

A FINDABILITY NOTE

Why We Are Hard to Find Online

*What a Google search for Croquet Queensland actually returns,
why the official front page is missing from it, and the effect that is
having*



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Prepared for the Management Committee

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SUMMARY

Members report that Croquet Queensland is getting hard to find on Google. It is. A search for our name no longer brings the official site up near the top. This note sets out what I found, how I checked it, and why it is happening: the front page is generic, the software that ranks results cannot read it, and it carries nothing live worth showing. The cause is the page, not the association.

1. Summary

Croquet Queensland is hard to find on Google because of the front page itself, not the association behind it. A search for our name now returns Facebook first, then our own forum and news pages, then a run of individual club sites and council directories. The official homepage does not appear among them. The site is not blocked: Google reads it and has it indexed. The trouble is that the page is judged less useful than the others. It carries about two thousand characters of the same boilerplate the RevolutioniseSport platform gives every sport, it holds none of the structured detail search engines and the new AI tools rely on to understand a page, and it has nothing live on it worth a visit. The clearest proof is close to home: our own news site, a fortnight old, already outranks the front page that has stood for around twenty-five years.

KEYWORDS *search visibility · RevolutioniseSport · machine-readable · the front page · findability*

Method. I inspected the live croquetqld.org page and read its code, then checked real Google rankings through Startpage, which serves Google's index. I compared our page against other bodies on the same platform and against our own news site.

Scope. The public search visibility of croquetqld.org, June 2026. This is a diagnosis of why we are not ranking, not a proposal for what to build.

2. What a Search Actually Returns

A search for ‘croquet queensland’ now returns Facebook at the top, then our own forum and news pages, then a string of individual club websites, and then council pages and directories. The official homepage, www.croquetqld.org, does not appear among the results at all. Its own subdomains outrank it, and so do the clubs.

It is not that Google cannot read us

The first thing to rule out is a block, and it is not one. The site is indexed: its pages do appear when you search the address directly. The pages that sit ahead of us are ordered by Google, not by the association. They are simply the ones it judges more useful than our front page.

Croquet Queensland is getting hard to find in Google searches.

REPORTED TO THE COMMITTEE BY A MEMBER, JUNE 2026

Even our deeper pages struggle

This is not only the homepage. On topic searches, where a member is looking for the four codes, our history, or our regions, the official pages rarely reach the first page of

results either; where any of our material does surface, it tends to be the news site rather than the main one. The whole site is present in Google’s index, but present is not the same as found. A page has to earn its place, and ours does not.

3. How a Search Engine Actually Works

It helps to know what a search engine is doing, because the reason we are missing follows straight from it. A search engine is not a person who knows our association and where to find us. It is a machine that has visited almost every page on the internet, taken a copy of each, and made notes on what each one is about. When someone runs a search, the machine does not go out and look; it sorts through the notes it already holds and decides, in a fraction of a second, which handful of pages to put in front of that person.

It does three separate jobs

The machine visits a page and copies it, which is called crawling. It files that copy under what it judges the page to be about, which is called the index. And for each search someone types, it ranks the filed pages and shows them in order. These are three different jobs, and it is worth keeping them apart, because a page can pass the first two and still fail the third.

Our problem is not in the first two. The machine can reach our page, and it has filed a copy; our pages do appear if you search for the exact web address. The problem is the third job. When someone searches for croquet in Queensland, our front page has been filed, but it is not chosen.

Being filed is not the same as being chosen

This is the part that catches people out. Having a page on the internet, and even having Google copy and file it, only makes it eligible. It does not earn a place near the top. A common search has millions of eligible pages and room for about ten on the first screen, which is the only screen most people ever look at. The machine has to pick the ten it thinks are most useful for that exact search. Everything else, however official or long-standing, is left further down, where almost nobody goes.

4. What Decides Which Pages Win

To choose those ten, the machine leans on a few plain things, and our page is short on all of them. It reads the words on the page and asks whether they genuinely say much about the subject. It looks for the hidden labels a well-built page carries in its code, the markers that tell the machine plainly what the page is, who it belongs to, and what is on it. It checks whether the page is alive, with recent news and activity, or sitting unchanged for months. And it weighs how many other trusted pages link to it and how many people visit. The page that says the most, is labelled the clearest, is the most active, and is the most linked to, takes the top spots.

The machine never sees our standing

The crucial point for us is what the machine cannot see. It does not see our logo, it does not know our history, and it has no idea that we are the official body for the sport in this state. It sees only the words and the labels on the page in front of it. So a respected

association with a thin, generic page can lose, every time, to a page built last week that happens to be full of clear, well-labelled content. Reputation lives in the minds of people. The machine only reads the page.

And now the machines answer directly

One thing has changed this past year. More and more, people are handed an answer written by AI at the top of the results, or they ask a tool like ChatGPT straight out, instead of clicking through to a website at all. Those tools read pages the very same way: they quote the ones they can understand and skip the ones they cannot. When our own page gives them nothing clear to quote, they describe us from somewhere else instead, a club page, an old document, a third-party summary. That is exactly the duplication members have noticed. The machines are explaining Croquet Queensland out of other people's pages, because ours does not hand them the words.

5. Why Our Front Page Is Passed Over

Set our front page against that list and the result is no surprise. On the words, it is generic: about two thousand characters of the same boilerplate the RevolutioniseSport platform hands every sport, with little that says what makes Croquet Queensland the place to land. The short grey description that shows under our name in a search result is the platform's stock formula, the same shape it writes for every sport on it rather than a

line written about us, and it is repeated word for word on every page of the site. On the labels, it has none, so to the machine the page is close to blank. On activity, it is static, with nothing live on the front worth returning for. The sameness reaches even the smallest things: the little icon in the browser tab is the platform's stock cog, the one every sport gets, instead of a croquet logo. A page that cannot manage its own icon was never going to stand out to a search engine.

KEY FINDING · 1

Our front page is passed over on every measure the machine uses: thin on words, blank on labels, and static. To the part of Google that ranks pages, it is close to empty.

None of this can be put right by editing the page. It is built into the platform's template, the same one every sport on RevolutioniseSport receives, which is why a whole row of national and state bodies on that

template share the identical weakness. RevolutioniseSport is weak as a public website. The page is not neglected; it is doing exactly what the template allows, and that is not enough to be found.

6. The Proof That It Is the Page, Not Us

The clearest proof that this is about the page, and not about the association, is close to home. Our own news site, a fortnight old, already outranks the front page that has represented Croquet Queensland online for

around twenty-five years. In search, age and history earn nothing. What earns a place is whether a page is well built and can be read by software. The news site can be; the old front page cannot.

TABLE 1. *The same two measures across three of our own pages and our national body.*

Page	Built on	Readable text	Machine-readable tags
<i>Our front page</i>	RevolutioniseSport	~2,060	None
<i>Croquet Australia front page</i>	RevolutioniseSport	~2,015	None
<i>Our news site</i>	A modern site, not RevSport	~10,991	Present

Visible text length and structured-data tags read from each live page, 19 June 2026. Readable text is the visible character count; machine-readable tags are the structured markers search engines rely on to understand a page.

Croquet Australia's front page is just as thin as ours and carries no more structure, yet it sits first for its own name. The difference is competition, not quality. Nothing else contests the phrase 'croquet australia', so a hollow page wins by default. 'Croquet queensland' is crowded: active club sites, and

our own content-rich news site, all stand between members and the front page. We are not worse than Croquet Australia. We are simply exposed, because Queensland croquet is busy online and the front page is the weakest thing we put in front of it.

7. The Effect the Front Page Is Having

The cost of all this is not only that we are hard to find. A front page is meant to be the anchor for everything: the one place that settles who we are and points people on to the rest. While ours cannot hold that position, two things follow. Members and newcomers looking for us are handed to Facebook, to club

sites, and to our own subdomains before they reach the association. And, as the last section explained, the AI answers and search summaries describe us out of other people's material, which is the very duplication members have been raising. The association is being represented online by pages it does not control.

KEY FINDING · 2

While the front page is weak, it does more than hide. It hands the job of representing Croquet Queensland to whatever other pages the machines can read.

This note sets out the why and stops there. The one step worth taking now is small and costs nothing: set up Google Search Console on the site, a free tool from Google that shows which searches we appear in and where we

sit, so we can see today's position plainly and measure any change. What to do about the front page itself is a larger conversation, and one the understanding here is meant to inform rather than settle.

APPENDIX A

The Evidence

What a search for our name actually returns.

The figure below is the heart of this note: a live search for ‘croquet queensland’, with the official site nowhere in the results, so the committee can see exactly what a member sees.

FIGURE 1 A search for ‘croquet queensland’. The official site does not appear. Facebook, our own forum and news pages, and individual club sites all rank above it. (Google’s ranking, viewed through Startpage, so the page frame is Startpage’s; the order is Google’s.)

