

Guidance to Clubs and Tournament Managers for holding tournaments in England during Covid-19

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Introduction

1. This document is intended to help clubs and tournament managers plan their events in a way that complies with the regulations when they start to consider holding tournaments. It has been reviewed by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) on 22nd July 2020.
2. This is clearly a fast-moving situation and Government guidance can be relaxed or tightened at any time. Clubs should be prepared to react to changes, and players should be aware that this may include cancellation of an event at short notice.
3. It is essential that at all stages of planning an event, the latest Government and CA guidance should be taken into account. At the time of writing, the following are recommended reading:
 - Government Guidance:
 - a. [Organising outdoor sport and physical activity events](#) (updated 17 July)
 - b. [Staying alert and safe \(social distancing\)](#) (updated 17 July)
 - c. [Guidance for providers of outdoor facilities on the phased return of sport and recreation in England](#) (updated 17 July). In particular the section [guidance on running outdoor events](#)
 - d. [Guidance for re-opening bar and kitchen facilities](#) (updated 17 July)
 - e. [FAQs: what you can and can't do](#) (updated 17 July)
 - CA Guidance:
 - a. [Covid-19 Precautions for Playing Croquet](#) (updated 2 July)
 - b. [Coronavirus - Latest Information and Advice](#), including 'Precautions for Playing Croquet' and the 'Clubhouse Re-Opening Checklist' (regularly updated)
4. Clubs located in, or close to, Wales or Scotland, should also consider different guidance that may be applicable to them or visiting players. Similarly, clubs should be aware of any local restrictions that may have been imposed by central or local government.
5. The final decision whether or not to hold a competition or tournament is left entirely at the discretion of clubs, who in addition to this guidance should take into account the views of their members, rules stipulated by landlords, the nature of the tournament and any other local conditions, including any local lockdown restrictions.

Guidance for size and format of event

6. The format of the event must ensure that no more than 4 players are allotted to a court at any one time, with the exception of specific double-banked doubles events when 8 players are permitted to be allotted to a full-size court. These double-banked doubles events (for example – the AC Opens Doubles and AC Inter-Counties) will be authorised in advance by the relevant Tournament Committee. All other Government guidelines ensuring a Covid-19 secure event (especially social distancing) must be met throughout the duration of the tournament.
7. This includes, but may not be limited to:
 - i. The entry size must be no more than the playing capacity of the courts so that social distancing can be maintained during play and at all other times.
 - ii. The host club must satisfy itself that it has adequate off-court space and facilities for that number of players, including toilet and hand-washing facilities, and shelter in the case of extreme weather.
 - iii. Players should wash their hands whenever they change court. Clips and balls should also be washed.
8. Clubs and tournament managers may choose to run tournaments under more restrictive rules if they would find this easier to manage in their circumstances. For instances under the previous guidance, issued on July 2nd, players should be restricted in any one session to a group of no more than the maximum size of groups allowed under Government guidance for social play. A session would be a period of play before a break so would be likely to be a morning, afternoon or evening session but could also be 0930-1100, 1110-1340, 1350-1520 for example. Players in different groups would not interact during that session (this would require them to play on different courts, not eat lunch together etc.)

Preparations prior to the event

9. Clubs must consider the whole end-to-end ‘user journey’ when planning safe operating practices; this means all activities from the time of arrival on site to leaving, not just the sporting activity. It is recommended that clubs should carry out a risk assessment. As well as considering players, this activity must also include staff (if applicable) or volunteers at the club.
10. This includes, but may not be limited to:
 - i. **Ensure that it is clear that anyone who is symptomatic or suspects they have been exposed to the virus does not take part and remains at home.**

- ii. Clubs should set out all the lawns before players arrive. Arrangement needs to be made so equipment (particularly balls and clips) can be cleaned whenever players change courts in accordance with CA guidance.
- iii. Indoor facilities, apart from toilets and through-ways, should be kept closed unless the club has decided to open its bar and kitchen under the new Government and CA guidance effective from July 4th.
- iv. Additional arrangements may be required for more frequent cleaning of any areas that are open. This should include appropriate signage regarding queuing arrangements, and ensuring that appropriate hygiene facilities are provided (e.g. disposable towels and hand sanitiser)
- v. If hoops need to be brought in each night, it would be preferable if the same person/small group of people is responsible for setting out and bringing in.
- vi. Provision must be made for players to shelter at the social distance in force at the time of the event. It is important to consider bad weather. A typical shelter found at most clubs may only accommodate one person unless the social distance plus mitigation measures can be enforced. Players' cars may provide an option if other facilities are limited.
- vii. Until catering and bar facilities are provided by the host club, all players must bring their own refreshments, including drinks and food, and they should be told to take all their rubbish home with them. Players will assume there are no bar and catering facilities open unless the club specifically informs them otherwise
- viii. Arrangements should be made for somewhere for players to eat their packed lunches at the social distance currently in force. Bad weather should be considered. This may mean gazebos, sitting under umbrellas or in their own car.
- ix. Clear instructions should be sent to all the players about the club rules for arrival, hand washing, toilets, equipment cleaning, shelter etc. This should include instructions to players to arrive and leave in the clothes they will be playing in and to go directly to their allotted court, washing their hands as directed.
- x. Spectators should be limited to club members, members of a players own household or support bubble, or other individuals agreed with the Manager in advance. All spectators should follow current Government guidance on group size and maintain social distancing from each other and the players.
- xi. Clubs should consider posting the CA poster/infographic (available at <https://www.croquet.org.uk/?d=2595>) around the lawns as a reminder to players.

Guidance for managing the event

11. Do as much of the draw and arranging of games in advance of the tournament as possible. Let players know who they will be playing and on which lawn in advance if possible.
12. Stagger start times so that everyone is not arriving at the club at the same time.
13. Inform the players of the format before the event. Avoid players asking for advice or instruction by telling them everything beforehand and putting up notices with the same information.
14. Players should avoid congregating, for example at a manager's table to write results on a board, or between games.
15. Players may call for a referee. All refereeing will require maintenance of social distance. This may mean the referee will ask the players to move away whilst testing static positions (for example, balls on/off court, hoops scored/not scored, balls in/not in contact, wirings). For questionable shots the referee should take the best position possible whilst maintaining social distance. Referees may use their own phones to provide high speed images of strokes if that enables them to referee effectively at a greater distance. (See Tournament Regulation L8)
16. Maintain, for at least 21 days, records of games and lawn allocations to support contact tracing should it subsequently be required.

Notes on Tournament Regulations

17. Attention is drawn in particular to the following provisions of the Tournament Regulations which clubs may need to rely upon in order to make appropriate adjustments to events in order to comply with the guidance above.
 - M1(k) (Emergencies). The CA considers that this regulation applies to all events taking place during the Covid-19 pandemic. This Regulation requires that the manager takes actions necessary to protect players and the club. This may include:
 - o Alterations to the published programme to adopt a different format or a reduced number of players (C2(c)).
 - o Refuse entry to certain players, for example those who are displaying symptoms (C3(e)).
 - M2(g) (Sanctions), includes breaches of Covid-specific requirements (including distancing and hygiene measures), and may result in disqualification and being asked to leave the premises.
 - C2(b) (Titles for Events) still applies. If the requirements of, for example, a Championship cannot be met, the event should either be downgraded or not held.

- P4(b) (Reporting) Players should report to the manager at the start and end of play, and results at the end of each game/match in accordance with arrangements made for each event. It is not expected that this will be a face-to-face arrangement.
18. The following regulations are amended during the Covid-19 pandemic
- Appendix 1 –The use of flags, corner/off-side markers and clips should be in accordance with general CA guidance about playing croquet during Covid-19.
19. The CA does not intend to impose any penalties on players who withdraw due to Covid-19, whether that is imposed (for example, due to isolation requirements) or personal choice. Consequently
- An administrative fee under Regulation P3(g) should not be imposed.
 - Withdrawals, even at short notice, will not be subject to sanction under Regulations P2(c) or P3(h).
20. Given the lack of opportunity to play this season, the adjustment for allocation and seeding purposes of 50 grade points per year for those who have not played sufficient games is suspended for the remainder of 2020. (Regulations C3(a)(3), F1(a)(3), F2(a)(1)).