

SOUTHWELL CROQUET CLUB

PLAYING CROQUET – RISK ASSESSMENT

Playing croquet can provide enjoyable recreational activity, but like any physical endeavour, it is not without potential risks. Prior to engaging in croquet, it is essential to consider the following risk assessment:

1. **Physical Injury:** Participants may be at risk of physical injury due to trips, slips or falls while moving around the croquet field, swinging mallets or manoeuvring balls. Injury severity may vary from minor bruises to more serious sprains, strains or fractures. Particular care should be taken when stalking the ball or lining up the mallet with the target ball.
2. **Equipment Hazards:** The use of croquet equipment such as mallets and balls presents risk of injury if not handled properly. Participants should be cautious to avoid striking themselves or others with mallets and to prevent balls from causing injury upon impact. Care should be taken when setting up and dismantling the court. Do not carry too much equipment at any one time. If hoops are not easily extracted from the court use the appropriate equipment for extraction. When setting out the hoops use the rubber mallet to knock the hoop into the ground; do not stamp on them or hit with your mallet.
3. **Overexertion and Fatigue:** Engaging in prolonged periods of croquet play without adequate rest or hydration may lead to overexertion, fatigue or heat-related illnesses, particularly in hot weather conditions. Sunscreens and hat should be used as appropriate.
4. **Collisions and Interactions:** In multiplayer games, there is a risk of collisions or accidental contact between participants while moving around the playing area, which could result in injury if not managed carefully. Extra care is needed when double-banking.
5. **Adverse Health Reactions:** Individuals with pre-existing medical conditions or physical limitations should be mindful of their health status before participating in croquet to avoid exacerbating any underlying issues.
6. **Lawn Maintenance:** Play should not take place on a court whilst it is being maintained. If treatments have been applied, players should be made aware and advised as to the precautions necessary eg the court not being suitable for play or the need to wash hands afterwards etc.

Mitigation Strategies:

1. **Player Awareness and Education:** Ensure all participants are aware of the potential risks associated with croquet and are properly educated on safe playing techniques and equipment usage.
2. **Equipment Inspection:** Regularly inspect croquet equipment for any signs of damage or wear and tear and replace or repair as necessary to minimise the risks of accidents or injury.
3. **Weather Monitoring:** Monitor weather conditions before and during croquet play and take appropriate precautions or postpone the activity if adverse weather poses a safety risk.

4. **Hydration and Rest Breaks:** Encourage participants to stay hydrated and take regular breaks to prevent overexertion and fatigue, especially during extended play sessions.
5. **Clear Communication:** Establish clear communication among players to prevent collisions or accidental contact and encourage mutual respect for each other's safety during gameplay.

By acknowledging these risks and implementing appropriate mitigation strategies, participants can enjoy the benefits of croquet while minimising the likelihood of accidents or injuries.