>	

- *The clubs are based a 2-hours or more car journey apart*
- *A 20-game match cannot reasonably be completed in five rounds because:*
 - *Either team will consist of only four players.*
 - *The match will be played on fewer than two lawns.*

A 10-game match comprising 2 doubles games and 8 singles games may be played if

- *The match is to be played on 1 full-size lawn, and*
- *Either team requests it*

Vote

**P 304
P26**

Player Participation Limitation – drop the restriction on the number of singles and doubles games that an individual may play

This proposal was presented then withdrawn at the 2025 AGM. However, in the light of the previous proposal, the working group suggests the following clarification to Rule 19) a) iii) which currently states:

In a 12-game match no player shall play in more than one doubles and three singles games unless part of a team of three.

Proposal

This be amended to

In a 10 or 12-game match no player shall play in more than one doubles and three singles games unless part of a team of three.

Vote

Note: if passed, this resolution means that rules on match format and game format will need to be updated.

P305

To remove the option of playing on half courts at a 1-court club

Proposer

Kington Langley CC

We propose a change to the SWF Golf Croquet League Rule 14, "Match Format", in relation to fixtures played at a single court club.

The proposal is to remove the option which currently allows a fixture at a single court club to be played using half-courts.

The purpose of the proposed change is to ensure that all matches in current golf croquet leagues are played on courts of the same, or broadly similar size regardless of the number of courts a club has.

Vote

AC Rules

P 401	Coaching at B League matches
Proposer	Nailsea & District CC
That in a B league match it would be permissible for out-players to be given advice from a more experienced player during a match. Only off the lawn and not during a turn. Not coaching as such, more discussions on the best way forward to boost confidence. The rationale is that often very new players are not psychologically ready to take part in a league match. This would also encourage AC.	
<u>Proposal</u> For B League matches only, to allow clubs to nominate one person each to provide coaching/advice to any players on their team when those players are sitting out while their opponent is on the lawn. This person is not permitted to delay play, cannot coach/advise while a player is on the lawn and cannot enter the lawn for any reason.	
<u>Rationale</u> Beginners are often nervous about playing competitive croquet for the first time and may be more willing to try if they can receive the support of a more experienced club member. The aim is to increase the number of AC players playing competitive croquet and is therefore aligned to the Action For AC initiative.	
Vote	

P 402	To remove the option of fielding a player with a handicap of 20 or 22 in Intermediate League
Proposer	Kington Langley CC
We propose a change to the Association League Rule10 a iii regarding handicaps in the Intermediate League.	
We propose the removal of "in addition a team may field one player whose handicap is 20 or 22".	
The reason for the proposal is that with the introduction of the base of 6.5 the range is too wide.	
Vote	

P 403	To change the Intermediate League from 26-point games to 18-point games with a 2 hour 15 min time limit
Proposer	Nailsea & District CC
The rationale for this being that the jump from 14-point B League games (or 26-point on a short lawn) to 26-point games on a full lawn with a 3 hour or 3.5 hour time limit does appear too daunting for new players.	
This proposal would encourage more new players into AC	
Vote	
If this is passed, information on calculating bisques would be updated.	