

Golf Croquet European Club League 2026 Rules

Preamble

The event is organised by the European Regional Committee (ERC) of the World Croquet Federation (WCF).

The competition is to be played in accordance with the WCF Rules of Golf Croquet in effect on February 6th 2026.

The ERC Organiser for 2026 is Ian Burrige. Please note new event specific email address ECLOrganiser2026@gmail.com which should be used for all correspondence relating to the event.

The event comprises seven Championship Heats followed by a Finals Weekend in October and seven Qualifying Heats for the 2027 Championship.

General Entry and Eligibility Criteria

- 1 Open to all clubs of European Members and Registered Croquet Organisations of the WCF.
- 2 Clubs are encouraged to enter as many teams as they wish. Where a club enters more than one team rule 9 will apply.
- 3 All players must be a member of the club that they represent. Additionally, players for Spanish clubs must be federated to that club. A failure to comply with this rule will result in the club being disqualified.
- 4 Players may only participate in one Heat and may not represent a team in the Finals Weekend, other than the team that they played for in a Heat.
- 5 Players who did not play in a Heat may play in the Finals Weekend.
- 6 Each match will be contested by 4 players. A squad of 4 to 6 players may be used in a Heat, or the Finals Weekend. (For the avoidance of doubt these can be a different group of players in each case). Team captains will name 4 players from their squad for each match in accordance with Appendix 1.
- 7 Entry Fee 90 Euro or 80 GBP per team payable to the WCF. Except that there is no entry fee for teams Hosting a Heat.
- 8 With their entry each team will advise the name and contact details of their captain, or other person responsible for communications until a captain has been appointed.
- 9 A club may enter additional teams subject to the following:
 - Two teams from the same club cannot play in the same Heat (unless that event would otherwise be undersubscribed);
 - Players can only play for one team in any given season;
 - The teams from a club must be ranked in order of strength (average DG of the best 4 players) and will be designated 'A', 'B', 'C' etc.
 - Where a club is qualified for the Championship and wishes to enter more than one team the 'A' (strongest) team must play in the Championship.

2026 Venues and Dates

10 Entries for the 2026 Heats must be received by February 6th 2026.

11 The 2026 Championship Heats will be Hosted as follows:

18/19 April	Balgreen (SCO)
25/26 April	Cheltenham (ENG)
23/24 May	Ikiskile (LVA)
30/31 May	Vigo (SPA)
20/21 June	Telc (CZE)
18/19 July	Hamburg (GER)
1/2 August	Leighton Linlade (ENG)

12 The winner of each of the seven Championship Heats will qualify for the Finals Weekend to be held at Carrickmines (Ireland) on 9-11 October 2026, who will also participate giving eight teams in total.

13 The 2026 Qualifying Heats will be Hosted as follows:

25/26 April	Compton (ENG)
16/17 May	Carrickmines (IRE)
23/24 May	Vigo (SPA)
6/7 June	Phyllis Court (ENG)
20/21 June	Watford (ENG)
4/5 July	Corfu (GRE)
TBC	Herbert Park (IRE)

14 The winner of each Qualifying Heat will be eligible to participate in a 2027 Championship Heat, along with teams that have finished 1st and 2nd in the 2026 Championship Heats. The remainder of the participants in the 2027 Championship Heats will be determined in accordance with Appendix 3.

Heats

15 Clubs qualified for the Championship (See Appendix 2) will be asked to indicate, in order of preference, a minimum of at least two abroad (not in their own country) Championship Heats that they wish to participate in.

16 All other clubs will be asked to indicate, in order of preference, which Qualifying Heats they are interested in participating in. Choosing more than one will increase the chances of being allocated a place.

17 A number of teams will be allocated to the reserve list for the Championship (see Appendix 2). These teams will be asked for their preferences for both Championship and Qualifying Heats.

18 In addition to the Host club three places are available in each Heat. The ERC Organiser will allocate teams to the Heats, taking into account their own order of preference and the following principles:

- Championship Heats will consist of teams qualified for the Championship or, if necessary, teams from the reserve list in order of promotion
- Teams that participated in 2025 have priority over those that did not
- Teams from abroad (not from the Host country) have priority over those from the Host country
- 'A' teams have priority over additional teams
- Where possible, all teams in a Heat should be from a different country
- Where allocations cannot be determined using these principles places will be awarded by ballot

19 If sufficient entries are not received for any Heat its format/rules may be modified in order to create a viable event, or the Heat may be cancelled. The Host of any cancelled Heat will be offered the opportunity to enter an alternative Heat.

20 The format for each Heat of four teams will be an all play all block, with a match between two teams consisting of 2 doubles and 8 singles games as detailed in Appendix 1.

21 The winner of each Championship Heat should confirm with ERC Organiser, within two weeks of the event that they intend to participate in the Finals Weekend. If they do not wish to do so the place will pass to the second placed team etc.

Heat Stage Host Commitments

22 The Host club of each Heat is expected to provide hospitality for the visiting players. Food (but not drinks) should be offered free of charge for lunch and afternoon tea on both Saturday and Sunday.

23 The Host club cannot charge a green fee, or make any other charge, to the visiting players.

24 The Host club will manage the playing schedule in accordance with Appendix 1 and arrange for the event to be reported on croquetscores.com.

25 The Host club will appoint and inform the other teams of the Tournament Referee, who should be qualified and ideally not a player. All players who are qualified as referees in their own country may act as such but only if a non-playing referee is not available.

Participating Team Commitments

26 No less than two weeks before their Heat each team should appoint a captain responsible for team selection and communications following their appointment. On appointment the name of the captain should be provided to the Host club and the ERC Organiser.

27 The captain should provide a list of their intended players to the Host club and the ERC Organiser, at least two weeks before the start of the event. Subsequent changes are allowed and should be notified immediately.

Appendix 1 (Match Formats & Winner Determination)

Order of Play for Qualifying Groups of 4 Teams

Before each match each team captain will declare their team of 4 players, the same 4 players must play in the singles and the doubles. The captain should also identify two doubles pairings, there are no restrictions on which two players may play together. Players and Doubles Pairings will be ordered by DGrade/combined Dgrade (X1, X2, X3, X4 and XD1, XD2):-

Match 1 A v B and C v D

Saturday

AD1 v BD1, AD2 v BD2, CD1 v DD1, CD2 v DD2

A1vB2 v A2vB1, A3 v B4, A4 v B3

C1vD2, C2vD1, C3 v D4, C4 v D3

A1 v B1, A2 v B2, A3 v B3, A4 v B4

C1 v D1, C2 v D2, C3 v D3, C4 v D4

Match 2 – A v C and B v D

Saturday

AD1 v CD1, AD2 v CD2, BD1 v DD1, BD2 v DD2

A1vC2, A2vC1, A3 v C4, A4 v C3

B1vD2v B2vD1, B3 v D4, B4 v D3

Sunday

A1 v C1, A2 v C2, A3 v C3, A4 v C4

B1 v D1, B2 v D2, B3 v D3, B4 v D4

Match 3 A v D and B v C

Sunday

AD1 v DD1, AD2 v DD2, CD1 v BD1, CD2 v BD2

A1vD2, A2vD1, A3 v D4, A4 v D3

C1vB2, C2vB1, C3 v B4, C4 v B3

A1 v D1, A2 v D2, A3 v D3, A4 v D4

C1 v B1, C2 v B2, C3 v B3, C4 v B4

A match between two teams is best of 10 games.

Two points will be awarded for each team match won and one point awarded to each team in the case of a draw. The winner will be the team with the most points. If two or more teams are equal on points the winner will be the team that has won the most games across all matches, if two or more teams are still tied the winner will be the team that has won the most singles games across all matches. If two or more teams are still tied the winner will be the team with the best net hoops against the teams that remain tied.

Appendix 2 – 2026 Championship Teams and Reserve List

In addition to the Hosts of each Heat the following 21 teams are qualified for the 2026 Championship Heats:

- Algarve (POR)
- Broadwas (ENG)
- CERN (SWI)
- Club de Campo Villa de Madrid (SPA)
- Compton (ENG)
- Dulwich (ENG)
- Ealing (ENG)
- Metis (CZE)
- Newbridge House (IRE)
- Newcastle (IRE)
- Newport (ENG)
- Phyllis Court (ENG)
- Real Aero Club de Santiago (SPA)
- Real Club de a Puerta de Hierro (SPA)
- Real Club de Golf de Novo Sancti Petri (SPA)
- Real Club de Golf Vista Hermosa (SPA)
- Roehampton (ENG)
- Suedwest (GER)
- Sussex County (ENG)
- Tolkis (FIN)
- Zurich (SWI)

If any of the above teams fail to take up their place the reserve teams in order of promotion are:

- El Buho (SPA)
- Real Aero Club de Vigo (SPA)
- Horice (CZE)
- Club de Campo de Vigo 'B' (SPA)
- Cheam (ENG)
- Golf Xaz (SPA)
- Sherry (SPA)
- Real Club Pineda de Seville (SPA)
- Villanueva (SPA)
- Phyllis Court 'B' (ENG)

Appendix 3 – 2027 Championship Heat Qualification Rules

Automatic Qualification for the 7 Championship Heats:

- The first and second placed teams from the seven 2026 Championship Heats, along with the Host of the 2026 Grand Final
- The winners of all the Qualifying Heats from 2026
- Any participant in the 2025 Grand Final that did not participate in the 2026 Heats
- The Host of any 2027 Championship Heat not already qualified above

Remaining Places in the 7 Championship Heats:

- The team finishing 2nd in each Qualifying Heat in 2026 will be placed in Allocation Pool 1.
- The team finishing 3rd in each Championship Heat in 2026 will be placed in Allocation Pool 2.

The teams in Allocation Pools 1 & 2 will each be ordered by the average DGrade of their best four players that participated in their Heat at the end of the that Heat.

Teams will be allocated places in the Championship Heats alternately from the top of the two pools starting with Allocation Pool 1 (ie 1st Pool 1, 1st Pool 2, 2nd Pool 1, 2nd Pool 2 etc) until the 28 teams required has been fulfilled. The remaining teams will form the reserve list maintaining the alternating order.

Whilst it is anticipated that the above process will be sufficient to fill Championship Heats should it fail to do so the process will be repeated with the teams that came third in the Qualifying Heats and fourth in the Championship Heats.

Any new team that has not played previously will play in a Qualifying Heat in their first season.

A team which did not play in 2026 but which has played in either 2024 or 2025, finishing 3rd or above in a Championship Heat or 2nd or above in a Qualifying Heat, not already qualified for a Championship Heat, will be added to Allocation Pool 2 using the average DGrade of the best four players that played in that Heat.