

COMBAT CROQUET:

TRIAL BY PEELS ¹

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with

Ben Rothman

— K.W. PEELING A RELUCTANT OPPONENT
TO ONE AND THREE .

¹ Word Version: Combat (26-04-24). This game follows from our game, *Peel and Reverse*, [New Roles for Peeling in Croquet](#), pages 151-182. Our books, together with associated videos, are available free of obligation and free of charge to anyone interested in pursuing them. Here are the links: [to the books](#), and [to the videos](#). Please send comments and suggestions to Howard@Sosin.net. We thank Jerry Marquardt and Zack Watson for playing and commenting on this game.

The drawing on this page is by John Prince. It is entitled, *K.W. Peeling a Reluctant Opponent to one and three*. It originally appeared in Keith Wylie's book [Expert Croquet Tactics](#), 1985, page 94. We want to thank Paddy Chapman for gaining approval from Sue Prince for us to use this image, August 2025.

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I.. INTRODUCTION

Teams face off in *Combat Croquet* under modified AC rules that limit Striker to making no more than four hoops a turn. During a sequence of such turns, teams seek to reach the peg, complete a triple-peel and peg-out. This is accomplished with four types of Peels:

The 1st and 2nd influence the positions of clips. These are Promotions and Demotions.

1. **Promotions:** In *Combat* there are Team-Clips instead of individual ball-clips. Peeling your Partner at your team's current hoop promotes (advances) your Team-Clip one hoop but does not clear deadness.
2. **Demotions:** In *Peel Croquet*, we allowed Oppo ball-clips to be demoted one hoop by Peeling Oppo in the reverse direction at the last hoop he made. In *Combat* we allow Oppo's Team-Clip to be demoted in the same way.

The lift rules in traditional AC encourage the 1st ball of a team to "run 9 hoops and set a leave". If Oppo fails to hit in, then, classically, but optionally, the 2nd ball will try to finish with a Triple-Peel. In *Combat* "Triples" are mandatory but take a different form – the winning team must complete "Current Peels" at hoops chosen randomly, thereby converting them into "Done Peels" and must have three of them survive Oppo's efforts to eliminate them!

The 3rd and 4th types of Peels make (and break!) this new Triple-Peel Requirement. These are Conversions and Eliminations.

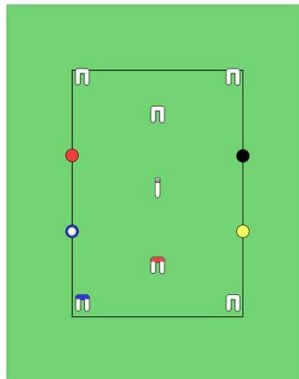
3. **Conversions:** Peeling a ball (usually Partner) at its team's assigned Current Peeling Hoop converts it into a Done Peel.
4. **Eliminations:** Peeling a ball (usually Oppo) in the reverse direction at one of its Done Peel Hoops eliminates it from the game.

These rules expand what Striker must do to win: He must move beyond just progressing his own clip and just completing his own Triple, to include *Combat by Peels* – impeding the progress of Oppo's clip and interfering with his Triple.

A lively and cutthroat game ensues!

II.. RULES AND RATIONALES

- 1. Coin Toss:** A coin is tossed. The winner will play first as Team-A using u/k. The loser will play 2nd as Team-B using r/y.
- 2. Current Peels (CP) and Done Peels (DP):** Team-A starts with an initial CP and 1-DP. Team-B also starts with an initial CP but has 2-DPs. These are determined before the first turn of the game – 5 blocks are drawn at random from a bag (that originally had 12, one for each hoop). The first two become Team-A’s CP and DP; the next three are allocated to Team-B’s CP and 2-DPs³. *Random selection of CPs and DPs makes each game unique. An uneven allocation of DPs across teams helps to level the playing field.*
- 3. Team-Clips:** There are two clips: one for Team-A, and one for Team-B. Team-A’s clip starts on h(1); Team-B’s starts on h(3). *Having one clip to progress to the peg instead of two speeds up play and influences the way Peels are executed. Different starting hoops for the two teams further levels the playing field.*
- 4. The Augmented Box and Home-Bases:** The dimensions of the “Box”, the rectangle encompassing h(1), h(2), h(3) and h(4), is increased by one yard on each side to create the “Augmented Box”. Four ball markers are used to identify “Home-Bases” on the Augmented Box: one placed 8 yards north from the south-west corner, one 8 yards south from the north-west corner, one 8 yards south from the north-east corner, and one 8 yards north from the south-east corner. Team-A places the balls on Home-Bases before the start of its 1st turn, perhaps as shown below, but in any order it chooses.



Thereafter, any ball outside the Augmented Box at the end of a turn can be moved to any open Home-Base by the next Striker, at his option. All such movements must be done before next the turn begins. A ball moved to a Home-Base can be lifted and used

³ There are 396 possible different configurations of the starting scoreboards: $(12!) / (7!) / (5!) / 2$.

as Striker. *Balls kept within the Augmented Box use only 43% of the area of the usable area of a full lawn*⁴. *Employing Home-Bases simplify break play and facilitate Peeling.*

5. **Conversions (C):** This is a Peel at a CP-Hoop. It converts a CP into a DP. Only one CP-Hoop per team is known at any time. A team can use either ball to convert its CP into a DP by Peeling Partner through the team's CP-Hoop. Play stops and the CP becomes a DP, evidenced by moving the CP to the DP side of the scoreboard. If a team still needs additional DPs, then it returns to the bag and draws another block, which becomes its CP, and play resumes. Oppo (inadvertently) can do the C for you by Peeling one of your balls at your CP-Hoop, converting it to a DP. *Knowing the location of only your current CP-Hoop, and not future ones, complicates the acquisition of DPs needed to complete the required TP.*
6. **Eliminations (E):** This is a Peel of an Oppo-Ball in the opposite direction at one of Oppo's DP-Hoops. It eliminates the DP-Hoop from the game. Each team is limited to completing 3-Es. Within this limit, any number can be tried each turn, and in any order. The team suffering an E must convert an additional CP into a DP. The 12 possible DPs and their eliminating hoops are: (1,8), (2,7), (3,10), (4,9) (5,12), (6,11), (7,2), (8,1), (9,4), (10,3), (11,6), and (12,5). A team (inadvertently) can Peel its Partner in the reverse direction at the hoop of one of its own DPs. Unless there is some other valid interpretation (Rule 14), this Peel will become an Elimination, but only if Oppo has a remaining E to spend. Otherwise, the Peel has no impact. *Limiting each team to three Es helps to produce a timely finish to a game! It also ensures that the bag of blocks never needs to be refilled.*
7. **Triple-Peel (TP) Requirement:** A team must accumulate 3-DPs net of Es before pegging-out. *Team-A starts with 1-CP and needs 2-Cs to complete its TP; Team-B starts with 2-CPs and needs only one more. But then Combat begins, and the number Peels completed before one team nets three DPs and can peg-out, often exceeds 10.*
8. **DP Limit:** A team cannot accumulate more DP's than needed. Thus, a team with 3-DPs will not have a CP, just DPs. If this team subsequently suffers an E, then play stops briefly while the DP is removed, and the team that suffered the E draws a block that identifies a new *now-needed* CP-Hoop. *Teams cannot acquire "Insurance" DPs.*
9. **Lifts-to-Position:** A team can use either ball as Striker and can start a turn from where Striker lies or with a lift-to-position. *This lift facilitates break play and Peeling by allowing early Peel attempts and early placement of Pioneers and Escape-Balls.*
10. **Turns and the 4-Hoop Limit:** Teams alternate turns running breaks under AC rules. However, Striker is limited to making no more than 4-Hoops per turn (involving no more than 35 shots). *4-Hoops provide ample time to attempt multiple Peels while keeping the game interactive.*

⁴ $23 \times 16 = 368$ sq yards compared to $33 \times 26 = 858$ sq yards (the whole lawn after the 1-yard mark-ins). $368/858 = 0.43$.

- 11. Wrap-Around (w):** If a team does not complete its Triple during the original 12 hoops, then, after making h(12), its Team-Clip “Wraps-Around” to h(1), now “h(1w)”. The clip is not placed on the peg. Striker continues making hoops in order, subject to the 4-Hoop limit. Striker is simultaneously for the peg and for its next hoop in Wrap-Around and can peg-out at any time after completing its Triple-Peel. *Wrap-Around facilitates play by preventing Teams from getting stuck at the peg with unfinished Triples.*
- 12. Promotions (P):** This is a Peel of Partner at the Team’s current-hoop. It moves the Team-Clip one hoop forward. But, importantly, a P does not grant a clearing of deadness. A P allows a Team to advance its clip more than four hoops during a turn⁵. It is possible (inadvertently) to promote an Oppo ball at its Team’s hoop. *Ps can mitigate mistakes.*
- 13. Demotions (D):** This is a Peel that sends an Oppo ball in the reverse direction through Oppo’s last completed hoop thereby demoting its Team-Clip one hoop⁶. Ds can occur from any Team-Clip position, including h(1). It is possible (accidentally) to demote your Partner-Ball thereby moving your own Team-Clip backward! *Ds are great temporizers.*
- 14. Interpreting A Peel:** All Peels must be accounted for, whether completed intentionally or by accident! If the result of the Peel is subject to more than one interpretation, then Striker chooses the role he wants it to have – only one role is permitted. Clips are moved according to the adopted interpretation, and the scoreboard is updated as appropriate.
- 15. Winning:** A game is won by the team that is first to complete its TP while advancing its Team-Clip through h(12) and then pegging-out Partner and Striker. If a team is unable to peg-out (PO) both balls in a single turn, then its Team-Clip remains in Wrap-Around, the pegged-out ball is placed by Oppo on an open Home-Base of his choosing, and play continues. *This game is demanding enough with four balls on the lawn.*
- 16. Scoring:** Points accumulate from three sources: (i) Team-Clip position minus one (where a team in Wrap-Around receives 12 points), plus (ii) one point for each DP remaining on the scoreboard at the end of a game, plus (iii) one point for pegging-out *both* balls. Thus, 16 (12 for hoops, 3 for DPs and 1 for two completed POs) will be the winner’s score, with the loser having a lesser number.

⁵ For example, if u/k’s clip is on h(3), and u Peels k at h(3), then the u/k Team-Clip is immediately advanced to h(4). To clear deadness and continue his break, u will need to progress to and make h(4) with the remaining balls he has access to (i.e., is not dead on).

⁶ A Demotion does not take place at the physical hoop holding a Team-Clip but at its previous physical hoop. Thus, demoting a ball when its Team-Clip is on h(5) is achieved by Peeling it backward through h(4), namely through h(9). Here is a list of starting clip positions, Demotion-Hoops, and resulting Team-Clip positions after successful Ds: (1,5,12), (2,8,1), (3,7,2), (4,10,3) (5,9,4), (6,12,5), (7,11,6), (8,2,7), (9,1,8), (10,4,9), (11,3,10), (12,6,11), (Peg,5,12).

17. Scoreboard: Success during *Combat* benefits from accurate intel! A scoreboard helps. We use the one shown below. It has two panels, one per team, each 18" x 24"; there are 12 magnetic scorecards, one per hoop, each 11.5" x 4". On the top is the drawn CP-Hoop-# (in green) and directly below is the associated E-hoop-# (in orange). Additionally, there are two sets of three team-colored magnetic "circles" representing Es that remain available to each team.



Each panel accommodates five columns of information: one labeled "Current", three labelled "Done", and one labelled "Es". We rest the panels against chairs. Additionally, each panel has two holes at the top to accommodate straps that allow the boards to be hung (from a canopy, etc.) if so desired. In either case, the result should be a scoreboard that is visible from anywhere on the lawn. ⁷

⁷ This picture was taken at the NCC in Palm Beach, Florida. It show the start of a game. A *Combat Croquet* "set" consisting of 2 scoreboard panels, 12 score cards, 6 Elimination circles, a bag of 12 blocks, 4 Home-Base markers, 2 team-clips, and a carrying case.

III.. PURPOSE AND MECHANICS OF INDIVIDUAL PEELS

Four types of Peels make up the weapons of *Combat*. Two are directed at the TP Requirement – accumulating 3-DPs net of Es. They are: (1) Cs that convert CPs into DPs, and (2) Es that permanently eliminate DPs. The other two are directed at the hoop requirement – advancing your Team-Clip to the peg (and perhaps into Wrap-Around). Striker is limited to making four hoops per turn, but the progress of a Team-Clip can be altered with: (3) Ds that demote Team-Clips, and (4) Ps that promote Team-Clips. All four Peel types are integral to the game. Cs, Ds, and Es employ similar mechanics; Ps require a different approach:

Cs, Ds, and Es: These are undertaken at known hoops that are independent of those involved in Striker's break. If a Peel fails, it can be retried later in the break, at the already specified hoop. Striker should consider the location of available Peeling hoops in relation to the location and progression of hoops in his break. This information helps him decide how and when to attempt particular Peels. The rules specify that turns can start with a lift-to-position. This allows a Peel to be attempted before Striker makes the 1st hoop in his break. He can attempt it as a Rush-Peel, returning to his break with the follow-on croquet shot⁸. Or he can rush Peelee to the Peeling hoop followed by a croquet-shot Peel attempt. These attempts may succeed or fail; either way, they will be more productive if other balls are available that allows Striker to approach the first hoop in his break.

Striker then has opportunities for Peels associated with his 2nd, 3rd, and 4th hoops. In each case he can complete the Peel following established procedures – in particular, with an escape-ball or by rolling to a Pioneer. Letting R stands for Reception, V Pivot, and P Pioneer, then, depending upon the circumstances, the ball to be Peeled after Striker makes h(i) and before Striker makes h(i+1) can be the 1st ball used – R(i), as in a Back-Peel – in this case the Peel is described as occurring "After" h(i). It can be the 2nd ball used – V(i), as in a Transit-Peel – in this case the Peel is made "On-the-Way-To" h(i+1). It can be the 3rd ball used – P(i+1), as in a Straight-Peel – in this case the Peel is completed just before Striker makes h(i+1), "Straight" at h(i+1). Finally, Striker can wait until after making his 4th hoop and attempt the Peel "Posthumously". This can be done by simply rushing Peelee to the Peeling hoop and "giving it a go". But prior planning can be useful. Often this has Striker complete the 3rd hoop in his break and then: (i) Send Peelee and a 2nd ball to the Peeling hoop, (ii) Make his 4th hoop using the remaining ball, and (iii) Attempt the Peel using the Reception-Ball from the 4th hoop and the previously sent ball to facilitate a rush and Peel attempt of Peelee at the Peeling hoop. It is also

⁸ Rush-Peels are valuable at external hoops because they need not involve escape balls.

reasonable to save the extra ball as an escape ball to facilitate setting a leave. In either case, Peelee may jaws; if so, and Striker remained on the playing side of the Peeling hoop, then there can be one more attempt to complete the Peel, now with a scatter shot or bombard.

A successful E permanently removes a DP-Hoop from the game. This is true no matter how far Peelee proceeds through the hoop; a C or D that barely squeaks through also is “successful”, but this success can be temporary because the completed Peel is ripe to be negated by Oppo at the start to his next turn, with an E or a P at the same hoop but in the opposite direction, often tried as a rush-Peel (!). This ever-present danger explains why a Posthumous Peel is best done with sufficient force, or with a follow-on scatter-shot, so as to complicate a reversing E or P.

Ps: Ps can be attempted at any time during Striker’s break. But, because *Combat* calls for Team-Clips instead of individual ball-clips, Ps conducted *during* the 4 hoops of a break result in the Peeling hoop and Striker’s hoops being “moving targets”. If the Peel succeeds, then Striker must progress to the hoop *that is one after the P-Hoop* to clear deadness and continue his break. This can entail a long rush. If a P fails, then Striker will need to change course – he will use the Oppo ball he had intended to escape with instead to make the hoop at which the P just failed! Often this will involve a roquet on Oppo and then a take-off back to the playing side of the P-Hoop ¹⁰. A further complication of a failed P is that, after the Peel, Partner might be blocking Striker’s path to the P-Hoop or Partner could be jawsed! A clean jump will make the hoop and clear deadness, but a drag jump that puts Peelee through won’t work because, as in GC, the Peelee, in this case Partner, will get credit for scoring the hoop and advance its Team-Clip, but Striker will be 3-ball dead and his turn will end!

Ps can be tried Posthumously – when success or failure does not impact the four hoops in Striker’s break, as they will have already been completed. But once again, just trickling through the hoop will leave Peelee ripe to be sent back in the opposite direction (this time with a D) by Oppo at the start of his next turn.

In Chapter VI we establish that Ps have limited value early in a game. However, in Chapter V we show that Ps take on a major role in the context of finishing turns when a P (or 2-Ps!) need to be completed to advance Striker’s clip before the 4th hoop is made in Striker’s break, to allow Striker to make h(12) and then engage in follow-on peg-outs.

¹⁰ Minimizing the length of this take off is why Ps are usually attempted going to a nearby escape-ball, rather than rolling to a distant pioneer.

IV.. PAIRS OF PEELS

Peels play important roles in AC. They are done on Partner, Oppo, and sometimes on both, but rarely on both in the same Turn¹². Other than sextuples, few AC games involve more than three Peels. And, no matter what is attempted, Striker has at most twelve hoops to complete his task.

Things are different in *Combat*. Here competent Strikers often attempt and can “reliably” complete two Peels, a “Pair”, each 4-hoop turn [which can extend past h(12) into Wrap-Around]. Some may protest that this is unrealistic because it is the pace of a Sextuple. But, as described earlier, establishing a break is easier in *Combat* because each turn can start with a lift-to-position, and balls usually start within the Augmented Box. Furthermore, as can be seen in the table below, the rules of *Combat* greatly enhance the availability and feasibility of Peeling opportunities each turn versus those of AC.

PEELING OPPORTUNITIES

CONSIDERATION	AC	COMBAT
# of Available Peelees	usually 1	2 or 3
# of Peeling Hoops	usually 1	up to 6
# Attempts per Hoop	1 or fewer	1 or 2
Peel to Start a Turn	rarely	often
Posthumous Peels	not useful	very useful
Peeling After h(12)	rarely	often

In what follows, we start by assuming that players completing a Pair of Peels each turn is the goal and the norm¹³. We then relax this assumption to allow for three or more Peels a turn.

¹² The NZ-TPO provides a delightful exception, as does a strategy involving POPs on Oppo in one turn, with a TP on Partner to follow, as shown on the cover page to this book.

¹³ In our book c.10 → A6W → CA7, pages 9-11, we propose a new handicap system, called “FIXs and SIMs”. It was designed for GC players who have reasonable single ball skills but have limited experience with croquet shots or the strategies of break play. A FIX allows a missed shot (usually a missed hoop or rush) to be replayed. Additionally, if the missed shot was taken from within 7 yards of the hoop or target ball, then the shot can be “further fixed” – that is replayed from one foot directly in front of the missed hoop or missed ball.

SIMs: After a roquet, in lieu of taking croquet, Striker goes ball-in-hand to the rushed ball and marks its position with a ball marker. He then *simulates* the croquet shot by playing two single ball shots from the marker – first sending the croquet ball to where he wants it to go in the croquet shot and then sending Striker where it should go. Striker picks up his marker and continues his break with a continuation shot.

Similar handicap procedures can be used in *Combat* – letting Striker FIX errant rushes or hoop shots and letting him complete Peels and other croquet-shots with SIMs. Giving weaker players an appropriate number of FIXs (we have tried and recommend between 1 and 4 *per turn*) allows them to compete in and to enjoy *Combat*.

16 Pairs That Reduce To 10

The 16 possible Pairs that arise from our 4 Peel types [C,E,D,P] are shown below in (,)s. Which Peel is done 1st and which is done 2nd is up to Striker and may influence the success of his turn, but the order of execution does not influence the scoreboard. This fact reduces relevant Pairs to 10: 4 – (,)s and 6 – [(,), (,)]s. These are considered from easiest to hardest to execute:

[(E,C), (C,E)], [(C,D), (D,C)]: These Pairs involve 3 Peelees: the 2 Oppo balls for the Es and Ds, and Partner for the Cs. All Peeling hoops are known at the starts of a turn. The Peels can be done in any order. Failure of one does not preclude attempting another. Up to 3 attempts can be made during play to each hoop ¹⁵. Posthumous Peels are possible during non-finishing turn.

(E,E), [(D,E), (E,D)]: These Pairs involve only the 2 Oppo balls as Peelees. All Peeling hoop locations are known when Striker starts his turn. The Peels can be done in either order. Failure of one does not preclude attempting another. There are 2 Oppo balls, and thus two Peel attempts can be made during play to each hoop. If this is not a finishing turn, then Posthumous Peels are possible. (E,E) is a special case that is made easier if Oppo has 3-DPs because that situation provides three potential Peeling hoops.

(D,D): Both Peel locations are known, but the 2nd cannot be attempted until the 1st is done. If the state of the game permits, the 2nd D (and sometimes both!) can be done Posthumously.

(C,C): This Pair adds a new challenge. The 2nd C-Hoop is not known until the 1st is done and a block is drawn. If the state of the game permits, the 2nd C can be done Posthumously ^{17 18}.

[(P,E), (E,P)], [(D,P), (P,D)], [(P,C), (C,P)]: These Pairs all involve a single P. These are easier to complete if the P can be tried second and perhaps accomplished Posthumously in a non-game ending turn. But, if the goal is to complete the Pair and peg-out this turn, then Striker will need to complete the P (and C if there is one) before making the 4th hoop in his break.

(P,P): Two Ps are required. This is the most difficult Pair to execute, particularly if (P,P) is to be followed by 2-peg-outs to win the game. This situation arises when Striker has accumulated 3-DPs, is for h(7), and wants to win this turn. In this case (P,P) must be completed before Striker makes h(12), to clear deadness and allow for the 2-POs.

¹⁵ The 3rd attempt can be “straight” if Striker’s next hoop is also the Peeling hoop, or as a Peel-and-Hold!

¹⁷ If the 1st C is accomplished with a rush-peel and the new Peeling Hoop is at the same physical hoop but in the opposite direction, then a 2nd Peel can occur with the follow-on croquet shot. Further, if the 1st C is rush-peeled at h(6), the new CP is h(11), and this is the 3rd Peel of the Triple, then it is possible to complete the h(11) Peel firmly as a croquet shot, have Peelee run into the peg and then have Striker peg itself out and win the game. The same can be true if the initial Peel is at h(12) and the follow-on is at h(5).

¹⁸ After a jawsed 1st C, Striker will go make a hoop, come back to the peeling hoop using the reception ball as transportation and then Rush-Peel to complete the Peel. Only then does he draw a block and know the 2nd C. This means Striker must “guess” where to send the reception ball, which complicates the execution of the 2nd C.

V.. FINISHING TURNS

From the Prospective of Team-A: Turn-3A is taken by Team-A (u/k), the team that plays first to start the game. It is the first time this team may have accumulated “enough” DPs and may have moved his Team-Clip within “sufficient” striking distance of the peg so that Team-A has a “realistic” possibility of finishing the required Triple-Peel and reaching the peg within the allotted 4-Hoops, while maintaining the wherewithal to peg-out both balls for the win. We present six alternative (Clip, DPs) possibilities for the start of this turn, along with the set of things that need to get done (i.e., Hoops, Peels, and peg-outs) to finish ¹⁹. These are ordered from easiest to most difficult:

Game Ending Turns Involving Cs and POs

The first three finishing positions require zero, one, or two Cs followed by 2-POs to win.

- 1.. **(9,3): (4-Hs, 2-POs)** – This is the simplest situation, no Peels are required ²⁰. Just – 2-POs.
- 2.. **(9,2): (4-Hs, 1-C, 2-POs)** – Only 1-C is required. But it must be completed before Striker makes h(12) to allow for the POs.
- 3.. **(9,1): (4-Hs, 2-Cs, 2-POs)** – 2-Cs are required. Both must be completed before Strike makes h(12) to allow for the POs.

Game Ending Turns Involving Ps, Cs and POs

The later three finishing positions involve Ps, where these are necessary to catch up on hoops needed for a finishing turn ²². Ps are challenging to execute, especially when faced with completing the Pair (P,P) during what is intended to be a game ending 4-Hoop Break that must also allow for 2-POs! Some players may choose to avoid this Pair, even if it means extending a game to a 4th turn, or beyond. This usually involves “temporizing” – creating an easier finishing opportunity next turn while conceding as little as possible to Oppo this turn (ideally keeping him from finishing or at least giving him a difficult finishing opportunity).

¹⁹ If Peelee is jawed during a C attempt during a finishing turn, it is possible for Striker to complete the C after his 4th hoop with a rush-peel and then attempt to Peg-Out with a croquet shot. This can be a “friendly” attempt if, for example, Peelee is jawed in h(11), or it can be a “desperate” attempt if Peelee is jawed in h(2).

Additionally, Striker can make his final hoop, rush an Oppo ball to the Peeling Hoop, complete the Peel with a bombard while gaining a rush on Peelee to the Peg, and then Peg-Out. (This strategy was suggested by Zack Watson.)

²⁰ Striker could start his turn for h(9) or for any hoop after that and still finish because he can still make 4-Hs by proceeding into Wrap-Around. That said, it is not necessary to complete all 4-Hs before proceeding with the 2-POs.

²² Team-A starting Turn-3A from h(7) or h(8) can be the result of break downs in previous turns or Demotions.

Players learn to treat Pairs involving a single P with respect – most will/should “hold their nose” and attempt them, unless there is an obvious and easy (temporizing) way out! Finally, even the need to execute just a single P and 2-POs creates a new level of anxiety.

- 4.. **(8,3): (4-Hs, 1-P, 2-POs)** – Only a single P is required, but it must be completed at h(11) or earlier to clear deadness and make room for the POs.
- 5.. **(8,2): (4-Hs,1-P, 1-C, 2-POs)** – 1-C and 1-P are needed. They can be done in either order. Both require Partner as Peelee, and both must be done before making h(12) to allow for the POs.
- 6.. **(7,3): (4-Hs, 2-Ps, 2-POs)** – Two Ps are needed. Both involve Partner as Peelee. Only one can be tried pre-break; both must be done before h(12) to clear deadness and allow for the POs ²³.

The goal of Team-A is to start Turn-3A from one of the six positions outlined above, ideally, an easy one, and finish, with a secondary goal of leaving Team-B unable to finish if Team-A fails. The goal of Team-B is to prevent Team-A from reaching an ending position at all, and failing that, to make its execution as difficult as possible! Additionally, Team-B tries to be in position to win if Team-A breaks down.

From the Perspective of Team-B: We explain in the next section why we have chosen to have Team-B’s clip (r/y) starts on h(3) instead of on h(1). From there, by the end of its Turn-1B, it is possible for Team-B to reach all but the 1st and 3rd (which require “help” from Team-A) of the six finishing positions outlined above, and therefore for Team-B to have the possibility of finishing in Turn-2B, unless Team-A intervenes ... ²⁴

²³ Suppose Striker comes on the lawn with 3-DPs and his Team-Clip on h(7). The most straight forward way to proceed is for Striker to start his turn with a lift-to-position on Partner, rush Partner to h(7) and attempt the P on the way to one of the two Oppo balls. This sequence creates an internal Peel at h(7) which should help Striker get to the Oppo balls needed to continue the break.

Striker then sends a pioneer (Oppo) to h(9) and proceeds to h(8) with the other Oppo. He makes h(8), sends Oppo and Partner to h(10), goes to and makes h(9), Peels Partner at h(10) and escapes with a short rush on Oppo to h(11). h(11) is made followed by making h(12) and then the two Oppo balls are used to facilitate the peg-out of Partner and Striker. This sequence of events has Striker proceed: P7,H8,H9,P10,H11,H12,PO,PO. It is also possible to delay the Peel at h(10) until h(11).

Another way to proceed is to try two mid-Break Ps: Here Striker rushes Partner and an Oppo ball to h(8) and then makes h(7) with the 2nd Oppo ball. This leads to the sequence H7,P8,H9,H10,P11,H12,PO,PO. However, the Peel at h(8) is an external Peel which adds to the difficulty of continuing the break.

Other sequences are possible but are unlikely to succeed! If a P fails, it’s probably better to makes the hoop with Striker, give up finishing this turn, and see what damage can be done to Oppo as you proceed with your break.

²⁴ Starting with the balls on Home-Bases and attempting to finish from any of these Positions is great practice.

VI.. STRATEGIC CONSIDERATIONS

Notation

We assume that players, augmented by FIXs and SIMs if necessary, are proficient with standard break play, including Peeling. This lets us simplify the notation used to document games of *Combat* because it is then reasonable to consider the locations of balls and Peeling hoops as generic, which in turn eliminates the need for extensive images of balls on lawns. Instead, we document games in pairs of turns (e.g., 1A and 1B) using two lines of information: one for Team-A and one for Team-B. Each line provides two “Trios” of data, one for each team, and each Trio publishes three numbers: (i) A team’s clip position – CLP, (ii) # of accumulated DPs, and (iii) # of unused Es. These Trios are followed with columns used to check off which “Actions” were taken by Striker this turn. These reveal how many Hoops (Hs) were made, which type of Peels (C,E,D,P) were completed, and how many Peg-Outs occurred (POs).

Starting Conditions

The first line of documentation of every game shows the starting conditions of the Trios. We had two goals in mind in setting these: To make games interactive and dynamic from the very start, and to have fair fight – as level a playing field as possible for the two teams.

TURN-#	TEAM-A			TEAM-B			ACTION					
	(CLP	DPs	Es)	(CLP	DPs	Es)	H	C	E	D	P	PO
Start 1	(1	0	3)	(1	0	3)						
1A	(5	2	3)	(1	0	3)	4	2				
Start 2	(1	1	3)	(1	1	3)						
1A	(5	2	3)	(1	0	3)	4	2				
1A*	(5	1	3)	(12b	0	3)	4	1		1		
1A^	(5	1	2)	(1	0	3)	4	1	1			
Start 3	(1	1	3)	(1	2	3)	Team-B has an extra DP					
Start 4	(1	1	3)	(3	2	3)	Team-B has an extra DP and two extra Hs					

Start 1: This is an intuitive place to begin. It reads and feels like a true beginning for a game of *Combat*: Both Team-Clips start on h(1), teams have not completed any Current Peels and so have no DPs, and neither team has eliminated an Oppo’s DP, so both teams still have 3-Es.

However, this start does not allow combat during initial turns:

(1) It Precluded Ds: We originally did not allow Team-Clips to be demoted from h(1) back to h(12). With this rule in place, and with both Team-Clips starting on h(1), there can be no Ds in Turn 1A. Furthermore, Ds would only become available in Turn-1B if Team-A successfully advances its clip during Turn-1A.

(2) It Precluded Es: With no DPs on the scoreboard, there would be no opportunity for Es during Turn-1A, and Team-B could only employ an E in Turn-1B if Team-A completed a C during Turn 1A, thereby converting a CP into a DP.

(3) It Allowed Ps: But we show below that Ps are not valuable in Turn-1A.

With no possibility of Ds, Es and a limited role for Ps, a game of *Combat* would have a predictable start – an attempt by Team-A to complete the Pair (C,C), as shown in Turn-1A. Here Team-A makes 4-Hs, converts its initial CP into a DP, draws a block for a new CP, and converts that one into another DP. (C,C) is often part of a “whole game” strategy but can be difficult to execute in Turn-1A. Other Pairs, if they were possible, may be easier to execute early on, and should be available to both teams from the start.

Start 2: We modified rule 13 to allow Team-Clips to be demoted from h(1) “b”ack to h(12) now “h(12b)”. (C,C) is still possible and shown as Turn-1A, but also possible is the Pair (D,C) shown Turn-1A* ²⁵. This rule change gives Ds agency from the very start of a game.

Start 2 also facilitates Es by changing the Trios to give each team an initial DP. Now Team-A can execute the Pair (E,C), as shown in Turn-1[^]. *These changes improves interactivity and makes game more dynamic. However, simulations show that if: (i) neither team breaks-down, (ii) they alternate turns completing 4-Hs and 2-Peels, and (iii) they use some forethought concerning which Pairs are used, then Team-A will have the innings and can win all of the games!*

Start 3: This was our first attempt to Level the Playing Field. We modified the Trios such that Team-A starts with a single DP while Team-B starts with two *This is an improvement, but Team-A still dominates in simulated games* ²⁷.

²⁵ There are instances where two alternatives are shown for the play of a team. The first was “possible” but the second was what we propose be done. For example, a 3A turn can be followed by a 3A* turn, with follow-on turns by both teams adopting the (*). If another two alternatives are shown later in a game, then the notation switches from 3A* to 3A[^], and the ([^]) carries on from there, etc.

²⁷ We could have given Team-B a 1-Peel advantage by allocating Team-A zero DPs and Team-B one. But this creates the possibility that Team-A fails in Turn-1A, and ends with no DPs on the scoreboard, meaning that Team-A would not have a DP for Team-B to Eliminate!

Start 4: Team-A plays first. *Ceteris paribus*, this give it a 4-Hoop and 2-Peel head start. In this start we *split the baby* by giving Team-B a handicap of half that amount: 2-Hs and 1-DP. Team-B starts with its clip on h(3) instead of h(1), and with 2-DPs instead of just one. *Simulations from this start are presented in the next chapter.*

We believe that Start 4 levels the playing field a great deal – Team-A maintains a slight advantage but one that can disappear in an instant! If there is a downside to Start 4 it is that it feels like you are starting in the middle of a game. It can take a moment to get oriented!

Start 4 was also used to create the Table presented below. It suggests that Team-B should win if Team-A involves a P as one of its two Peels in Turn-1A: This is logical because if Team-A chooses to complete a P, then it is not doing another type of Peel that turn! Yes, a P advances Team-A’s clip, but to what end? Arriving to Turn-3A with its clip at h(10) instead of h(9) conveys little benefit, whereas an additional C, D, or E can be determinative, or preventative. The Table also shows that Team-A should win if it chooses to demote Team-B’s clip one hoop while also completing a Conversion, [i.e., using the Pair (C,D)], but executing the Pair (D,D) is not a winning strategy for Team-A. ²⁸

Winner – Team (A or B?) – as a Function of Pair Used in Turn 1A

Pair	C	E	D	P
C	A	A	A	B
E		A	A	B
D			B	B
P				B

“C” ze the Day: You can’t win a game of *Combat* unless you complete your Triple, and you can’t complete your Triple without completing one or more Cs. The question is, when should C’s be done? In general, we believe the answer is as early as possible (especially for Team-A).

If your CP is at an odd numbered hoop, then completing this C usually involves an inward Peel. It can be advantageous to start a turn like this by rushing Partner to the Peeling hoop and trying the Peel. Continuing the break after the Peel attempt should be relatively easy because balls that were outside the Augmented box usually start a turn by being placed on Home-Bases, which minimizes the effective size of the lawn, making Peeling easier.

²⁸ The Pair (D,C) “works” in Turn-1A because Team-A grows its DP count from 1 to 2 while demoting Team-B’s clip from h(3) back to h(2) leaving the Trios (5, 2, 3) (2, 2, 3). Team-B wants to reach the Trio (7, 3, 3). But to do so requires Team-B to complete the Pair (C,P). This is doable but leave Team-A’s Trio unchanged with (5, 2, 3). Then, in Turn-2A, Team-A can execute the Pair (C,E) and reach the unbeatable Trios (9, 3, 2) (7, 2, 3).

If your CP is at an even numbered hoop, then completing it usually involves an outward Peel. This can be difficult in the middle of a break because it often requires an escape-ball. Consider doing this as a Rush-Peel to start your turn. Or do it Posthumously, seeking a different Peel, hopefully an inward D or E, as the first Peel in your Pair. Or, set up for the outward 1st C in the traditional way: send Peelee and an escape ball to the Peeling hoop, go make a hoop, come back and do the Peel, and look to do a 2nd Peel later in your break, perhaps Posthumously ³⁰.

Mind Your Ds and Es: There is no limit in the rules on the number of D's a team can execute. However, Ds are of limited value after Turn-3. Once Oppo has reached h(9), pushing his clip backwards one or two hoops, still leaves him in a finishing position. That said, leaving him with the Trio (7, 3, x) or (8, 2, x) forces him to contemplate the more difficult finishing turns.

The rules of *Combat* allow each team only 3-Es. These are useful throughout the game but have the most impact in later turns, when Ds are not as effective. Even if Oppo has 3-DPs, eliminating two of them will force him to complete the Pair (C,C) before the 4th hoop in his break in order to finish this turn.

Use Ds and Es purposefully. Make Oppo work for it! He might breakdown!

New Blocks: Players often speculate about which block will be drawn next. You can improve your guess by remembering which blocks were previously drawn and knowing how many blocks remain in the bag. However, obtaining an accurate count (without peeking in the bag!) is complicated for two reasons: (i) an E does not cause a block to be drawn unless Oppo had three DPs (and no CP) before the E – which then necessitates a draw for a new CP, and the completion of a C does not cause a block to be drawn if your team has 3 DPs after the C.

Here is a formula that uses only “publicly available” information (i.e., from the score board):

of Blocks remaining in the bag =

of unused Es across both teams + [6 minus (# of CP and DP cards on the boards)]

Consider the Leave: Keeping all balls inside the augmented box limits Oppo's flexibility at the start of his turn. Therefore, forgoing a Posthumous peel that sends one or more balls outside the augmented box can make sense if this leave hampers Oppo sufficiently at the start of his turn. It is also possible to leave balls inside the augment box and also hampered by hoops.

Don't Forget the Break! Peeling is great fun, but don't neglect advancing your Team-Clip!

³⁰ If this is u/k's 1st turn and their CP is h(1) or h(8), then the Peel attempt before h(1) can be risky.

VII.. SAMPLE GAMES ³¹

We present samples games of three types:

- (1) 2-Peeler Games with no Breakdowns: The first three games involve “2-Peelers” – players who routinely complete 2-Peels per turn. We assume no breakdowns and show that having the innings is valuable, but it is also necessary to choose Pairs wisely.
- (2) 2-Peeler Games with Minimal Breakdowns. The next two games show that Team-A’s initial advantage is fragile: Team-A loses the innings if it fails on a single hoop or on a single Peel during a turn.
- (3) Advanced Play: The last 2 games allow 3 or more Peels per turn. It is advantageous to be a consistent 3-Peeler. However, making a single Posthumous 3rd Peel as a 2-Peeler, may not be “worth it” relative to setting a good leave.

2-Peeler Games – no Breakdowns

GAME 1: Team-A starts with (C,C), Team-B responds (E,E)

Turn-#	TEAM-A			TEAM-B			ACTION						
	(CLP	DPs	Es)	(CLP	DPs	Es)	H	C	E	D	P	PO	
Start	(1	1	3)	(3	2	3)							
1A	(5	3	3)	(3	2	3)	4	2					
1B	(5	1	3)	(7	2	1)	4		2				
2A	(9	3	3)	(7	2	1)	4	2					
2B	(8	2	1)	(11	2	0)	4		1	1			
3A	Team A wins 4-Hs, 1-C, 1-P, and 2-POs.						<i>This game involved 10 Peels.</i>						

Here Team-A uses the Pair (C,C) in turns 1A and 2A and then finishes in Turn-3A with (C,P). Either or both (C,C) Pairs could have been completed with a Posthumous 2nd Peel, but both Peels in the final Pair needed to be completed before h(12) to allow for Peg-Outs.

Team-B responds with perhaps the most obvious play (E,E) and then depletes his stock of E’s by the end of his 2nd turn. This gives Team-A an easy victory in Turn-3A.

³¹ Page 25 provide a scoresheet that can be used to track a game.

GAME 2: Team-A starts with (C,C), Team-B responds (D,D)

Turn-#	TEAM-A			TEAM-B			ACTION						
	(CLP	DPs	Es)	(CLP	DPs	Es)	H	C	E	D	P	PO	
Start	(1	1	3)	(3	2	3)							
1A	(5	3	3)	(3	2	3)	4	2					
1B	(3	3	3)	(7	2	3)	4			2			
2A	(9	3	3)	(7	2	3)	4				2		
2B	(7	3	3)	(11	2	3)	4			2			
3A	Team A- can win 4-Hs, 2-Ps and 2-POs but temporizes												
3A*	(11	3	1)	(11	0	3)	4	2					
3B*	(11	1	1)	(3w	0	1)	4	2					
4A*	Team-A can win 4-Hs, 2-C and 2-POs but temporizes												
4A^	(3w	3	1)	(3w	0	1)	4	2					
4B^	(3w	2	1)	(3w	1	0)	4	1	1				
5A^	Team-A wins with 4-H's, 1-C, and 2-POs. This game involved 17 Peels.												

Once again, Team-A starts with (C,C), but this time Team-B responds with (D,D). In Turn-2A, Team-A is able to reach the Trio (9, 3, 3). Team-B again responds (D,D) leaving team-A the most difficult Trio (7, 3, 3). Team-A could attempt to finish (4-Hs, 2-Ps and 2-POs) but if he fails then Team-B has a relatively easy finish, just needing (4-Hs, 1-C, and 2-POs).

Team-A “Temporizes” – gives up winning this turn but -- *lives to fight another day* – by playing the Pair (E,E). This leaves Team-B’s clip at h(11), close to the peg. But, with no DPs on the board, and without the ability to complete 3-Cs, Team-B does not have a finishing turn. Team-B responds with (E,E) which gives Team-A another finishing turn, this time requiring completing the pair (C,C) before h(12) to allow Peg-Outs.

Even though Team-B is now in Wrap-Around, it still has no DPs (!) and cannot finish during its next turn. Team-A takes advantage of this situation by completing the Pair (C,C) but in a “relaxed way”, allowing the final C to be done Posthumously – not finishing this turn. Team-B gets another turn but cannot finish. The best recourse for Team-B is proceed in the hopes that Team-A breaks down: (i) use its final E, (ii) complete a C giving his Team 1-DP, and then (iii) set a leave. If Team-A does break down, then Team-B can finish with the Pair (C,C).

Using (D,D) early in the game and saving (E,E) for later, did not prevent Team-A from winning, but it did delay the process increasing the likelihood that Team-A breaks down and Team-B takes over.

GAME 3: Team-A starts with (C,E), Team-B follows with the same.

This time Team-A begins with (C,E). The table on page 15 suggests that starting with this Pair, and making thoughtful choices for follow-on Pairs, allows Team-A to win. However, the timid play by Team-A shown below gives the victory to Team-B.

Turn-#	TEAM-A			TEAM-B			ACTION					
	(CLP	DPs	Es)	(CLP	DPs	Es)	H	C	E	D	P	PO
Start	(1	1	3)	(3	2	3)						
1A	(5	2	2)	(3	1	3)	4	1	1			
1B	(5	1	2)	(7	2	2)	4	1	1			
2A	(9	2	1)	(7	1	2)	4	1	1			
2B	(9	1	1)	(11	2	1)	4	1	1			
3A	(1w	2	0)	(11	1	1)	4	1	1			
3B	(1w	1	0)	(3w	2	0)	4	1	1			
4A	(5w	2	0)	(3w	2	0)	4	1				
4B	Team B wins 4-Hs, 1-C, and 2-POs.						<i>This game involved 14 Peels.</i>					

Both teams use only Cs and Es at every turn until Turn-4A when Team-A runs out of Es. Neither team tried the Pair (C,C) which could have been a winning strategy for Team-A in turns 3A and 4A, and for Team-B in Turn 3B!³²

One must be thoughtful and bold (but not reckless) to succeed in Combat!

³² And Team-A could have tried (C,C) with the 2nd C being Posthumous in Turn 2A!

Games with Minimal Breakdowns

The next two games illustrate just how fragile Team-A's initial advantage really is.

GAME 4: Team-A completes two Peels per turn, but makes only three hoops in Turn-1A, instead of four. Team-B wins.

Turn-#	TEAM-A			TEAM-B			ACTION						
	(CLP	DPs	Es)	(CLP	DPs	Es)	H	C	E	D	P	PO	
Start	(1	1	3)	(3	2	3)							
1A	(4	3	3)	(3	2	3)	3	2					Only 3 hoops not 4!
1B	(3	3	3)	(7	3	3)	4	1		1			
2A	(7	3	3)	(5	3	3)	4			2			
2B	(6	2	3)	(9	3	2)	4	1	1				
3A	(10	2	3)	(7	3	2)	4			2			
3B	Team-B can finish with 4-Hs, 2-Ps, and 2-PO.											<i>This game involved 12 Peels.</i>	

Team-B could choose to temporize, as per Game 2.

GAME 5: Team-A Makes 4-Hs in Turn 1A, but fails on 2nd C in the Pair (C,C). Team B wins.

Turn-#	TEAM-A			TEAM-B			ACTION						
	(CLP	DPs	Es)	(CLP	DPs	Es)	H	C	E	D	P	PO	
Start	(1	1	3)	(3	2	3)							
1A	(5	2	3)	(3	2	3)	4	1					Only 1 Peel, not 2!
1B	(5	2	3)	(8	3	3)	4	1				1	
2A	(9	2	3)	(6	3	3)	4					2	
2B	(7	2	3)	(10	3	3)	4					2	
3A	(11	2	1)	(10	1	3)	4					2	
3B	Team-B wins with 4-Hs, 2-Cs, and 2-POs.							<i>This game involved 11 Peels.</i>					

Team-A tries (C,C) in Turn-1A but fails on the 2nd C.

Team-B can set out on the road to victory by completing the Pair (P,C) in Turn-1B which puts Team-B in the Trio (8,3,3). Team-A follows with (D,D) which pushes Team-B back to (6,3,3) while Team-A progresses to (9,2,3). Team-B responds with (D,D) in Turn-2B leaving Team-A with (7,2,3), a non-finishing Trio, while progressing to (10,3,3).

The best Team-A can do is (E,E) leaving Team-B with (10,1,3). From here Team-B can finish with (C,C) followed by 2-POs.

Again, Team-B could choose to temporize.

Advanced Play

Completing more than 2-Peels in a turn is possible and can be valuable if the attempt does not stress the break “too much”. Multi-Peeling turns usually start early and end late. That involves attempting (or setting up for) at least one Peel before the 1st hoop of a turn, and planning for one or more Posthumous Peels after the 4th hoop. In the middle, the “stars” – ball positions and Peeling possibilities – may align to produce unexpected and delightful results ³³.

While experts are free to try anything (!), in the simulated games presented below we allow 3-Es in a turn, but not 3-Cs or 3-Ds. We also allow mixed sets of 3-Peels, (E,E,C), (E,E,D), (C,C,E), (C,C,D), (D,D,C) and (D,E,E), where any internal order is possible. And, we allow the Pair (P,P) to be tried and succeed, but we don’t allow it to be combined with yet another (i.e., a 3rd) Peel.

GAME 6: 3-Peeler vs 3-Peeler – Team-A Wins

Turn-#	TEAM-A			TEAM-B			ACTION						
	(CLP	DPs	Es)	(CLP	DPs	Es)	H	C	E	D	P	PO	
Start	(1	1	3)	(3	2	3)							
1A	(5	3	3)	(2	2	3)	4	2				1	
1B	(5	3	3)	(8	2	3)	4					2	
2A	(9	3	1)	(7	0	3)	4	2				1	
2B	(9	0	1)	(11	0	0)	4		3				
3A	(1W	2	1)	(10	0	0)	4	2				1	
3B	(1W	2	1)	(10	2	0)	4	2					
4A	Team-A wins 4-Hs, 1-C, and 2-POs.						<i>This game involved 17 Peels.</i>						

Team-A won. As would be expected, the advantage of having the innings is consistent across 2 and 3-Peel environments.

³³ Here are details of a 4-Peel turn (involving all four Peel types!) with u/k’s CP at h(7) and one of r/y’s DPs at h(10). u/k plays k as Striker for its Turn-1A. k lifts-to-position going to y. k rushes y from the Home-Base shown on page 3 [this game was played before u/k could put balls on any of the Home-bases, best would have been a different spot, the north east site] to h(7), completes the **D** [Peels y at h(7)] moving the r/y clip from h(3) back to h(2) going to u. u is sent to h(2) as k gets a rush on r to h(1). k makes **h(1)**, sends r to h(3) going to y. y is sent to escape-ball position at h(2) as k goes to u. u is sent to Peel position at h(7) as k goes to position at h(2). k makes **h(2)** and then does a **C**, converting the CP at h(7) into a DP (Peels u) going to y. y is sent to h(4) as k goes to r at h(3). k makes **h(3)** and then does an **E** of r/y’s DP at h(10) by Peeling r at h(3). This is done as a roll-Peel with k going to u [which is south of h(2)]. u is sent to h(5) as k goes to y at h(4). k makes **h(4)** and then uses y and r to get to u. u is rushed to Peel position at h(5). k does the **P** Peeling u at h(5) to move the u/k clip to h(6).

Details of a 5-Peel Turn (involving 3-Es and 2-Ds!) can be found starting on page 163 of [New Roles ...](#)

How Valuable is a One-Off 3rd Peel for a 2-Peeler?

Game 7 suggests that collecting a “fortunate” (probably Posthumous) 3rd Peel as Team-B in a match between two players who are essentially 2-Peeler, does not “tilt” the lawn enough to let Team-B win. This result should inform and influence your choice between setting an effective turn-ending leave or trying to complete a Posthumous Peel.

GAME 7: 2-Peeler vs 2-Peeler: Team-B Collects a 3rd Peel in Turn-1B – Team-A Still Wins

Turn-#	TEAM-A			TEAM-B			ACTION					
	(CLP	DPs	Es)	(CLP	DPs	Es)	H	C	E	D	P	PO
Start	(1	1	3)	(3	2	3)						
1A	(5	3	3)	(3	2	3)	4	2				
1B	(5	0	3)	(7	2	0)	4		3			
2A	(9	2	3)	(7	2	0)	4	2				
2B	(7	2	3)	(11	2	0)	4			2		
3A	(11	2	1)	(11	0	0)	4	2				
3B	Team-A wins 4-Hs, 1-C, and 2-POs.						<i>This Game involved 12 Peels.</i>					

The results from Games 4 and 5 above should be compared to the results inferred from the Table on Page 15 for an extra hoop, and from this Game 7 for an extra Peel. There appears to be an asymmetry between failing on a single hoop [of four], or Peel [of two] – which can be terminal, compared to making a single extra hoop [5 instead of 4] or Peel [3 instead of 2] – which does not insure a victory!

VII.. CONCLUSION

Combat Croquet uses four types of Peels: Two are new (Conversions and Eliminations), one has been revamped (Promotions), and one was used in a previous game (Demotions). These are blended into a game that: (i) requires the completion of a new form of Triple-Peel – based on Peeling at hoops generated randomly, (ii) limits Striker to making no more than 4-Hoops during a turn, and (iii) has Team-Clips (instead of individual clips) that need to be advanced from h(1) to h(12), and perhaps into Wrap-Around, before the two required peg-outs can occur.

The result is an interactive game of intense *Combat* where “things get done and undone”, where you are always looking to “do for” your team and “do to” Oppo. It is playable because running breaks is relatively easy – facilitated by rules that keep balls away from the boundaries and give Striker the ability to start each turn with a lift-to-position.

This game is a constant source of amusement and bemusement because there are a plethora of Peeling possibilities at every turn – enough to destroy your opponent or hang yourself!

SCORESHEET

Turn-#	TEAM-A	TEAM-B	ACTION							COMMENTS
	(CLP DPs Es)	(CLP DPs Es)	H	C	E	D	P	PO		
Start	()	()								
1A	()	()								
1B	()	()								
2A	()	()								
2B	()	()								
3A	()	()								
3B	()	()								
4A	()	()								
4B	()	()								
5A	()	()								
5B	()	()								
6A	()	()								
6B	()	()								