

## 5. Extra Turns

Handicap games allow players of different abilities to compete so that they will have more equal chances of winning. Each player is allotted a handicap, ranging from zero for the strongest players up to 12 for the weakest players.

- **In singles** the weaker player is allowed a number of extra turns equal to the difference between the players' handicaps<sup>1</sup>.
- **In doubles** games, extra turns are given to a player, not a side. The number given by the lower handicapped player in one side to the lower handicapped player in the other side is half the difference between their handicaps with any fraction rounded up to the next whole number. The same procedure applies to the higher handicapped players in each side.

*No point may be scored for the striker's side in an extra turn.* An extra turn may only be played by a striker at the end of that striker's turn and is to be played with the same ball<sup>2</sup>. A striker may play an extra turn at any stage in the game, and, if receiving more than one, may play extra turns in succession.

Extra turns are very powerful because they

- Allow you to turn a losing hoop into a winning hoop.
- Allow you to play a more attacking game.
- Can make your opponent deviate from their normal game.
- May give you a psychological advantage over your opponent.

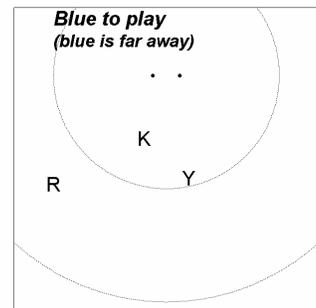
Clearly, some of those advantages lie in having extra turns up your sleeve. Therefore, try not to use up all your extra turns too early<sup>3</sup>. In particular, don't use an extra turn merely to postpone losing a hoop which you are probably going to lose eventually anyway. Of course, if your opponent is in a position to run their seventh hoop, you have to be less fussy. Postponing the apparently inevitable may then be your only hope of winning.

Here are some general situations where you can make good use of extra turns. For most of the situations a specific example is given. In those examples, balls and hoops are not to scale, and concentric circles indicate distances, in yards, from the hoop.

**B** = Blue, **R** = Red, **K** = Black, **Y** = Yellow

**Situation 1.** Both you and your opponent are in good positions to run the hoop. You would run the hoop first except that your opponent will knock your ball away with his other ball.

**Example:** Yellow has just done a very good stun shot, finishing in front of the hoop after knocking blue far away. From such a long distance your chances of hitting red are very slim. Red will, of course, want to knock black away so that it cannot prevent yellow from running the hoop. However, you can use your normal turn with blue to position it near red and then, with an extra turn, use it to knock red away so that red cannot stop you from running the hoop with black.



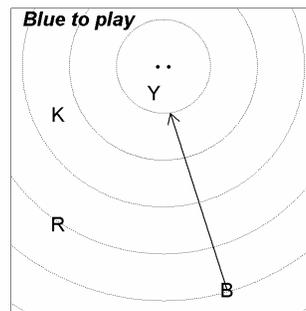
<sup>1</sup> Handicap difference is used for the normal 13 point singles games. For 7 or 19 point games there is a table specifying the number of extra turns for a given handicap difference.

<sup>2</sup> An extra turn may not be taken in place of a turn missed because of a non-striking fault or the playing of a wrong ball.

<sup>3</sup> In association croquet there is a danger that you'll be caught with extra turns you have been saving. That is because your opponent can finish the game unexpectedly with a brilliant break. This danger does not apply to golf croquet.

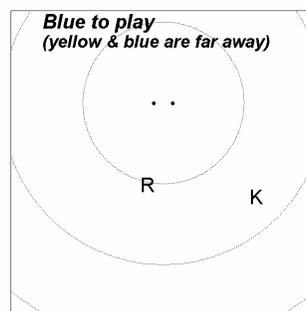
**Situation 2.** Both you and your opponent are in good positions to run the hoop. Your opponent would run the hoop first except that you can knock his ball away with your other ball. However, your opponent's other ball is in a position to knock that other ball away first.

**Example:** Without extra turns you would have to either attempt to run the hoop or hit yellow away because otherwise red will knock black far enough away to prevent it from hitting yellow. Having an extra turn, you can just place blue in front of the hoop (as indicated by the arrow). If red hits black away, black can just come back and use an extra turn to hit yellow, allowing blue to run the hoop. Since red knows you have extra turns, he might try to hit blue away instead of black. If so, then your extra turn has helped you a bit without you even having to use it.



**Situation 3.** The ball your opponent just played and the one you are about to play are both a long way from the hoop (e.g. your opponent hit you away but failed to keep his ball near the hoop). Your opponent's other ball you can easily run the hoop. Your other ball is quite near the hoop.

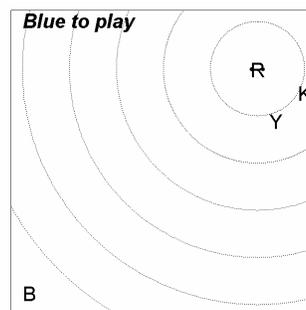
**Example:** Blue is so far away it is unlikely to hit red and prevent it from running the hoop. Rather than try to hit red in its normal turn, blue should place itself near red and then take an extra turn. If blue can stay in a hoop running position or, at least, near the hoop after hitting red away with a stun shot then, even after red returns to near the hoop, blue and black will have two balls against one near the hoop and be in a great position to win the hoop.



**Situation 4.** One of your opponent's balls is in the jaws of the hoop and neither of your balls is in a position to hit it away or jump over it through the hoop.

**Example:** With your normal turn you can try to put blue behind the hoop. If you get blue into a good position, you can use your extra turn to knock red well away. Provided blue stays near the hoop, your chances of winning the hoop would be fairly good.

If the positions of blue and black were interchanged in this example, then it would not be worth taking an extra turn. That's because the poor position of black would make it likely that you would still lose the hoop even if you knocked red away. It would be better to save the extra turn for another time - unless the situation was desperate because your opponents were about to win their seventh hoop.



**Situation 5.** All balls are near the hoop which has just been run (or it's the start of the game). You are first to shoot towards the next hoop which is about twenty yards away. You place your ball within a few yards of the hoop but not in a position where it is likely to run the hoop. You can use your extra turn to place the ball in a position where it is almost certain to run the hoop provided an opponent doesn't knock it away with a long roquet.

### Key points

1. An extra turn is best used to turn a very poor position into a very good one.
2. Don't use an extra turn in a situation where you are likely to lose the hoop anyway.
3. If the loss of the hoop would mean the loss of the game, ignore the second key point.