

EUROPEAN GOLF ASSOCIATION

EGA

Handicap System

Amended Edition, 1 January 2012



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(I) FOREWORD

(i) FOREWORD

The 2012 edition of the EGA Handicap System builds on the traditions of handicapping in the EGA. Our system is founded on the USGA Course Rating System and the fundamentals of handicapping as practised in CONGU and associations around the world.

Since its inception in 2000, the system has consistently evolved through three editions based on experience and evaluations in the member associations of the EGA.

In the early years of the third edition (2007), it became clear that the CSA procedure was not working out as expected in some countries. Moreover it appeared that 50% of the licensees were not fully implementing and/or complying with the system code.

The first step towards understanding was to establish the Handicap Research Group in 2008. The members are experienced golfers and have a solid background in numerical analysis and statistics. They are required to gather scoring data from different parts of Europe, to analyse performance aspects and to propose and validate improvements.

As a second step, three Regional Conferences were held in 2009 in the northern, central and southern zone to take stock of the requirements of the national associations in the future, to discuss changes, notably for CSA and to evaluate the reasons for non-compliance. Much of the non-compliance appeared to be due to lack of information and training of the national handicapping committees. Differences in golf culture across Europe take more time to accommodate. The Regional Conferences produced understanding of the problems and requirements in the field and a clear work program and planning for the 2012 edition.

The 2012 edition of the EGA Handicap System has been prepared by the Handicapping and Course Rating Committee of the EGA. Data analysis, design of new algorithms and validation tests were performed by the Handicap Research Group based on data provided by national associations.

The new edition has changes in both substance and form. A completely new procedure to replace CSA was designed and validated successfully. Computed Buffer Adjustment (CBA) is based on the number of players that play to the buffer or better, and the score is not adjusted. The Annual Handicap Review (AHR) has been improved to be more accurate, a clear quality improvement.

To accommodate the request for more information and background, the 2012 book was restyled. With the "System Overview" and a series of Explanatory Notes (EN) we highlight some of the reasoning, principles and assumptions fundamental to handicapping in the EGA. Together with the Guidance Notes (GN) they form a quick reference manual for better understanding and proper application of the system.

The HCRC would like to express its sincere thanks to the CONGU Board for granting permission to use selected items of the CONGU manual.

Whilst we hope handicap committees will be better informed by the new book, it is just as important that the golfers are aware of the basic functions and obligations. The “Short Guide to the EGA Handicap System” is provided for the national associations to be used in publications and information for their members.

I should like to express my sincere thanks to all HCRC and HRG members, our secretary and to HCRC members that retired in the past two years for their support and hard work to produce this major revision of our system. I truly believe that this 2012 edition of the EGA Handicap System will enable us to achieve our mission: one handicapping system, uniformly implemented and appreciated throughout Europe.

Jan Kees van Soest

Chairman HCRC

(ii) PRINCIPAL CHANGES 2012

General

- New sections and clauses have been added and some removed, resulting in renumbering.
- A section on “How to use the manual” has been added.
- A detailed index has been provided.
- Explanatory Notes (EN) and Guidance Notes (GN) have been added.
- The number of options and discretions for the national associations has been reduced.
- A system overview has been provided for understanding the relationship of the principle elements of the system.
- A short guide (player oriented) has been added as an appendix.
- All decisions have been included in a separate part of the book; the decisions have undergone substantial review.
- In certain sections, a reference to the Decisions part of the manual has been added.

Part 1 Definitions

- New definitions have been introduced: active; inactive; club handicap; club playing handicap; Computed Buffer Adjustment (CBA); CONGU; general play, No Return (NR)
- Definitions removed: Competition Stableford Adjustment CSA; marker; tee; winter period

Part 2 The Golf Course and Course Rating

- Section 2.1 EN on “The principles of USGA Course and Slope Rating” added.
- Section 2.4 Tees now described without reference to gender. GN on “Junior golf” added.
- Section 2.5 Length of hole for Par adjusted. EN on “Relevance of Par” added.
- Section 2.6 Specimen Local Rule removed to allow different options for Local Rules.
GN on “Preferred lies” added.
- Section 2.7 Temporary greens allowed: changed to one per nine holes.
Winter period removed.
GN on “Course set up and maintenance” added.

Part 3 Handicapping

- Section 3.1 National association discretion for responsibility of player to adjust handicap (old 12.10) removed.
National association discretion to adopt EDS removed. Obligation to establish EDS procedure and discretion to apply limits to EDS introduced.
National association discretion to adopt CBA (old CSA) removed.
National association discretion to restrict increase to two strokes removed.
Clause 3.1.17 Clause amended to cover all competitions that require an EGA Handicap.

- Clause 3.1.18 Recommendation to audit plus handicaps changed to obligation and GN on topic added.
- Clause 3.3.3 Clause added to add affiliated club discretion to direct active handicap required for competitions.
- Section 3.4 GN on "Purpose and composition of handicap committee" introduced. Changed discretion to obligation to calculate CBA (old CSA)
- Section 3.5 Obligation for player to adjust handicap immediately after the competition has closed and the result has been announced.
Note 3.5.9 amended: only allow NR adjusted scores for minimum of four scores.
Obligation for player to comply with purpose and intent of EGA Handicap System added.
- Section 3.6 Completely rewritten to reflect both 9- and 18 holes scores.
GNs on acceptable and unacceptable scores in case of disqualification and No Return introduced.
- Section 3.7 New section to introduce Computed Buffer Adjustment (CBA) as standard procedure of the EGA Handicap System. New algorithm in Appendix B
- Section 3.8 Rewritten to reflect EDS as standard feature of the EGA Handicap System with restrictions at the discretion of the national association.
EN added on "Purpose of EDS".
Note for the national association to allow category 1 players to return EDS for re-activating an inactive handicap.
- Section 3.9 Supplemented with provisions for 9-hole scores. EN on "Plus Handicaps".
EN on "9-hole scores".
- Section 3.10 Supplemented with provisions for 9-hole scores. EN on "Stableford".
- Section 3.11 Standardised to require at least three (3) scores to attain handicap.
Supplemented with provisions for 9-hole scores.
GN on "Allotment of lower handicap than calculated".
- Section 3.12 Discretion to restrict increase to two strokes removed. See also 3.1.
Section restricted to alteration, re-activation and handicap record.
- Section 3.15 Modified to reflect new automatically applied method for Annual Handicap Review (AHR) with new Appendix C.
Added discretion of national association or handicap authority to direct that active handicaps are a prerequisite for entry into competitions.
Note to give examples of marking active handicaps.
Introduced EN on "Purpose of AHR".
- Section 3.16 GN on "General Play Adjustment" introduced.

(II) PRINCIPAL CHANGES 2012

Part 4 Decisions

- New. Contains substantially revised decisions and new decisions.

Appendices

Introduced or revised:

- A. Handicap record sheet. Modified to reflect active, inactive and computed buffer adjustment.
- B. Computed Buffer Adjustment (CBA). New algorithm and procedure to replace CSA.
- C. Annual Handicap Review (AHR) Procedure. New algorithm and procedure to replace old version.
- D. Handicap allowances. Amended for clarity.
- E. Stroke index allocation. Amended for clarity.
- F. Playing handicap table. Amended for clarity.
- G. Club handicap. Expanded for clarity.
- H. System options for national association. (new)
- I. Short Guide to the EGA Handicap System. Provided for wider distribution by national associations to players.
- J. List of explanatory notes (EN) and guidance notes (GN). (new)
- K. License. Form renewed to reflect quadrennial renewal procedure and clarification of rights and obligations of the national association.

Deleted appendices:

- USGA Course and Slope Rating (old A). See www.usga.org for detailed information.
- Table of handicap adjustments (old C).
- Relevance of Par (old J).
- Introduction to the EGA Handicap System (old K).
- Appendix G (old), replaced by Part 4 - Decisions.

(iii) HOW TO USE THE MANUAL

Gender

Throughout the manual, reference to the masculine gender includes the feminine unless stated otherwise.

Table of Contents; Index

The Table of Contents lists the principal elements of the EGA Handicap System 2012-2015 and provides an outline for how the manual is structured. Most of the time, it should be possible to identify the relevant section simply by reference to the Table of Contents. In addition, to further assist in finding the appropriate part, section, clause, decision, or appendix, an index can be found at the back of the manual.

Know the definitions

Whenever a word or expression is used that is defined in Part 1, the word or expression is printed in italics. A good knowledge of the defined terms is necessary for the correct application and interpretation of the EGA Handicap System.

Understand the words

The EGA Handicap System 2012-2015 is written in a deliberate fashion. You should be aware of and understand the following differences in word use:

"may"	=	option
"should"	=	strong recommendation
"must"	=	instruction/obligation

Supplementary information

In order to provide enhanced explanation and understanding and to facilitate a correct application of the EGA Handicap System, certain sections in the manual have been supplemented with explanatory text (Explanatory Notes) and advisory text (Guidance Notes). Such supplementary information is separated off from the rest of the text to mark its special status.

Delegations and optional clauses

Certain aspects of the EGA Handicap System are optional or can be implemented at the discretion of the national association in a country. Such aspects of the system have been listed in Appendix H.

(IV) EGA HANDICAP POLICY

(iv) EGA HANDICAP POLICY

The EGA is the governing authority of the EGA Handicap System. The Executive Committee of the EGA has delegated the task to develop, maintain and monitor the correct application of the EGA Handicap System to the Handicapping & Course Rating Committee of the EGA.

Purpose

The purpose of the EGA Handicap System is to:

- enable as many golfers as possible, men and women, to obtain a handicap.
- achieve equity and uniformity of handicapping throughout Europe.
- produce fair handicaps that reflect the scoring potential of the players and enable players of differing abilities to take part in various forms of competitions on as equitable and fair a basis as possible.
- provide flexibility in returning scores from multiple forms of play (as recognized by the EGA Handicap System), e.g. 9 or 18 holes, qualifying competitions and qualifying rounds, under conditions that truly reflect the player's scoring ability.
- provide portability of exact handicaps from course to course, as well as from one set of tees to another set of tees on the same course.
- provide playing handicaps that are adjusted in relation to the relative playing difficulty (Course- and Slope Rating) of the course being played.
- provide necessary algorithms to enable computer assisted and consistent application of the system.

Application

In order to maintain supervision of golf handicaps, the system may only be used for members of an affiliated club, individual members of a national association or individual players registered and controlled by a national association. The system is subject to quadrennial review, and only the current version may be implemented.

Rights and obligations

The European Golf Association (EGA) has overall jurisdiction for the administration of the EGA Handicap System in Europe. The EGA has delegated the jurisdiction for the administration of the EGA Handicap System in a country to the national association. A national association must obtain a renewable license agreement from the EGA in order to use the EGA Handicap System and must ensure the integrity of the EGA handicaps issued under its jurisdiction. The EGA may withdraw the licence if, in its opinion, a national association fails to comply with the obligations and regulations of the system. Policies of national associations and affiliated clubs issuing EGA Handicaps must be consistent with the fundamental principles and regulations of the EGA Handicap System and the Rules of Golf as approved by R&A Rules Limited.

In order to achieve uniformity in the application of the EGA Handicap System, a national association may not amend the regulations of the system other than as provided by the specific options in some clauses in Part 3. Exact handicaps issued by a national association or an affiliated club not in full accordance with the EGA Handicap System, may not be called “exact handicaps” and may not be identified as such on handicap cards or elsewhere. The Handicapping & Course Rating Committee of the EGA has the right to obtain any information related to handicapping from a national association at any time.

Translation, Trademark and Legal

Only national associations holding a license from the EGA are permitted to translate the EGA Handicap System from English into their own language. The translation must, in all respects, communicate and acknowledge the underlying principles and purposes of the EGA Handicap System. The system in its translated form must be called “EGA Handicap System” and the handicaps must be called “EGA Handicaps”.

In other respects, the translation does not need to be literal and the national association may use the terminology that is commonly used in its own country. In the interest of manifest uniformity, the numbering of parts, sections and clauses must be maintained. However, a national association may provide detail under particular sections exercising their rights to choose options in the system in the form of a specific regulation in the existing note(s) or in additional notes at their discretion. National associations must send a copy of its translation to the EGA for reference purposes. National associations must also obtain written authorization from the United States Golf Association (USGA) in order to use the USGA Course Rating System.

The term “EGA Handicap System” is a registered trademark of the EGA. Organizations that are not authorized national associations or area authorities, clubs that are not affiliated clubs and individual golfers who are not members of an affiliated club or, for handicapping purposes, not registered by a national association, may not use this trademark or any part of the EGA Handicap System, except that they may provide products or services to authorized national associations, area authorities or affiliated clubs for the limited purpose of applying the EGA Handicap System.

(v) SYSTEM OVERVIEW

This section sets out the basic principles of the EGA Handicap System and provides the overall context of implementation.

Purpose

The purpose of a handicapping system is to enable golfers of differing abilities, men and women alike, to take part in various forms of competitions on as equitable and fair a basis as possible. All handicapping systems establish and maintain a measure of playing ability in time, expressed as the number of strokes that the player is entitled to use to adjust his gross score.

Measurement of performance

Measurement of performance against a standard (USGA Course Rating) is fundamental to establishing an EGA Handicap. The player's round-by-round scores returned over time are then used to adjust that handicap. Even for a correctly handicapped player these scores will be spread over a range distributed about the average. Generally the lower the handicap the smaller the difference between best and worst scores and the tighter the distribution about the median (average) score. In general, as handicaps increase, the median gross score increases, as does the spread of the scores about the median.

The biggest problem in maintaining handicaps which reflect a player's current ability is the number of scores presented for handicap adjustment. This applies particularly where a player presents fewer than 10 scores for handicap consideration. The higher the number of scores the better the confidence that the handicap reflects the player's ability.

Handicap

All handicaps relate to, and are derived from, a player's current and historical scores. The system is not designed so that a player plays to, or below, his handicap just as frequently as he plays above it. For example, it is likely that a correctly handicapped category 1-player plays to, or below, his handicap about 35% of rounds, whereas a correctly handicapped category 4-player would achieve handicap or better performance in about only 10% of rounds. An improving player will play below his handicap more frequently than a correctly handicapped player of the same handicap. This will continue until they become correctly handicapped, when their scoring pattern will be the same as others with a similar handicap. The opposite pattern would be observed with a declining player.

Scores

Scores are made on golf courses under varying conditions. Golf courses may be situated in many different geographical areas and their designs differ substantially. It follows that one course may be more difficult than another and that scores must be adjusted to reflect these parameters before being used to measure performance.

Adjustment mechanisms are in place to:

- calibrate the difficulty of a golf course under normal conditions for scratch and bogey players, i.e. USGA Course and Slope Rating, and
- account for weather and course conditions that vary significantly from normal, i.e. Computed Buffer Adjustment (CBA).

Course and Slope Rating

In order to calibrate the characteristics of a golf course, the EGA Handicap System has adopted the USGA Course Rating System. The Course Rating (CR) is a measure for the playing difficulty for a scratch player whereas the Slope Rating (SR) measures the playing difficulty for the bogey player relative to the scratch player. The playing handicap is computed by means of the CR and SR, thus equalising the difference in playing difficulty and making scores from different courses comparable. This feature makes handicaps portable across all national associations which have adopted the EGA Handicap System and from one set of tees to another on the same course.

Computed Buffer Adjustment (replaces CSA)

The USGA Course Rating Manual states: “The USGA Course Rating and Slope Rating must reflect conditions normal for the season(s) when most rounds are played”. However, sometimes rounds are played when either the weather or the course conditions are not normal and within the EGA Handicap System these rounds directly affect handicaps. The Computed Buffer Adjustment (CBA) calculation has been developed to determine when the conditions deviate so far from normal that an adjustment must be made to compensate.

Annual Handicap Review and General Play

Handicapping is not an exact science but rather a statistical approximation of playing ability in time. The accuracy of the handicap relies heavily on the number of scores returned within a specified time frame. The system is quite robust for players with stable handicaps who return scores on a regular basis but there are two categories of players which require special attention. A player may be a beginner and his ability may improve faster than the system can adjust his handicap. Similarly, older players may be experiencing a gradual deterioration of physical ability and consequently playing standard which may not be reflected in the handicap because of the small number of scores returned. It is therefore of paramount importance that the handicap committee of the affiliated club conduct the annual handicap review of handicaps as a mandatory quality check on the performance of the system and use the provisions of general play in the period between annual handicap reviews.

Fundamental principles

The EGA Handicap System is based on the following fundamental principles:

- Every player will endeavour to make the best score he can at each hole during a qualifying round.
- Every player will return a sufficient number of scores to provide reasonable evidence of his play-

(V) SYSTEM OVERVIEW

ing standard. EGA has accepted four scores as a minimum requirement. However, initially every score above that minimum will improve the accuracy of the handicap substantially.

- Every affiliated club or handicapping authority will run qualifying competitions, calculate computed buffer adjustment, and perform the annual handicap review strictly in accordance with the system.

The objective of the system is to produce handicaps that are portable not only club to club but also national association to national association. This can be best achieved if all parties, national association, affiliated clubs, and players, honour their obligations to the best of their knowledge and ability.

PART 1 – DEFINITIONS

DEFINITIONS

Throughout the EGA Handicap System whenever a word or expression is used which is defined within the definitions section, the word or expression is printed in italics. The definitions are arranged in alphabetical order. For definitions in relation to the USGA Course Rating System see: www.usga.org.

ACTIVE (new)

“Active” is the designation of an *exact handicap* that has been maintained by submitting at least four (4) *qualifying scores* in the previous season, and that has been confirmed or adjusted during the *annual handicap review*.

Note: An *inactive handicap* can be re-activated at any time by returning three *qualifying scores* between successive *AHRs*.

AFFILIATED CLUB

An “*affiliated club*” is a golf club affiliated to a *national association* or *area authority* or any other organization affiliated to or recognized by the *national association* or *area authority* as *handicapping authority*.

Note: No body other than an *affiliated club*, an *area authority*, or a *national association* may administer the *EGA Handicap System*.

ANNUAL HANDICAP REVIEW (AHR) (new)

The “*annual handicap review*” (*AHR*) is a mandatory procedure that requires the *handicap committee* to review the performance of all players under their jurisdiction against their current handicap and to confirm or adjust the handicap as considered appropriate.

Note: To assist the *handicap committee* a specification containing the algorithm for computer assisted (i.e. software) *AHR* is provided to all *national associations*.

AREA AUTHORITY

An “*area authority*” is an authority appointed by a *national association* to act on behalf of that *national association* for the purposes of the *EGA Handicap System* within a specified geographic area.

BUFFER ZONE

The “*buffer zone*” is the range of *Stableford scores* within which the player’s *exact handicap* remains unchanged. A *Stableford score* is within a player’s *buffer zone* when it is within the following ranges for his *handicap category* (without *computed buffer adjustment*):

Handicap category	Bufferzone (Stableford points)	
	18-hole scores	9-hole scores
1	35 – 36	not applicable
2	34 – 36	not applicable
3	33 – 36	35 – 36
4	32 – 36	34 – 36
5	31 – 36	33 – 36

Note: Buffer zones for 9-hole scores are different from buffer zones for 18-hole scores in order to make them comparable for handicapping purposes.

CLUB HANDICAP (new)

A “club handicap” is a handicap exceeding the limit for an exact handicap of 36. A club handicap is expressed as a whole number to a maximum of 54.

Note: The club handicap is used for conversion to a club playing handicap as provided in Appendix G.

CLUB PLAYING HANDICAP (new)

A “club playing handicap” is the number of handicap strokes a player with a club handicap receives from a specific set of tees at the course being played.

COMPUTED BUFFER ADJUSTMENT (CBA) (new)

The “computed buffer adjustment” (CBA) is an adjustment factor to be made to the buffer zone of a player’s handicap category following each round of a qualifying competition.

Note 1: The CBA is calculated for handicapping purposes by following the procedure set out in Appendix B.

Note 2: A CBA is not calculated for a 9-hole qualifying competition or EDS.

CONGU (new)

“Council of National Golf Unions Limited”

COURSE RATING; USGA COURSE RATING

The “Course Rating” (CR) is the designation that indicates the evaluation of the playing difficulty of a course for scratch golfers under normal course and weather conditions. It is expressed as strokes taken to one decimal place, and is based on yardage and other obstacles to the extent that they affect the scoring ability of a scratch golfer.

DISTANCE POINT

A “*distance point*” is the point on a tee from which the length of a hole is measured and must be indicated by a visible permanent marker. Unless otherwise specified by the *national association*, the *distance point* should be placed centrally, but at least four meters from the back of the tee.

EGA

“*European Golf Association*”

EGA HANDICAP

An “*EGA Handicap*” is a golf handicap issued under the jurisdiction of a *national association* and attained and adjusted in accordance with the provisions of the *EGA Handicap System*.

EGA EXACT HANDICAP (= EXACT HANDICAP)

An “*EGA Exact Handicap*” is the EGA’s designation of the relative golfing ability of a player, as a number taken to one decimal place, on a course of standard relative playing difficulty (*Slope Rating* of 113). An “*exact handicap*” is issued under the jurisdiction of a *national association* to a maximum value of 36.0 and maintained and adjusted in accordance with the provisions of the *EGA Handicap System*.

Note: The *exact handicap* is used as an index for the *playing handicap table* for conversion to a *playing handicap*.

EGA HANDICAP SYSTEM

The “*EGA Handicap System*” is the method approved by the EGA to evaluate the scoring potential of golf players and to enable players of differing abilities to take part in various forms of competitions on as equitable and fair a basis as possible.

EGA PLAYING HANDICAP (= PLAYING HANDICAP)

The “*EGA Playing Handicap*” is the number of *handicap strokes* a player receives for a specific set of tees at the course being played.

The *playing handicap* is expressed as a whole number (0.5 rounds upwards, “plus” 0.5 rounds upwards to scratch, and “plus” 1.5 to “plus” 1) using the *EGA Playing Handicap Formula*.

Note 1: A player with a “plus” *playing handicap* gives *handicap strokes* to the course, commencing at stroke index 18.

Note 2: The *playing handicap* is computed from the *exact handicap* as indicated in the *playing handicap table*.

Note 3: The *playing handicap* is considered to be the handicap referred to in Rule 6-2 of the Rules of Golf.

EGA PLAYING HANDICAP FORMULA

The “EGA Playing Handicap Formula” converts exact handicaps into playing handicaps.

$$\text{PLAYING HCP} = \text{EXACT HCP} \times (\text{SR} / 113) + (\text{CR} - \text{PAR})$$

Note: “Plus” handicaps must be expressed as negative values.

EGA PLAYING HANDICAP TABLE (= PLAYING HANDICAP TABLE)

An “EGA Playing Handicap Table” is a table used for converting an exact handicap to a playing handicap based on the Course Rating, Slope Rating, and Par for a specific set of tees.

EXTRA DAY SCORE (EDS)

An “extra day score” (EDS) is a Stableford score returned under handicap conditions, other than in a qualifying competition, in accordance with the specifications set out in section 3.8.

GENERAL PLAY (new)

“General play” is a procedure to adjust the player’s exact handicap other than resulting from a qualifying score in the period between AHRs to take account of a significant change in playing performance.

HANDICAP ALLOWANCE

A “handicap allowance” is the number of handicap strokes a player receives in a handicap competition. It is the percentage of the playing handicap determined by the Committee.

Note 1: A player with a “plus” playing handicap gives handicap strokes to the course, commencing at stroke index 18.

Note 2: Handicap allowances vary for different forms of competition, see Appendix D.

Note 3: The handicap allowance in a qualifying round of individual play is: 100 % x playing handicap

Note 4: The handicap allowance is considered to be the “number of strokes received” referred to in Rule 6-2 of the Rules of Golf.

HANDICAP CATEGORY

“Handicap categories” are divisions of exact handicaps according to the following table:

Handicap Category	Exact Handicap
1	plus – 4.4
2	4.5 – 11.4
3	11.5 – 18.4
4	18.5 – 26.4
5	26.5 – 36.0

HANDICAP COMMITTEE

The “*handicap committee*” is the body appointed by an *affiliated club* to administer the *EGA Handicap System* within the club.

HANDICAP CONDITIONS

“*Handicap conditions*” are the prerequisite conditions under which *qualifying scores* may be returned for handicapping purposes.

Handicap conditions only apply when:

- the round is played over a *measured course* with a measured length of not less than 2750 meters over 18 holes, or 1375 meters over 9 holes.
- the course being played has been rated by the *national association* or *area authority* in accordance with the *USGA Course Rating System*.
- the length of the course played does not vary from the length of the *measured course* by more than 100 metres over 18 holes, or 50 metres over 9 holes.
- the tee-markers used to designate the teeing ground (the Rules of Golf, Definitions) are placed on the tees in accordance with clause 2.75
- the round is played in accordance with the Rules of Golf (including the Conditions of Competition) as approved by R&A Rules Limited.
- the form of play is either stroke play, Bogey/Par or Stableford, provided that Bogey/Par and Stableford are played with full *handicap allowance* (= 100% x *playing handicap*).
- the score is marked by an approved marker.

For decisions from the *EGA Handicapping and Course Rating Committee* on “*handicap conditions*”, see section 4.1.

HANDICAPPING AUTHORITY

The “*handicapping authority*” for a player is his *home club* or his *national association*. For players who are not members of an *affiliated club*, the *national association* or *area authority* may assume the responsibility as *handicapping authority* as directed by the *national association*.

HANDICAPPING & COURSE RATING COMMITTEE OF THE EGA (HCRC)

The “*Handicapping and Course Rating Committee of the EGA*” is the body appointed by the Executive Committee of the EGA to develop, maintain and monitor the correct application of the *EGA Handicap System* for the *national associations* affiliated to the EGA.

HANDICAP STROKE

A “*handicap stroke*” is a stroke which a player is entitled to deduct from his gross score.

Note: A player with a “*plus*” *playing handicap* adds strokes to his gross score.

PART 1 – DEFINITIONS

HANDICAP STROKE INDEX

A “*handicap stroke index*” on the score card indicates the order of holes at which *handicap strokes* are to be given or received. A *handicap stroke index* must be published for each course (Rule 33-4 of the Rules of Golf).

Note: A player with a “plus” *playing handicap* gives *handicap strokes* to the course, commencing at stroke index 18.

HOME CLUB

A player’s “*home club*” is an *affiliated club* of which the player is a member, and which is responsible for the administration of his handicap.

Note: If the player is a member of more than one *affiliated club* he must nominate one as his *home club*.

INACTIVE (new)

“*Inactive*” is the designation of a handicap that was maintained on three (3) or fewer *qualifying scores* in a previous season and that has not been confirmed or adjusted during any following *AHR* procedures. Maintenance is suspended until the *inactive* handicap has been re-activated.

Note: An *inactive* handicap can be re-activated at any time by returning three *qualifying scores* between successive *AHRs*.

MEASURED COURSE

A “*measured course*” is any course that has been measured according to the *USGA Course Rating Manual*.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION

A “*national association*” is any national golf organization affiliated to the *EGA* and authorized to act on behalf of the *EGA* for the administration of the *EGA Handicap System* within its own country.

NO RETURN (NR) (new)

“No Return” (*NR*) denotes any round that is not completed and/or for which no score card is returned, and additionally, in stroke play only, when no score is returned on one or more holes.

PERIOD FOR PREFERRED LIES

The “*period for preferred lies*” is the period of time, determined by the *national association*, during which *handicap conditions* will apply notwithstanding the application of a Local Rule for “*preferred lies*” as a result of adverse conditions. *National associations* must determine the *period for preferred lies* in their own country as they deem to be necessary on account of climatic or other conditions.

PLAYING HANDICAP (see EGA PLAYING HANDICAP)**PLAYING HANDICAP TABLE (see EGA PLAYING HANDICAP TABLE)****QUALIFYING COMPETITION**

A “qualifying competition” is any competition in which *handicap conditions* prevail.

Note: If applicable, the CBA must be calculated at the conclusion of each round of a *qualifying competition*.

QUALIFYING ROUND

A “qualifying round” is any round in a *qualifying competition* or a round played with the intention to return an EDS.

QUALIFYING SCORE

A “qualifying score” is any score returned in a *qualifying competition*, including a NR, or a score adjusted under clauses 3.6.2 or 3.10.3 or any EDS.

SCRATCH GOLFER

A “scratch golfer” is a player with an exact *handicap* of 0.0.

SLOPE RATING

“Slope Rating” (SR) is the USGA designation that indicates the relative playing difficulty of a course for players who are not *scratch golfers* relative to the *Course Rating* (i.e. compared to the difficulty of the course for *scratch golfers*). *Slope Rating* is computed from the difference between the bogey rating and the *Course Rating*. A golf course of standard relative playing difficulty has a *Slope Rating* of 113.

USGA

“United States Golf Association”

PART 2 – GOLF COURSE AND COURSE RATING

2.1 COURSE RATING

- 2.1.1 All courses in a country must be rated by a *USGA-licensed national association or area authority*, if so delegated, according to the *USGA Course Rating System* (USGA Course Rating Manual; www.usga.org).
- 2.1.2 The *USGA Course Rating System* is the property of the *USGA*. *National associations* must obtain written authorization from the *USGA* in order to use the system. They must follow all of the procedures in exactly the way the *USGA Course Rating Manual* prescribes. No alterations are allowed. All interpretations are made by the *USGA*.
- 2.1.3 For handicapping purposes an *affiliated club* must only use *Course Ratings* and *Slope Ratings* issued by the authorized *national association* or the *area authority*, if so delegated.

EXPLANATORY NOTE: PRINCIPLES OF COURSE- AND SLOPE RATING

The *Course-* (CR) and *Slope Rating* (SR) values are used to relate the degree of difficulty of the course to the score and consequently the handicap of the player. The ratings are determined by a trained rating team in accordance with the rating manual of the *USGA* under normal course and weather conditions.

First all holes are measured from the *distance* point to the centre of the green. These lengths are adjusted for the influence of roll, wind, elevation, altitude, doglegs, and lay-ups to effective playing lengths. Shot lengths are defined for scratch players and bogey players, men and women.

Apart from distance, the playing characteristics of a course are influenced by obstacle factors. These are topography (e.g. side hill lies), fairway width, green target properties, recoverability and rough, protection by bunkers, out of bounds and extreme rough, water hazards, trees (size and density) and green surface.

All factors are evaluated per hole for men and women and for both the scratch- and the bogey player. The system provides tables with values and correction factors based on extensive data gathered by the *USGA*.

The *Course Rating* is established from the effective playing lengths and the influence of the obstacle factors for the total of 18 holes. The number is expressed in strokes to one decimal point and represents the score that may be expected from a *scratch golfer*.

The bogey rating is established in the same way. It represents the score expected from the bogey player on that particular course. As one course may differ from another in the degree of difficulty presented to the bogey player it is clear the player should receive more strokes on the relatively more difficult course than on the other. The relationship between course and bogey rating is called the *Slope Rating*. It is a measure of the relative playing difficulty for the non-*scratch player* compared to the *Course Rating*. A golf course that is regarded as having the same relative difficulty for scratch- and bogey players has a *Slope Rating* of 113.

2.2 COURSE MEASUREMENT

Each hole must be measured along a horizontal plane from the *distance point* on each tee to the centre of the green according to the instructions in the USGA Course Rating Manual.

2.3 ALTERATIONS TO COURSES

When permanent alterations have been carried out to a course increasing or decreasing its length or playing difficulty, the *affiliated club* must request a new *Course Rating* and *Slope Rating* from the *national association* or *area authority*, if so delegated.

2.4 TEES

- 2.4.1 Courses should have at least a red and yellow marked set of tees, the yellow playing in total longer than the red. It is recommended that tees should be rated for both men and women when applicable.
- 2.4.2 There may be additional tees providing reduced playing length to accommodate junior and senior players of both genders or providing increased length and challenge for highly skilled players of both genders. In some cases a course may have a set Championship tees, provided the total length exceeds 6300 meters. The table below sets out the recommended sequence of tee colour designation.

Course Rating and Slope Rating				
Tees	Men's CR	Men's SR	Women's CR	Women's SR
Championship (Black)	74.9	136	–	–
White	73.9	130	–	–
Yellow	72.1	128	79.0	140
Blue	67.9	125	73.7	134
Red	67.3	120	72.7	128
Orange	64.5	104	68.0	125

Note: It is not recommended that any tees are rated for women if the total length is greater than 5800 meters.

- 2.4.3 All tees must be of sufficient size to provide a teeing ground which satisfies the Rules of Golf. Each set of tees must have a *distance point* which should be placed centrally, but at least four meters from the back. The *distance point* has to be visible at all times.

GUIDANCE NOTE: JUNIOR GOLF

Rating tees for men and women provides an excellent way of adapting the course to the abilities of junior players, boys and girls. Because age is a determining factor, especially for distance, special junior tees or family tees may be installed. Rating these tees for men and women should provide ample possibilities to attain an *EGA* or *club handicap* for all age groups and to move from one set of tees to another as the playing standard develops with age.

2.5 PAR

- 2.5.1 Par reflects the score that a *scratch golfer* would normally be expected to make for a given hole.
- 2.5.2 The Par figure for each hole must be printed alongside each hole on the score card.
- 2.5.3 Par for each hole must be fixed by the *affiliated club* (unless specified by the *national association*) in relation to the measured length and the playing difficulty of each hole and must be within the following ranges given in meters:

Par	WOMEN	MEN
3	- - 200	- - 235
4	185 - 385	220 - 450
5	350 - +	415 - +

Example: The length of a hole with a dogleg is 430 metres. Depending upon its “effective playing length” and its average playing difficulty the hole may be allotted Par 4 or 5.

Note: Only in very exceptional circumstances (following authorisation from the *national association*), Par may deviate from the table above.

EXPLANATORY NOTE: RELEVANCE OF PAR

Par is not a very good measure of the playing difficulty of a golf course. Two courses having the same Par may vary substantially in length and design of the holes. For example, courses A and B were constructed in similar terrain and with the same relative playing difficulty.

Course A: Four Par 3 holes of 125 meters and fourteen Par 4 holes of 270 meters. The total length is 4155 meters Par 68.

Course B: Four Par 3 holes of 200 meters and fourteen Par 4 holes of 360 meters. The total length is 5640, meters Par 68.

It is obvious that the *scratch golfer* would find course B much more difficult to play. Both have a Par of 68 but the CR numbers would be in the order of 63 and 69.

As scoring is recorded against Par, the *playing handicap* would be adjusted by (CR-Par), for course A with (- 5) and for course B with (+1).

- 2.5.4 The total of the Par figures for each hole must not be taken as the relative difficulty for a *scratch golfer*. The relative difficulty is defined by the *Course Rating*.

2.6 PERIOD FOR PREFERRED LIES

- 2.6.1 During the *period for preferred lies* as determined by the *national association*, *handicap conditions* will apply notwithstanding the application of a Local Rule for “Preferred Lies”. Outside the *period for preferred lies*, *handicap conditions* will not apply when “Preferred Lies” are in operation unless the consent from the *national association* or *area authority* has been obtained.
- 2.6.2 Adopting “preferred lies” requires a detailed Local Rule which allows the players relief as set out in Appendix I, Part B - 3b of the Rules of Golf.
- 2.6.3 A Local Rule allowing preferred lies may be adopted by the Committee on one or more holes when conditions on those holes are so adverse that improving the lie of the ball would promote fair play.

GUIDANCE NOTE: PREFERRED LIES

The purpose of “Preferred Lies” (sometimes referred to as “Winter Rules”) is to allow *qualifying scores* to be returned when playing conditions would otherwise not allow proper play due to adverse conditions of the course or extreme wetness and mud.

The *period for preferred lies* is meant to allow *handicapping conditions* notwithstanding the application of a Local Rule for “Preferred Lies” automatically in some parts of Europe where these conditions occur every year, particularly during the winter months.

National associations may determine the *period for preferred lies* in their own country as they deem to be necessary on account of climatic or other conditions, e.g. from 1 November to 30 April inclusive. Several options exist for the Local Rule but Preferred Lies must not be made obligatory and the Local Rule should be in operation only when the conditions warrant.

It is a widely held misconception that Preferred Lies are to protect the course. Rather the opposite is true as the player may move the ball to the best turf from which he subsequently takes a divot. Remember that Preferred Lies conflict with the fundamental principle of playing the ball as it lies. Indiscriminate use of Preferred Lies should be avoided.

2.7 PERMITTED ADJUSTMENT TO A MEASURED COURSE

- 2.7.1 Each *affiliated club* must endeavour to maintain the length of its *measured course* at all times.
- 2.7.2 *Handicap conditions* will only prevail if a *measured course* has a measured length of not less than 2750 metres over 18 holes, or 1375 metres over 9 holes.
- 2.7.3 *Handicap conditions* do not prevail when the length of the course played varies from the length of the *measured course* by more than 100 metres over 18 holes, or 50 metres over 9 holes.

- 2.7.4 In order to maintain the *Course Rating* characteristics of the course, and subject to the provisions of clause 2.7.3, the tee-markers used to designate the teeing ground (see the Rules of Golf, Definitions) must, normally, not be placed more than 10 metres in front or 10 metres behind the relevant *distance point*.
- Note:** Only, in exceptional circumstances, this 10 meter range may be exceeded. This is only to be accepted if maintenance reasons (or extreme weather conditions) force the club to move the tee markers outside this range. Nevertheless, the maximum 100 meter deviation in clause 2.7.3 cannot be exceeded. If so, *handicap conditions* do not prevail.
- 2.7.5 Placement of the tee markers should be balanced so that the length of the course played is approximately equal to the measured length from day to day. This is done by using both front- and back sections of the tees according to course conditions.
- 2.7.6 The use of one temporary green per nine holes of a course is allowed, provided that the length of the course played does not vary more than allowed, see 2.7.3.
- 2.7.7 The club must notify the authorized *national association* when permanent changes are made to the course. Permanent changes to the course require the *national association* to review the current *Course Rating* and *Slope Rating* and to determine whether a re-rating is necessary.

GUIDANCE NOTE – COURSE SET UP AND MAINTENANCE

A golf course is rated on its effective playing length and its playing difficulty under normal conditions that should prevail on average in mid season when most rounds are played. If the length or playing difficulty changes materially, scores will be affected and handicaps distorted.

The objective of the course committee and greenkeeping staff should be to maintain rating conditions as constant as possible throughout the season. The following points are worthwhile to consider:

- Vary the difficulty of hole locations, i.e. 6 easy 6 average 6 difficult.
- Vary the set up of the teeing grounds to maintain the measured length.
- Maintain the parameters of the rating, most importantly length, rough height, width of the landing zones, and green speed.
- Consider applying for a temporary rating rather than declaring the course non-qualifying if major repair or reconstruction work is planned. This situation might occur when a hole has to be shortened considerably, temporary tees are in use, bunkers are reconstructed and taken out of play or the length of the course has to be reduced by more than 100 meters. Contact the *national association* for advice.

CBA has been designed to compensate when conditions deviate so far from normal that effectively “normal conditions” do not apply. For instance heavy rainfall or very long dry spells may have an effect on roll conditions on a golf course. It may make a course play effectively longer or shorter. Also it may have an effect on maintenance. Heavy rain may not allow the rough to be cut as usual, long dry spells may lead to a situation where there is no rough to be cut at all.

The USGA Course Rating System Manual, section 15, provides good detailed advice on maintenance of rating parameters and the potential impact on *Course-* and *Slope Rating* values.

PART 3 – HANDICAPPING

3.1 RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS OF A NATIONAL ASSOCIATION

A national association:

- 3.1.1 Has the jurisdiction for the administration of the *EGA Handicap System* within its own country, subject to the overall jurisdiction of the *EGA*.
- 3.1.2 May not change or deviate from the regulations and specifications of the *EGA Handicap System* unless it is stated that a certain aspect of the *EGA Handicap System* is at the discretion of the *national association*; the main reason being the interest to achieve uniformity of application across *national associations*.
- 3.1.3 Must appoint a sub-committee, the National Handicap Committee, to administer the *EGA Handicap System* within its own country.
Note: The National Handicap Committee may be combined with the National Rules Committee or body with similar regulatory functions.
- 3.1.4 May delegate any part of its jurisdiction to an *area authority*.
- 3.1.5 Must ensure that all courses approved by the national association for handicapping purposes have *Course-* and *Slope Ratings* determined according to the *USGA Course Rating System*.
- 3.1.6 Must obtain a license from the *EGA* in order to use the *EGA Handicap System*.
- 3.1.7 Must ensure the integrity of the *EGA handicaps* issued under its jurisdiction.
- 3.1.8 May assume the responsibility as *handicapping authority* at its discretion.
Note: If a *national association* assumes the responsibility as *handicapping authority*, it should also perform the obligations set out in sections 3.3 and 3.4, if applicable.
- 3.1.9 Has the right to obtain any information related to handicapping from *area authorities* and/ or *affiliated clubs* at any time.
- 3.1.10 Must settle any dispute or doubtful point referred to it. Its decision is final. If the *national association* cannot come to a decision, it must refer the dispute or doubtful point to the *Handicapping & Course Rating Committee* of the *EGA*, whose decision is final.
Note: When exercising its powers, the *national association* must recognise and apply the correct legal procedures.
- 3.1.11 May determine limitations of 9-hole scores and *EDSs* as per clause 3.6.1 c. and section 3.8
- 3.1.12 Must determine the procedure to register *EDSs*.
- 3.1.13 Must determine the *period for preferred lies*.
- 3.1.14 May require a successful examination on the Rules of Golf (including etiquette) before allotting a player an *exact handicap*.
- 3.1.15 Must determine a procedure to adjudicate upon the suspension of *EGA Handicaps* according to sections 3.13 and 3.14.
- 3.1.16 Must determine the appeal procedure to be made available to a player who is dissatisfied with a decision under sections 3.13 and 3.14.

- 3.1.17 May at its discretion direct that an *active handicap* is a prerequisite for entry into a competition for which an *exact handicap* is required, see clause 3.15.5.
- 3.1.18 Must audit the *exact handicap* of all players with an *exact handicap* of + 1.0 and better in order to control a fair entry into national and international championships which require a maximum *exact handicap*.

GUIDANCE NOTE: PURPOSE OF AUDIT OF LOW HANDICAP PLAYERS

The purpose of the audit of low handicap players is to provide assurance that their handicap records have been maintained in accordance with the *EGA Handicap System* and in particular that all away scores have been entered correctly. To execute the audit, *handicapping authorities* are required by the national association to return as part of the AHR the handicap record of all players with an *exact handicap* of plus 1 (the *national association* may require all records of 0 or better) or better.

The audit must be based on the comparison of these records with the official scores of a wide range of national and international competitions.

Experience has shown that players with incomplete handicap records tend to have lower handicaps than they are entitled to. Whilst this does not influence scratch stroke play competitions it does have an important bearing on entry into prestigious tournaments and possibly the *CBA* calculation. By auditing, the *national association* can better ensure a level playing field and not place players who honour their obligations at a disadvantage.

3.2 RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS OF THE AREA AUTHORITY

An area authority:

- 3.2.1 Must administer the responsibilities delegated by its *national association*.
- 3.2.2 Has the right to obtain information related to handicapping from *affiliated clubs* under its jurisdiction at any time.
- 3.2.3 Must appoint a committee to perform the duties as prescribed. This committee may be combined with another committee with similar regulatory functions if deemed appropriate.
- 3.2.4 May assume the responsibility as *handicapping authority* if the *national association* so directs.

3.3 RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS OF THE AFFILIATED CLUB

An affiliated club:

- 3.3.1 Is the *handicapping authority* for all members for whom it is the home club subject to the overall jurisdiction of the *area authority* (if applicable) and the *national association*.
Exception: A national association may, at its discretion, assume the responsibility as handicapping authority for the members of affiliated clubs under its jurisdiction.
- 3.3.2 Must ensure that the *EGA Handicap System* is correctly applied at the club. Failure to comply with this requirement would justify the *national association* withdrawing the club's right to act as a *handicapping authority* or imposing such conditions as the *national association* may consider appropriate.
- 3.3.3 May at its discretion direct that an *active exact handicap* is a prerequisite for entry into a competition under its jurisdiction for which an *EGA Exact Handicap* is required. See clause 3.15.5.
- 3.3.4 Must appoint a *handicap committee* to perform the obligations set out in section 3.4, and to ensure the integrity of the *EGA Handicaps* issued by the club. This committee may be combined with another committee with similar regulatory functions if it is deemed appropriate.
- 3.3.5 Is responsible for ensuring that *EGA Handicaps* are maintained in accordance with the procedures laid down in the *EGA Handicap System* and in accordance with any specific procedure imposed by the *national association*.
Note: Any complaint regarding the application of the system, which cannot be resolved by the *affiliated club*, must be made to the *national association*, or the *area authority* if so delegated, which may at its discretion carry out such investigation as it considers appropriate. If, following such an investigation, it is found that the *affiliated club* is in breach of its responsibilities, the *affiliated club* should be directed by the *national association* or *area authority* to rectify matters. Failure to resolve the matter satisfactorily may justify the *national association* declaring that handicaps at that *affiliated club* are not valid *EGA Handicaps*.
- 3.3.6 Must retain the handicap records of all members for at least the current and the previous calendar year, unless the *national association* assumes responsibility for keeping such records.

3.4 RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS OF THE HANDICAP COMMITTEE

The handicap committee:

- 3.4.1 Must maintain lists in which the names of players must be entered prior to any *qualifying round* and the *handicap committee* must have procedures to ensure that all score cards are returned to the *handicap committee* including incomplete cards (*NRs*).
- 3.4.2 Must ensure that the *CBA* is calculated in accordance with section 3.7 at the conclusion of each round of a *qualifying competition*, see also Appendix B.
- 3.4.3 Must ensure that the *exact handicap* of each member is recorded as required by the *national association* and made available at all times.

- 3.4.4 Must ensure that all *qualifying scores* are recorded as soon as possible and that all *exact handicaps* have been correctly calculated in relation to scores recorded in chronological order.
- 3.4.5 Must, when a member changes his *home club*, inform the new *home club* of his current *exact handicap* and provide the *handicap committee* of that club with a copy of the player's handicap record for the current and previous year.
- 3.4.6 Must exercise the power to suspend handicaps contained in sections 3.13 and 3.14. and the power to adjust handicaps contained in section 3.16 and must advise players accordingly.
Note: When exercising its powers, the *handicap committee* must recognise and apply the correct legal procedures.
- 3.4.7 Has the right, on the day of a *qualifying competition* and before the commencement of play, to declare a round of that competition as a non-qualifying round because of exceptionally bad weather and/or course conditions, see also clause 3.6.2 i.
Note: The *handicap committee* should never deprive a competition of its status as *qualifying competition* only to circumvent the regulations of the *EGA Handicap System* and prevent that scores will count for handicapping. Such action is contrary to the spirit of the *EGA Handicap System*. The *handicap committee* should give the players the opportunity to return as many *qualifying scores* as possible.
- 3.4.8 Must, after the end of the year (season), undertake an *AHR* of the *exact handicaps* of all members, see section 3.15.

GUIDANCE NOTE:

THE PURPOSE AND COMPOSITION OF THE HANDICAP COMMITTEE

Administrative staff and club managers in an increasing number of clubs are charged with the day-to-day administration of handicaps. The 2012 edition of the *EGA Handicap System* relies more heavily on computer assisted algorithms and most of the functions can be run in an automated fashion. Yet it remains important for the *handicap committee* to be responsible for the proper application of the clauses and in particular to be in charge of the *AHR*. The *handicap committee* has the ultimate authority to decide whether handicapping conditions are satisfied but may delegate the task to the committee in charge of the competition.

Knowledge of the system and its intent is a prerequisite requirement for its members; continuity of the capabilities in the committee should be safeguarded. The committee responsible for handicapping (but it may also have other responsibilities) must consist of at least three members preferably representing both genders.

3.5 RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS OF THE PLAYER

The player:

- 3.5.1 Must have only one *exact handicap* which must be allotted and recorded by his *handicapping authority*. That handicap applies everywhere where the *EGA Handicap System* applies.
- 3.5.2 Must, if he is a member of more than one *affiliated club*, select one *affiliated club* as his *home club* and notify that club and the others of his choice.
- 3.5.3 Must not change his *home club* except by giving advance notice of the change which can take effect only at the end of a calendar year unless he has ceased to be a member of his *home club* or both *affiliated clubs* agree to the change taking place at an earlier date.
- 3.5.4 Must ensure that before playing a *qualifying round* his entry is registered as required.
- 3.5.5 Must ensure that all *qualifying scores*, whether or not complete, are returned to his *handicapping authority*. If played at an *affiliated club* other than his *home club*, the player is obliged to report all these scores to his *home club*.
- 3.5.6 Must, prior to playing in any competition at any *affiliated club*, ensure that appropriate alterations of his *exact handicap* have been made.
- 3.5.7 Must increase or reduce his *exact handicap* where required after a *qualifying round* for a score not yet recorded on his handicap record. The adjustment should be made against the *CBA* if known. If the *CBA* is not known, it should be adjusted against *CBA=0*.
- 3.5.8 Must enter his current *playing handicap* on all cards returned after a *qualifying round* (Rules of Golf, Rule 6-2b). The player should also, for handicapping purposes, enter his current *exact handicap* on the cards, even though the round may be a scratch competition.
- 3.5.9 Must return at least four (4) *qualifying scores* each calendar year to provide his *handicapping authority* sufficient information about his playing ability to confirm or adjust his *exact handicap* at the *AHR*.

Note: If a player fails to report at least four (4) *qualifying scores*, including *NR* adjusted to Stableford scores, his *EGA Handicap* is statistically not reliable and should normally not be acceptable for entry into competitions which require an *EGA Handicap*, but may be used for social golf and the like, see clauses 3.12.4 - 3.12.7 and 3.15. 2.
- 3.5.10 Must endeavour to comply with the intent and purpose of the fundamental principles of the *EGA Handicap System* at all times.

For decisions from the *EGA Handicapping and Course Rating Committee* on “Rights and obligations of the player”, see section 4.2.

3.6 QUALIFYING SCORES

- 3.6.1 To be acceptable for handicap purposes, *qualifying* scores have to meet the following requirements:
- The round was played under *handicap conditions*.
 - The round was played on a course at an *affiliated club* or a course approved by the *national association* rated in accordance with the USGA Course Rating System. Alternatively, the round was played in a country outside the jurisdiction of *national association* on a course rated in accordance with the USGA Course Rating System or according to the Standard Scratch Score System.
 - The round consisted of 18 holes. For players in *handicap categories 3, 4, and 5* also rounds consisting of 9 holes are acceptable. A 9-hole score may not be part of an 18-hole score. A player can only return one 9-hole qualifying score per day for handicapping purposes.
Note: The *national association* may restrict 9-hole *qualifying* scores to *handicap categories 4 and 5*, and/or the number of 9-hole *qualifying* scores in any calendar year.
 - The round was played in a *qualifying competition* run by i) an *affiliated club*, ii) an *area authority*, iii) the *national association*, iv) other organizations approved by the national association v) was played as an *EDS*, see section 3.8. If the score was played outside the jurisdiction of the *national association* it has to be a *qualifying competition* run by an *affiliated club* of the *national association*.
 - The score was converted to Stableford points.
- 3.6.2 Notwithstanding the requirements of clause 3.6.1, a score is a *qualifying* score even if:
- the round has been cancelled by the committee in which case the round becomes “Reduction Only”.
 - the *CBA* has been determined as “Reduction Only”.
 - the player was disqualified for reasons acceptable for handicapping purposes as detailed below in the GN on “Scores acceptable for handicapping purposes in case of disqualification”.
 - the round was played with a Local Rule for “*preferred lies*” in operation, see section 2.6.
 - the round was a single round in an aggregate or eclectic competition provided that players who are partners do not play in the same group.
 - the player has returned an incomplete score (a *NR*) that is in the *buffer zone* or better. See GN on *NRs*.
 - the player has failed to return a score or submitted an incomplete score (“*NR*”) below *buffer zone* and the committee decided not to accept the reasons for the *NR*. See GN on *NRs*.
 - the round was played in a *qualifying competition* in which different groups started the round from different tees (e.g. shot gun).

- i. the competition was declared non-qualifying in accordance with clause 3.4.7 but the player decided to play an *EDS* in accordance with section 3.8
- 3.6.3 Notwithstanding the requirements of clause 3.6.1 and section 3.8 (*Extra Day Score*) a score is not a *qualifying score*, if:
- a. the round, other than an *EDS*, was played in a competition which was run by a third party which is not a *handicapping authority*.
 - b. the round was cancelled due to a committee decision and the score was incomplete and below the *buffer zone*.
 - c. the player was disqualified for reasons unacceptable for handicapping purposes as detailed below in the GN on “Scores not acceptable for handicapping purposes in case of disqualification”.
 - d. the round was played in any competition in which the player played with one or more partners (exception aggregate, see 3.6.2 e).
 - e. the player decided to declare the round a *NR* and the committee has decided to accept the reason for the *NR* (see the GN on *NRs*).
 - f. the round was played as part of a Pro-Am-Competition.

GUIDANCE NOTE: SCORES ACCEPTABLE FOR HANDICAPPING PURPOSES IN CASE OF DISQUALIFICATION

According to clause 3.6.2 c, only certain *qualifying rounds* for which a player is disqualified will be acceptable for handicapping purposes. This applies in general terms when a score can be established in spite of disqualification for technical offences.

An adjusted score may have to be calculated. In order to apply a result obtained in accordance with a. to g. below for handicapping purposes, the *handicap committee* must carefully investigate all details.

Note: All penalty strokes must be taken into account as well as the correct handicap and hole-by-hole scores.

- a. Rule 3-4: Player refuses to apply a rule in stroke play (incl. Stableford and against Par) which affects the rights of another player.
- b. Rule 6-2b: The handicap marked on the score card is higher than that to which he is entitled. The correct handicap should be used to calculate the adjusted score.
- c. Rule 6-3: Player fails to tee-off at the time designated by the tournament committee, but nevertheless returns a score card.
- d. Rule 6-6b: Score card is not signed by the player or the marker unless the marker has not signed the score card for a valid reason.
- e. Rule 6-6d: Score too low for any hole.
- f. Rule 6-7: Competitor unduly delays play, repeated offence.
- g. Rule 6-8: Competitor discontinues play.
- h. Rule 14-3b: Use of distance measuring device

GUIDANCE NOTE: SCORES NOT ACCEPTABLE FOR HANDICAPPING PURPOSES IN CASE OF DISQUALIFICATION

Scores which have been disqualified for technical offences when it cannot be determined how much of an advantage the player may have gained by breaching a rule are not acceptable for handicapping purposes:

- a. Rule 1-2: Serious breach when taking deliberate action to influence the position or movement of the ball.
- b. Rule 1-3: Competitors agree to exclude the operation of a rule or to waive a penalty incurred.
- c. Rule 4-1, 4-2, 4-3 and 4-4: Use of a club(s) which is non-conforming or else used in breach of the rules.
- d. Rule 5-1 and 5-2: Use of a ball which is non-conforming or else used in breach of the rules.
- e. Rule 6-4 Use of more than one caddie (leading to disqualification).
- f. Rule 7-1b: Practice on the tournament course on the day of, and prior to the tournament.
- g. Rule 11-1 or 14-3: Use of a non-conforming tee, use of an artificial device or unusual equipment (except a distance measuring device).
- h. Rule 22-1 Agreeing not to lift a ball that might assist any competitor.

GUIDANCE NOTE: NO RETURN

Every player who participates in a *qualifying competition* is expected to complete the round. *No Return (NR)* denotes any round that is not completed and/or for which no score card is returned, and additionally, in stroke play only, when no score has been returned on one or more holes, for reasons at the discretion of the player.

All results achieved in a *qualifying round* or an *EDS* must be submitted, irrespective of whether they are complete or not. In the event of a *NR* for handicap purposes, the *handicap committee* should first consider whether the player was able to honour his commitment to return a score or not. If he was not, and this is due to an injury or exceptional course conditions, the score should be declared *non-qualifying* unless he had already scored to his buffer or better at the time of the incident. If the player was able to complete the round but chose not to do so, the *handicap committee* should either apply the actual number of strokes (adjusted score according to clause 3.6.2 f.) or increase the handicap by 0.1 / 0.2, see clause 3.6.2 g. Only adjusted scores resulting from a *NR* may count in the required four (4) cards for the *AHR*, see sections 3.12 and 3.15.

Since an incomplete card and a *NR* can have the effect of increasing the player's handicap, the *handicap committee* would be justified in deeming the score *non-qualifying* when the player was only able play a few holes. Sections 3.13 and 3.14 of the *EGA Handicap System* offer the possibility to consider disciplinary measures if the committee is convinced *NRs* are entered to unfairly manipulate the system. No score cards should be issued to players when it is evident that daylight conditions will be insufficient for the completion of a full round.

For decisions from the EGA Handicapping and Course Rating Committee on "Qualifying scores", see section 4.3.

3.7 COMPUTED BUFFER ADJUSTMENT

- 3.7.1 At the conclusion of each round of a *qualifying competition*, with the exception of a 9-hole competition, the CBA must be calculated following the procedure specified in Appendix B.
- 3.7.2 Only players in *handicap categories* 1 – 4 holding an *active* handicap will be taken into account for the CBA calculation. At the discretion of the *national association*, this may be extended to players with *inactive* handicaps. However, the CBA result calculated will apply to players of *handicap category* 5 as well.
- 3.7.3 The CBA values range from +1 to -1,-2, -3, -4 & RO (Reduction Only). When the calculation directs that the scores returned are RO, a - 4 *buffer zone* shift is applied to determine which scores will lead to handicap reduction .
- 3.7.4 A CBA adjustment of -1 to - 4 & RO means shifting the *buffer zone* down by that number of points. This has the effect of moving the player's tolerance zone down before increase is triggered. CBA +1 is accomplished by shifting the *buffer zone* up by one point. Handicaps will be adjusted according to clauses 3.12.8. to 3.12.14 after applying CBA.
Example: A player of *handicap category* 1 enters a score of 33 points, the CBA is calculated to be -2. His *buffer zone* would normally range from 35 to 36, but is now 33 to 34. His handicap remains unchanged.
- 3.7.5 For the purposes of calculating CBA, the minimum number of players in a competition is ten (10).
- 3.7.6 If a competition is scheduled for more than one day, separate CBA values must be calculated for each day.
- 3.7.7 Two rounds on the same day may be combined to calculate one CBA when the format of the competitions is comparable.
Example: Club championship stroke play competitions are conducted on the same day for men, women and juniors. The three competitions may be combined to calculate one CBA.
- 3.7.8 If the round is cancelled by the committee for any valid reason, only scores in the *buffer zone* or better count (see 3.6.2) and CBA is 0.

EXPLANATORY NOTE: COMPUTED BUFFER ADJUSTMENT

Purpose

The purpose of *Computed Buffer Adjustment (CBA)* is set out in the system overview. The CBA-procedure replaces CSA and has been developed to apply specifically to the *EGA Handicap System*. CBA is now a standard feature of the *EGA Handicap System*. For algorithm details, see Appendix B. The USGA Course Rating Manual states: “The USGA Course Rating and Slope Rating must reflect conditions normal for the season(s) when most rounds are played”. However, sometimes rounds are played when either the weather or the course conditions are not normal and within the *EGA Handicap System* these rounds directly affect handicaps. The CBA calculation was developed to determine when the conditions deviate so far from normal that effectively the “normal conditions” do not apply and an allowance should be made to compensate for handicapping purposes in a manner that restores values to what they would have been under normal conditions.

Normal conditions

It has been established that when measured over a significant period and including a large number of players, the frequency for a particular group of players to score to a defined target can be calculated. Generally that number will reflect the performance under normal conditions, i.e. the average conditions across many courses during a playing season. Normal conditions can thus be defined as the percentage of players of a particular handicap level that will score to a target score.

Target score

The target score chosen for CBA is the familiar *buffer zone*. The *buffer zone* is the tolerance below 36 Stableford points before the handicap is increased. The higher the handicap, the wider the zone to provide players of different *handicap categories* about the same likelihood to play to their *buffer zone* or better. Thus it offers a certain amount of stability in measuring the frequency of hitting target.

During extensive research conducted by the *EGA Handicap Research Group* on large volumes of scoring data from many different countries it was established how often a player with an exact *handicap* varying from 0 to 26.4, i.e. *handicap category* 1 to 4, would be expected to score in the *buffer zone* or better. This data is now a benchmark to determine if the scoring in a particular competition is as might have been expected under normal conditions or not.

CBA

The CBA procedure requires calculation of the percentage of players that scored in the *buffer zone* per *handicap category*. The outcome is compared to what should be expected under normal conditions and a determination is made whether compensation is necessary for the scores to be used in handicap adjustment. In most cases, approximately 70 %, no compensation is required. In some cases, a compensation up or down is called for and, when conditions are extreme, the competition is determined “reduction only”. The compensation is achieved by shifting the *buffer zone*; the score of the player remains as is. Shifting the *buffer zone* will influence the effect of the player’s score on his handicap when entered into the system.

Example: Player *handicap category 3* (buffer zone 33-36) scores 32 and *CBA* = -1 (conditions worse than normal). No adjustment of exact *handicap*. Buffer zone becomes 32-35. If he had scored 36 he would have been reduced by 0.3

Significance of CBA

CBA is designed to compensate for exceptional playing conditions so that handicaps are adjusted by approximately the same amount as they would have been under normal conditions. Effectively it compensates for the relative difficulty that weather and other conditions present to scoring in the same way that Slope compensates for the relative difficulty of course design. Unlike Slope, adjustments apply equally to all players.

As *CBA* relies on a comparison of scores with expected results from players in *handicap categories 1-4*, it may be that a competition with a high proportion of improving players or under-handicapped players produces an unreliable outcome. That is one reason *handicap category 5* players are not included. In the case of a competition with a large number of improving beginners *CBA* +1 may be indicated while conditions were quite normal or even below standard. Under-handicapped players will cause the opposite effect, which runs contrary to what should happen, upwards adjustment of the (vanity) handicaps. These effects show that it is of paramount importance to correctly apply the *annual handicap review* (see section 3.15) and *handicap adjustment based on general play* (see section 3.16).

CBA may not be suitable for emerging golf nations because of the high proportion of new entrants into the game. The *HCRC* may grant an exemption based on a written request by the *national association*. The request should be submitted at the time of the license renewal and should be substantiated with facts about handicaps of the player population of the *national association* to support the request for exemption.

For decisions from the *EGA Handicapping and Course Rating Committee* on “Computed Buffer Adjustment”, see section 4.4.

3.8 EXTRA DAY SCORES (EDS)

- 3.8.1 An *EDS* is a Stableford score returned under *handicap conditions* other than in a *qualifying competition*. An *EDS*, subject to the provisions of clauses 3.8.2, 3.8.3, 3.8.4 and 3.8.5, counts for handicapping.
- 3.8.2 A *national association* must establish conditions to be imposed on playing an *EDS*. Players must be allowed to enter at least four (4) *EDSs* in a period between *AHRs*.
Note: Notwithstanding the four-score requirement, a *national association* may limit the number of *EDSs* for the period between *AHRs*.
- 3.8.3 Players may return an *EDS* only at such courses as the *national association* may direct.
Note: The player may be restricted to the course of his *home club* or course(s) designated by his *handicapping authority*.

3.8.4 Only players with an *exact handicap* in *handicap categories 2- 5* may return an *EDS* for handicapping.

Note 1: The *national association* may exclude *handicap category 2*, or 2 and 3, from returning an *EDS* for handicapping purposes.

Note 2: Notwithstanding the above restriction, a *national association* must allow a player of *handicap category 1*, and 2 or 2 and 3, if excluded from returning an *EDS*, to return a maximum of three *EDSs* for the purpose of re-activating an *inactive handicap*.

3.8.5 An *EDS* only counts for handicapping when the player has registered his name on the *EDS* entry list before starting the round. His entry must include the number of holes to be played (9 or 18 holes) and such other details as are required by his *national association* (e.g. date, name of marker, *exact-* and *playing handicap*, etc.).

3.8.6 The player must record the same details as mentioned in clause 3.8.5 on his score card and he must return the score card signed by the marker and countersigned by himself.

3.8.7 If the player, after registration on the *EDS* entry list, does not return his score card, a *NR* will be recorded for handicapping purposes.

3.8.8 A player's *exact handicap* cannot be reduced to a *handicap category* which is excluded from returning an *EDS*.

Example 1: A player with an *exact handicap* of 4.7 returns an *EDS* of 41 Stableford points. His *exact handicap* will only be reduced by 0.2 to 4.5 and not by 0.7.

Example 2: Where a *national association* does not allow *EDS* for category 2-players, if a player with an *exact handicap* of 12.0 returns an *EDS* of 41 Stableford points. His *exact handicap* will only be reduced by 0.5 to 11.5 and not by 1.2.

EXPLANATORY NOTE: EXTRA DAY SCORES

The *EGA Handicap System* (as well as other handicap systems) is based on the premise that every player will return a sufficient number of scores to provide reasonable evidence of his playing standard. The *EGA* has accepted four scores as a minimum requirement, but every additional score will improve the accuracy of the handicap substantially.

Although committees may consider that in the course of the season ample opportunity is provided to participate in golf competitions, experience has shown that many players struggle to return a sufficient number of scores to maintain a handicap that reflects their playing ability. This may be due to:

- work or family commitments preventing participation in competitions.
- difficulty in obtaining acceptable starting times on preferred days.
- a declining desire to play regular competition golf.

EDSs have been designed to provide a format to supplement scores from *qualifying competitions* for handicap purposes. The intent is to augment the sometimes sparse information from competition golf and to enable every player to meet the minimum requirement of four scores in a season. Since the commitment to return the score, good or bad, is made before the round starts and *handicap conditions* must be in operation, the *EDS* round technically compares to a competition round. However, it is notable that the *CBA* procedure is not operational in connection with *EDSs*. It is unlikely that players setting out on an *EDS* round will purposely choose a typical *CBA-3* day.

3.9 EGA PLAYING HANDICAP; PLAYING HANDICAP

- 3.9.1 The *playing handicap* is the number of *handicap strokes* a player receives for a specific set of tees at the course being played.
- 3.9.2 If the *playing handicap* is negative, termed a “plus” *playing handicap*, the player must give *handicap strokes* to the course, commencing at stroke index 18.
- 3.9.3 A player’s *playing handicap* is determined by applying his *exact handicap* to the *playing handicap formula*:

$$\text{PLAYING HCP} = \text{EXACT HCP} \times (\text{SR} / 113) + (\text{CR} - \text{PAR})$$

Note: The *playing handicap* is expressed as a whole number, 0.5 rounds upwards. This means -0.5 [= “plus” 0.5] rounds upwards to 0 [scratch] and -1.5 [= “plus”1.5] to -1 [= “plus”1].

- 3.9.4 For a 9-hole round the number of *handicap strokes* a player receives is:

$$\text{PLAYING HCP} = \frac{\text{EXACT HCP} \times \text{9-HOLES SR} + (\text{9-HOLES CR} - \text{9-HOLES PAR} \times 2)}{2}$$

Example: The *exact handicap* of a player is 11.8. He plays the front 9-holes of a course from the yellow tees.

Yellow tees men			
	18 holes	Front 9-holes	Back 9-holes
Course Rating	72.4	71.6	73.2
Slope Rating	127	122	132
Par	72	35	37
Handicap Strokes	14	7	6

The number of *handicap strokes* he receives is:

$$\text{Handicap Strokes} = \frac{11.8 \times 122 + (71.6 - 2 \times 35)}{2} = 7.17 \rightarrow \text{rounded} = 7 \text{ strokes}$$

- 3.9.5 A player’s *playing handicap* may also be determined by applying his *exact handicap* to a 9-hole or 18-hole *playing handicap table*, see Appendix F.

- 3.9.6 The *handicap allowance* is the number of *handicap strokes* a player receives (or gives) in a handicap competition. It is the percentage of the *playing handicap* determined by the Committee in charge of the competition.
- 3.9.7 *Handicap strokes* are allocated hole by hole according to the *handicap stroke index* indicated on the score card. Strokes in 9-hole rounds are taken according to the relevant *handicap stroke index*.
- Example: When playing 9-holes to which the even stroke indices have been allocated the player, receiving seven strokes, receives strokes at the holes with *handicap stroke index* 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12 and 14.
- 3.9.8 An *exact handicap* may convert to a *playing handicap* exceeding the maximum *exact handicap*.

EXPLANATORY NOTE – PLUS HANDICAPS

Originally golf handicaps were derived for stroke play. They were assessed against the scratch player and were strokes to be taken off a player's score. When it became necessary to handicap a player who had demonstrated that he was better than the notional scratch player, rather than re-handicapping the scratch player and all other players upwards, the concept of adding strokes to a score was accepted and such handicaps were designated plus handicaps. As a net score is determined by subtracting the player's handicap from the gross score, mathematically the plus handicap becomes a negative number. Handicaps as low as plus 5 have been attained.

EXPLANATORY NOTE: 9-HOLE SCORES

There is a certain analogy to *EDS* in the reasoning for introducing 9-hole competitions and 9-hole *EDS*. Again, in response to the demands of working and family life or lack of physical ability, 9-holes scores have been introduced to provide additional opportunities to return *qualifying* scores.

Since its introduction in 2007, the 9-hole *qualifying round* has become very popular in several countries, sometimes amounting to 30 % of all rounds for a particular group of players. Especially senior players and participants in evening competitions with restricted daylight benefit.

The practice of adding 18 points for the nine un-played holes in the case of 9 of holes Stableford, and applying a smaller buffer, was validated following extensive research in Germany, culminating in a successful two-year pilot programme.

However the traditional way for a round of golf, i.e. over 18 holes, is still considered to be the preferred format. For that reason the player who can play 18 holes in one day is not allowed to return two 9-hole scores in one day.

For decisions from the EGA Handicapping and Course Rating Committee on "EGA Exact Handicap and EGA Playing Handicap", see section 4.5.

3.10 STABLEFORD

- 3.10.1 For handicapping, all *qualifying scores* must be converted to Stableford points based on a *handicap allowance* of 100 % x *playing handicap*.
- 3.10.2 For handicapping, the Stableford points are awarded in relation to the Par at each hole as follows:

Net score on a hole	Points
More than one over Par or No Return	0
One over Par	1
Par	2
One under Par	3
Two under Par	4
Three under Par	5
Four under Par	6

- 3.10.3 The player must add 18 Stableford points to the result over 9 holes to obtain an adjusted *qualifying score* which can be recorded on his handicap record. 9-Hole *qualifying scores* must be clearly identified on the player's handicap record, see Appendix A.
- 3.10.4 If applicable, the CBA must be calculated at the conclusion of each round of an 18-hole *qualifying competition* by following the procedure set out in Appendix B.
- 3.10.5 Any score in a Par/Bogey *qualifying competition* must be converted to a Stableford score by adding 36 points to the player's final result.

Example:

2 down	:	- 2	+	36	=	34	Stableford points
5 up	:	+ 5	+	36	=	41	Stableford points
All square	:	0	+	36	=	36	Stableford points

- 3.10.6 In normal circumstances, a player plays exactly to his handicap when he returns a score of 36 Stableford points.

EXPLANATORY NOTE: STABLEFORD

The purpose of applying the Stableford point calculation for handicapping is to reduce the impact of a particularly bad score on a hole which does not truly reflect a golfer's playing ability. Other handicap systems use similar measures for stroke control such as net double bogey.

This restricts the score on a bad hole for a total adjusted stroke play score for handicapping purposes. It also allows a *NR* on a hole in a stroke play competition to be converted to a score for handicapping purposes.

Stableford scoring is a measure of performance against Par; the system was designed so that a player playing to handicap scores 36 Stableford points over 18 holes. The *EGA Handicap System* adjusts handicaps by assessing performance against *Course Rating* so a stroke allowance is included in the playing handicap formula (*CR-Par*) to allow for any differences between *Course Rating* and Par so that a player playing to handicap scores 36 points.

3.11 ATTAINING AN EGA EXACT HANDICAP

- 3.11.1 An *EGA Handicap* may only be obtained by a member of an *affiliated club*, an individual member of a *national association*, or an individual player whose handicap is registered and controlled by a *national association*.
- 3.11.2 The maximum exact *handicap* is 36.0 for men and women.
An exact *handicap* may convert into a *playing handicap* exceeding this number.
Note: For “*club handicaps*” of 37 and higher, see Appendix G.
- 3.11.3 To attain an exact *handicap*, a player must submit at least three Stableford scores over 18 holes or 9 holes. A member of an *affiliated club* must play the rounds under *handicap conditions* at his *home club* or any other course recognized and approved by his *handicapping authority*. A player who is not a member of an *affiliated club* must play the rounds under *handicap conditions* on a course of an *affiliated club* or any other course recognized and approved by the *national association* subject to any directions by the *national association*. Each score must be signed by a marker and countersigned by the player. At least one of the scores must equal an exact *handicap* of 36.0 or better (i.e. scoring 36 or more Stableford points). The best of the submitted Stableford scores counts for calculating the initial exact *handicap*.

The number of *handicap strokes* the player receives during these rounds is:

$$36 \times (SR / 113) + (CR - PAR)$$

For a 9-hole round the number of *handicap strokes* a player receives is:

$$\frac{36 \times 9\text{-HOLES } SR / 113 + (9\text{-HOLES } CR - 9\text{-HOLES } PAR \times 2)}{2}$$

Example:

The maximum exact *handicap* is 36. The player plays 18 holes.

The *Slope Rating* of the course being played is 125, the *Course Rating* is 71.3 and the *Par* is 72. The player receives:

$$36 \times (125 / 113) + (71.3 - 72) = 39.82 - 0.7 = 39.12 \rightarrow 39 \text{ handicap strokes}$$

This number can also be determined by applying an exact *handicap* of 36.0 to the *playing handicap table* of the course being played.

- 3.11.4 The initial exact *handicap* must be calculated on the basis of the best Stableford score returned:

$$INITIAL \text{ EXACT } HCP = 36 - (BEST \text{ STF. POINTS} - 36) \times 113 / SR$$

- 3.11.5 The *handicap committee* may allot a player a lower initial *exact handicap* if it has reason to consider that a lower *exact handicap* is more appropriate to the player's ability. In exceptional circumstances a higher *exact handicap* may be allotted than that indicated by the best score.
- 3.11.6 Except in exceptional circumstances, when a player fails to return a score justifying an *exact handicap* of 36.0, he must not be given an *exact handicap* of 36.0.
- 3.11.7 The *national association* may at its discretion require that a player may only be allotted an *EGA Handicap* on condition that he has successfully passed an examination on the Rules of Golf and the Etiquette.
- 3.11.8 A player without a handicap must not be allotted an *exact handicap* in *handicap category 1* without the written authority of the *national association*, or *area authority* if so delegated.

GUIDANCE NOTE: ALLOTMENT OF HANDICAP LOWER THAN CALCULATED

The *handicap committee* may allot an initial whole number *exact handicap* less than calculated based on clause 3.11.4 if it has reasons to believe that a lower handicap is more appropriate to the player's ability. Factors to consider are:

- Previous playing history and any lower handicap previously held at the *home club* or any other club. This is of paramount importance.
- Time of year and prevailing weather conditions when cards submitted.
- Information from peers.
- A handicap held under another handicap system.
- Other relevant sporting achievement.

3.12 ALTERATION OF HANDICAPS

- 3.12.1 *Exact handicaps* are divided into five *handicap categories*, see Part 1.
- 3.12.2 The recording of *qualifying scores* must be kept by Stableford points. The *handicap committee* must record the player's *qualifying scores* in chronological order.
- 3.12.3 A player's handicap record (example in Appendix A) must contain:
- a. the date of the round
 - b. information on where the round was played
 - c. the score and type (9-hole scores and 18-hole scores must be clearly identified)
 - d. the CBA (if applicable)
 - e. the qualifying Stableford score
 - f. the revised *exact handicap*
 - g. designation *active* or *inactive*
 - h. such other information as may be required by the *national association*, e.g. *Course Rating*, *Slope Rating*, *Par*, or adjusted *buffer zone*.

Note: Adjusted (qualifying) scores are Stableford scores computed by the *handicap committee* based on the result of a 9-hole score, a disqualification or a *NR*, see section 3.6.

- 3.12.4 A player must return at least four (4) *qualifying scores* each calendar year to provide his *handicapping authority* with the necessary information about his playing ability in order to properly maintain his *exact handicap* in accordance with the provisions of clause 3.12.8 - 3.12.15 and to be able to confirm or adjust his *exact handicap* at the *AHR*. Such a handicap is designated *active*.
- 3.12.5 Only the following *exact handicaps* may be maintained in accordance with the provisions of clauses 3.12.8 - 3.12.15:
- Active exact handicaps*
 - Exact handicaps* newly attained in the past or present year in accordance with section 3.11.
 - Exact handicaps* that have been reactivated for competition golf after the player has complied with clause 3.12.7.

Note: An *active exact handicap* must be clearly marked as such on the player's handicap record.

- 3.12.6 An *exact handicap* maintained on three (3) or fewer *qualifying scores* in the past calendar year is based on insufficient current data and cannot be reliably verified, and is therefore designated *inactive*. In the absence of adequate and necessary information for adjustment and revision, that handicap may not truly reflect the scoring potential of the player and must remain unchanged at the *AHR*. In the following year, the *exact handicap* may not be adjusted in accordance with the provisions of clause 3.12.8 - 3.12.14
- 3.12.7 An *exact handicap* which is *inactive* will again be re-activated for competition golf and maintained in accordance with the provisions of clause 3.12.8 - 3.12.15, as soon as the player has returned three *qualifying scores*. His new *exact handicap* will be calculated on the basis of his last *exact handicap* and the three returned scores.

Note 1: The *handicap committee* should review the player's newly calculated *exact handicap* in accordance with the requirements of section 3.16.

Note 2: If a *handicap committee* permits a player to compete in competitions at his *home club* in order to return scores to reactivate his *exact handicap*, he should not normally be eligible to win a (net) prize, or be included in the *CBA*-calculation.

- 3.12.8 If a player returns a *qualifying score* within his relevant *buffer zone* his *exact handicap* remains unchanged.
- 3.12.9 If a player returns a *qualifying score* with fewer *Stableford* points than his *buffer zone* or records a *NR*, subject to review by the *handicap committee*, his *exact handicap* is increased by 0.1 for *handicap category* 1 to 4, and by 0.2 for *handicap category* 5.
- 3.12.10 If a player returns a *qualifying score* above his *buffer zone*, his *exact handicap* is reduced by an amount per *Stableford* point in excess of the *buffer zone*, the amount per point being determined by his *handicap category*.

Note: Handicap adjustments based on 18-hole competition scores (clauses 3.12.8, 3.12.9 and 3.12.10) apply after the *buffer zone* has been adjusted in accordance with the *CBA* procedure, see section 3.7, *CBA*.

3.12.11 *Exact handicaps* must be adjusted as follows:

Handicap Category	EGA Exact Handicap	Buffer Zone		Stableford-points below the buffer zone: add only	Subtract for each Stableford-point above the buffer zone:
		18-hole scores	9-hole scores		
1	plus – 4.4	35 – 36	–	0.1	0.1
2	4.5 – 11.4	34 – 36	–	0.1	0.2
3	11.5 – 18.4	33 – 36	35 – 36	0.1	0.3
4	18.5 – 26.4	32 – 36	34 – 36	0.1	0.4
5	26.5 – 36.0	31 – 36	33 – 36	0.2	0.5

Example:

If a player playing off handicap 11.2 returns a Stableford score of 32 points, his *exact handicap* becomes 11.3. If he then returns a Stableford score of 42 points, his *exact handicap* is immediately reduced by $(42-36) \times 0.2 = 1.2$, i.e. to an *exact handicap* of 10.1

3.12.12 When a player's *exact handicap* is to be reduced from a higher *handicap category* to a lower *handicap category*, it must be reduced at the rate appropriate to the higher category only so far as to bring his *exact handicap* into the lower category and the balance of the reduction must be at the rate appropriate to the lower category.

Example: If a player playing off handicap 19.1 (*handicap category 4*) returns a Stableford score of 42 points, his *exact handicap* is reduced as follows:

$19.1 - (2 \times 0.4) = 19.1 - 0.8 = 18.3$, taking him into *handicap category 3*, now the reduction is 0.3 per point giving $18.3 - (4 \times 0.3) = 18.3 - 1.2 = 17.1$

3.12.13 Increases and reductions of a player's *exact handicap* must be made and registered by the *handicapping authority* as soon as practicable.

Note: It is the responsibility of the player to increase or reduce his *exact handicap* when required after a *qualifying round* for a score not yet recorded on his handicap record, see clause 3.5.7.

3.12.14 A player's *exact handicap* cannot be reduced by returning an *EDS* score to a handicap category which is excluded from returning an *EDS*.

3.12.15 A player's *exact handicap* cannot be reduced by returning a 9-hole *qualifying score* or by returning a 9-hole *EDS* score to a handicap category which is excluded from returning a 9-hole score.

3.13 SUSPENSION AND LOSS OF HANDICAPS

- 3.13.1 The *national association* or the *handicapping authority* of a player may suspend the player's *EGA handicap* if, in its opinion, he has deliberately failed to comply with his obligations imposed by the *EGA Handicap System*.
- 3.13.2 If it is established to the satisfaction of the player's *handicap committee* after due investigation that a player has failed to report (away) *qualifying scores*, the *EGA Handicap* of the player may be suspended for such a period as the *handicap committee* consider appropriate to obtain the necessary information to reinstate and adjust the player's handicap.
- 3.13.3 The player must be notified of the period of suspension and of any other conditions imposed. No player's handicap may be suspended without first affording the player the opportunity of appearing before the *handicap committee* of his *handicapping authority*.
- 3.13.4 Subject to any directions to the contrary issued by the *national association*, disciplinary proceedings with respect to an alleged offence committed at a player's *home club* must be initiated and determined by his *home club*. In all other cases the player's *handicapping authority* must hear and determine the issue.
- 3.13.5 If a player is a member of more than one *affiliated club*, a club which is not his *home club* may not suspend his *EGA Handicap*.
- 3.13.6 If a player is suspended from membership of his *home club*, his *exact handicap* must be suspended automatically until the membership is reinstated.
- 3.13.7 A player is not eligible to compete in or enter any golf event which requires an *EGA Handicap* whilst his handicap is suspended.
- 3.13.8 The suspension of a player's handicap applies at all *affiliated clubs* of which the player is, or becomes, a member during the period of suspension.
- 3.13.9 *National associations* must direct the appeal procedure to be made available to a player who is dissatisfied with a determination under clause 3.13.1-3.13.8.
- Note: When exercising its powers described in clause 3.13.1-3.13.7, the *handicap committee* must ensure compliance with any relevant legal procedures.
- 3.13.10 Except when a player changes *handicapping authorities*, a player's *exact handicap* is lost immediately when the player ceases to be a member of any *affiliated club* or *national association*.

3.14 RESTORATION OF HANDICAPS

- 3.14.1 A player whose *exact handicap* has been suspended under the provisions of clause 3.13.1 and 3.13.2 can regain his *exact handicap* in such manner as the *handicap committee* of his *handicapping authority* shall decide subject to the provisions of clause 3.14.3.
- 3.14.2 If the *exact handicap* of a player is to be reinstated within 12 months of the date on which the handicap was suspended or lost in accordance with clause 3.13.6 or 3.13.10, except under exceptional circumstances, it must be reinstated at the same handicap the player last held. In all other cases the player will be allotted a new *exact handicap* after he has complied with the requirements of section 3.11.
- Note: If applicable, the *AHR* should be carried out before the handicap is reinstated.

- 3.14.3 When allotting a new handicap to a player, the *handicap committee* must give due consideration to the handicap last held. A *handicap category 1* handicap must not be allotted without the written approval of the *national association* or the *area authority*, if so delegated.

3.15 ANNUAL HANDICAP REVIEW

- 3.15.1 The *handicap committee* of a *handicapping authority* must undertake the *annual handicap review (AHR)* as soon as possible after the end of the season (e.g. November - January). The *AHR* is mandatory for all players.

- 3.15.2 As a basis for a correct and fair review of his *exact handicap*, each player must return at least four (4) *qualifying scores* in a period between consecutive *AHR*'s. Such *exact handicaps* must be clearly marked *active* on the handicap records and handicap certificates to indicate that the *exact handicaps* may be correctly reviewed on the basis of sufficient data.

In the case of a *NR*, only *NR* scores that have been adjusted to Stableford scores may count for the minimum of four (4) scores required for the *AHR*.

Note: The *national association* should determine how an *active exact handicap* is designated on the player's handicap record and his handicap certificate which is usually issued at the beginning of the season. Examples are an asterisk*, the word *active* or the number of cards returned in the past season. Any number over 3 means *active*, 0, 1, 2 or 3 mean *inactive*.

- 3.15.3 At the *AHR*, the *handicap committee* must confirm or adjust the *exact handicap* (upwards or downwards) for all players in *handicap categories 1 – 5* who have returned four (4) or more *qualifying scores* in the past calendar year in accordance with Appendix C, (*Annual Handicap Review Procedure*).

Note: Adjustments implemented by the *AHR* to the *exact handicap* of players in *handicap category 1*, or to the *exact handicap* of a *handicap category 2* player that brings him to into *handicap category 1*, must be ratified by the *national association* or *area authority* if so delegated.

- 3.15.4 An *exact handicap* maintained on three (3) *qualifying scores* or fewer in the past calendar year is considered to be based on insufficient current data to be reliably verified, and is therefore designated *inactive*. In the absence of adequate and necessary information for adjustment and revision, that handicap may not adequately reflect the scoring potential of the player and must remain unchanged at the *AHR*. In the following year the *exact handicap* may not be adjusted in accordance with the provisions of clause 3.12.8 – 3.12.14.

- 3.15.5 At the discretion of the *national association* or *handicap authority*, an *active exact handicap* is a prerequisite for entry into a competition for which an *EGA Exact Handicap* is required.

Note: Directing that an *active exact handicap* is a prerequisite for entry into a competition for which an *EGA Exact Handicap* is a requirement is consistent with the aims of creating a fair and level playing field. *Inactive* handicaps may be allowed to compete without being eligible to win a (net) prize or for social golf and the like.

- 3.15.6 The *handicap committee* must use the format and the algorithm contained in Appendix C (Annual Handicap Review Procedure) in order to:
- list *active* handicaps and *inactive* handicaps.
 - identify handicaps of players whose median score is outside the tolerance zone of their expected score.
 - implement the suggested adjustments for *active* handicaps in *handicap categories* 1-5.
 - constitute and announce the *AHR* report.

EXPLANATORY NOTE: ANNUAL HANDICAP REVIEW

The *AHR* has two main objectives:

- To identify those players who have returned enough scores to be assessed effectively
- To assess whether the scoring performance of all such players in *handicap categories* 1 to 5 is representative of the players' ability as indicated by their current *exact handicap*.

The *AHR* is an essential procedure within the *EGA Handicap System* and therefore mandatory. It is designed to check that players have handicaps that reasonably reflect their ability as would be anticipated from their performance. It is accepted that the committee's ability to apply the process objectively varies widely from club to club as it is heavily dependent on the experience and knowledge of the committee. After considerable statistical research, an algorithm has been designed that will enable committees to carry out the *AHR* in a uniformly objective manner.

Active and Inactive handicaps

As part of that research it was determined that it was necessary for a player to return more than 4 scores in the period between *AHRs* for an effective assessment to be made of his performance against handicap. Such players have *active* handicaps and are included in the *AHR* assessment. Players that have returned fewer than four scores are excluded from the performance assessment process within the *AHR* and are regarded as having *inactive* handicaps. Such players retain an exact handicap but it cannot be definitely verified as the committee has been presented with too little information to make that judgement. However an *inactive* handicap can be taken as a general indication of the player's competence and is perfectly acceptable for any form of play where such an indication is all that is required.

The Review Process

It is anticipated that if all parties, particularly the *handicapping authority* and the players, have fulfilled their responsibilities, the vast majority of players will require no adjustment under the *AHR* and this is another reason to carry out the process by having a statistical analysis using an algorithm. The more scores a player presents for the *AHR* the more reliable the process becomes. Because of this, where a player has returned fewer than eight scores in the *AHR* period, the previous year's scores will be included in the current review. The algorithm computes a player's average score for the period (as represented by the median score) and compares it with a "target" score that has been computed for a player with the same exact handicap as the player had at the end of the *AHR* period. If the median score is within the tolerable range for that handicap, the handicap is confirmed. If outside the tolerance, an adjustment is applied dependent on the size of the variation.

The algorithm will make any adjustments automatically, but provisions will be made to allow a committee to override the adjustments if it considers there are exceptional circumstances (e.g. medical reasons). Such override must be justified in accordance with the provisions of section 3.16 (General Play)

For decisions from the EGA Handicapping and Course Rating Committee on "Active and inactive handicaps; Annual Handicap Review", see section 4.7.

3.16 POWERS AND DUTIES OF THE HANDICAP COMMITTEE RELATING TO GENERAL PLAY

- 3.16.1 The *handicap committee* may, when exceptional circumstances dictate, adjust the *exact handicaps* of players outside the *AHR* process on an individual basis.
- 3.16.2 When a player's *handicap committee* has significant evidence that a player's current *exact handicap* does not reflect his playing ability, then the *handicap committee* may adjust the *exact handicap* as it considers appropriate, but by no less than one whole stroke.
- 3.16.3 If the *handicap committee* considers that the *exact handicap* of a *handicap category 1* player is to be reduced or that the *exact handicap* of a *handicap category 2* player is to be reduced into *handicap category 1*, the *handicap committee* must refer the matter to the *national association*, or *area authority* if so delegated.
- 3.16.4 When deciding whether to implement or recommend an adjustment of *exact handicap*, the *handicap committee* of the player's *handicapping authority* must consider all available information regarding the player's golfing ability. It must consider in particular:
 - the frequency of rounds played.
 - the frequency of rounds played in proportion to the number of *qualifying scores* returned.

- the number of *qualifying scores* recently returned, not only scores to and below his *exact handicap* but also scores in the *buffer zone* or worse.
- the player's achievements in match play, four-ball (match play/stroke play) competitions and other *non-qualifying rounds*.

Note: The *handicap committee* should be particularly vigilant both of players whose general standard of play is known to be improving, and of players who have medical or other reasons which may adversely affect their scoring ability.

- 3.16.5 The *handicap committee* must advise the player of any change of his *exact handicap* under this clause and the change becomes effective when the player becomes aware of the adjustment.

Note: If the player is dissatisfied with the committee's decision, he must be afforded the opportunity of appearing before the committee. At that meeting, the player must also be informed of his rights and obligations imposed by the *EGA Handicap System*. When exercising the powers described in clause 3.16.1 – 3.16.4 the *handicap committee* must ensure compliance with any relevant legal procedures.

- 3.16.6 *National associations* must direct the appeal procedure to be made available to a player, who is dissatisfied with a determination under clauses 3.16.1-3.16.5
- 3.16.7 The *handicap committee* or the body organising a competition at a club which is not the player's *handicapping authority* may, if it has valid reasons to conclude that his *exact handicap* is too high, reduce his handicap. Any reduction made under this clause shall apply only to the competition for which it is made. The player's *home club* must be notified and provided with full details.

GUIDANCE NOTE: GENERAL PLAY ADJUSTMENTS

In exceptional cases, the *handicap committee* may adjust the player's handicap between *AHRs* if there is compelling evidence that his handicap does not reflect his current playing ability.

It is important to note that one very good, isolated, score is not a valid argument to reduce the handicap more than the system prescribes. A *general play* adjustment is exactly what it says: a reduction or increase based on the *general play* of the player. If there is a pattern indicating a mismatch of the handicap and actual scores the committee would be justified to make the adjustment.

General play adjustments are merely reactions to exceptional situations that can occur during the season and should be made under the same basic criteria used in the *AHR*. It would not be expected, on other than medical grounds, to make upwards adjustments. These should be applied during the *AHR*.

PART 4 DECISIONS

4.1 HANDICAP CONDITIONS

4.1.1 *Do handicap conditions prevail when golf carts/buggies are permitted?*

The Rules of Golf do not prohibit the use of golf carts/buggies. Therefore the use of a golf cart/buggy by itself will not cancel the status of *handicapping conditions*.

Even if the conditions of the competition prohibit the use of golf carts/buggies and because of the breach of those conditions the player was disqualified, the score will be considered for handicapping purposes.

4.1.2 *Do handicap conditions prevail when distance measuring devices are permitted?*

The Rules of Golf prohibit the use of distance measuring devices unless they are allowed by a Local Rule, see note to R14-3 Rules of Golf. However, even without a Local Rule, *handicap conditions* are considered satisfied when distance measuring devices are used during *qualifying competitions* or *EDSs*. Thus, if the player was disqualified because of a breach of Rule 14-3 for using a distance measuring device when not permitted, the score should still be considered for handicapping purposes, see clause 3.6.2 c.

4.1.3 *Do handicap conditions prevail when green staff has carried out maintenance work during the competition?*

It is not desirable for maintenance work to be carried out during a competition.

However, where this occurs and the committee has not taken any action such as suspending or cancelling the competition, the scores should be considered returned under *handicap conditions*. Thus, the scores will be considered for handicapping purposes.

4.1.4 *Do handicap conditions prevail when artificially surfaced tees are in use?*

Artificially surfaced tees (e.g. Astro turf or concrete-based tees), even if they do not strictly satisfy the Rules of Golf definition of a teeing ground, do not have a disruptive effect on the *handicap conditions*, as long as the artificial tees are located in positions that comply with the measurement of the relevant hole. Therefore, scores returned from rounds played from artificial tees are considered *qualifying scores* returned under *handicap conditions*.

4.1.5 *Do handicap conditions prevail when artificially surfaced putting greens are in use?*

Artificially surfaced putting greens are acceptable under the Rules of Golf provided the proper provisions have been made in a Local Rule to declare the artificially surfaced putting greens not to be immovable obstructions but integral parts of the course.

The USGA Course and Slope Rating Committee has confirmed that artificial turf may be rated under the USGA Course Rating System. When both these conditions have been fulfilled scores returned from rounds played from artificially surfaced putting greens are considered *qualifying scores* returned under *handicap conditions*.

- 4.1.6 *Do handicap conditions prevail in extended competitions with eclectic or aggregate awards?*
If, from a series of scores, special prizes are awarded for the best eclectic score or the best net or gross aggregate of a prescribed number of scores, each individual score in the series is:
- a *qualifying* score provided each score is returned under *handicap conditions* in a *qualifying competition*.
 - a *non-qualifying* score if it was returned solely for the purpose of eclectic, net or gross aggregate awards.
- 4.1.7 *Is a competition a qualifying competition where players are allowed to start from different tees (e.g. a two-tee or shotgun start)?*
Competitions in which competitors are authorised to start from different tees, such as with shotgun starts, are *qualifying competitions* provided *handicap conditions* prevail.

4.2 RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS OF THE PLAYER

- 4.2.1 *May players be required to enter their own scores into a computer?*
Usually score cards have to be returned to the committee in charge of the competition. The committee will then enter the scores into the computer. However, if the *handicap committee* requires players to enter their own *qualifying* scores (including *EDSs*) into the computer of the club, players must return an adequately signed scorecard to the *handicap committee* for verification purposes as soon as practicable. Other arrangements to allow the *handicap committee's* verification of any *EDS* are acceptable, provided that the *handicap committee* is satisfied that the correct score was recorded.
- 4.2.2 *May a committee impose a penalty under the Rules of Golf for failure to enter a score into a computer?*
Players may be required by a Condition of the Competition to assist the *handicap committee* in several ways such as:
- Provide the score total and apply the correct handicap
 - Enter the Stableford points total on the card
 - On completion, enter the hole-by-hole scores into a computer
- A *handicap committee* may not impose a Rule of Golf penalty when a player fails to comply with any of the above conditions.
- The Rules of Golf are very specific as to what the player's and any committee's obligations are with respect to score cards. Conditions of the Competition cannot change these requirements. No penalty under the Rules of Golf can be imposed provided the player complies with Rule 6-6. However, the *handicap committee* would be justified to consider disciplinary action such as suspension of the handicap, see section 3.13, or exclusion from the next competition(s).

4.2.3 *May a player have two home clubs?*

Yes, under certain conditions, but a player may never have more than two *home clubs*.

Generally, if a player is a member of two *affiliated clubs* affiliated to two different *national associations*, he has to select one club as his *home club* which administers and performs the AHR of his handicap. However, if the player resides in each country for periods of three or more consecutive months, he may nominate two *home clubs*. Both clubs may administer his handicap only for the time he is residing in the respective country. As soon as he moves to the other country, he must present his handicap record to his *home club* in that country for update. Furthermore, the player must declare which of those two *home clubs* is to perform the AHR. Generally, this should be the club at which the player has returned most *qualifying scores*.

4.3 QUALIFYING SCORES

4.3.1 *A player returns a qualifying score from a round played under the jurisdiction of another national association (which is not the player's handicapping authority). How can this score be applied for handicapping purposes?*

Generally the player has to provide his *home club* with the following information:

- Evidence that it was a *qualifying score* (e.g. a copy of Conditions of Competition or a list of official scores)
- Name of the club at which the round was played, and information about which association/federation is the *national association* for that club
- A score card with the hole-by-hole scores
- Par of each hole
- Handicap stroke index of each hole played
- *USGA Course Rating* value of the course (tees) played
- *Slope Rating* value of the course (tees) played
- *CBA* of the competition round, if applicable

This information enables the player's *handicap committee* to establish the correct *playing handicap* and to use the away score for handicapping purposes, by converting the score into Stableford points according to the requirements of the *EGA Handicap System*. If applicable, the *CBA*-calculation must be applied before handicap adjustment.

4.3.2 *A player returns a qualifying score from a round played under the jurisdiction of another national association which has not adopted the EGA Handicap System. How can this score be applied for handicapping purposes?*

CONGU:

The *USGA Course Rating* value will be replaced by the Standard Scratch Score (SSS) and the *CBA* by CSS (Competition Scratch Score). Scores played under the jurisdiction of CONGU

will have to be converted into Stableford points according to the requirements of the *EGA Handicap System*. The *playing handicap* applied for the conversion into Stableford points must be calculated as follows:

a. If no *Slope Rating* is available:

$$\text{PLAYING HCP} = \text{EXACT HCP} + (\text{SSS} - \text{PAR})$$

The result must be rounded to the nearest whole number.

b. If *Slope Rating* is available:

$$\text{PLAYING HCP} = \text{EXACT HCP} \times (\text{SR}/113) + (\text{SSS} - \text{PAR})$$

In both cases the (SSS – CSS) must be applied to the players Stableford score as the *CBA*.

USGA:

Scores returned from rounds played under the jurisdiction of the *USGA* will have to be converted into Stableford points according to the requirements of the *EGA Handicap System*.

The playing handicap which the conversion into Stableford points is based on, must be calculated as follows:

$$\text{PLAYING HCP} = \text{EXACT HCP} \times (\text{SR}/113) + (\text{CR} - \text{PAR})$$

The result must be rounded to the nearest whole number.

No *CBA*.

Other countries

Countries outside *CONGU* and *USGA* which use the *USGA Course Rating*: see *USGA*. Scores from rounds played in other countries are not acceptable as *qualifying scores*.

4.3.3 *How will a score returned in a competition where handicap limits apply, but where the player's handicap exceeds the limit, be treated for handicapping purposes?*

The score is a *qualifying score*. It will be used for handicapping purposes, assessed against the player's *exact handicap*, even though that *exact handicap* exceeded the limit. Other than for the competition result, the Stableford points used for handicapping will be calculated from the actual *playing handicap*. The competition result will, however, be calculated using the *exact handicap* limits imposed by the conditions of competition.

Example:

HCP Limit = 24.0; EXACT HCP 28.2; CR = 71.3; SR = 129; Par = 72

PLAYING HCP for competition = $(24.0 \times SR / 113) + CR - Par$

→ $(24.0 \times 129 / 113) + 71.3 - 72 = 26.6$ → 27 handicap strokes

PLAYING HCP for Handicapping = $(28.2 \times SR / 113) + CR - Par$

→ $(28.2 \times 129 / 113) + 71.3 - 72 = 31.4$ → 31 handicap strokes

4.3.4 *How should scores returned in stroke play competitions where handicaps do not apply be used for handicapping purposes?*

Even if handicaps do not apply for the competition results, the scores played in such rounds are *qualifying scores*, provided the *handicap conditions* are satisfied. The *handicap committee* must calculate the Stableford score for each player using the *playing handicap* based on the exact handicap.

4.3.5 *May an EDS 9-hole score, returned when 18 holes have been played, be accepted for handicapping purposes?*

Yes, provided that the player had previously registered the 9-hole EDS as required. The provision that a 9-hole score may not be part of an 18-hole score is meant to prevent the player choosing the better of the two 9-hole scores. This may appear to be against the spirit and intent of allowing 9-hole scores, but it would not be appropriate, or practicable, to interfere with the way players want to spend their time.

4.3.6 *Two 9-hole competitions are organised by a club on the same day. May scores from the second round be accepted for handicapping purposes?*

Although not permitted as a normal practice, the scores from the second competition would be acceptable provided the competitions are completely separate and played over a different set of 9 holes.

4.3.7 *What is the status of the score of a player who was allowed by the Committee to play in a competition for which he did not satisfy the entry requirements?*

A player returns a *qualifying score* after playing in a competition in which he was allowed to play by the Committee without being eligible to win a prize, e.g. a player holding an *inactive handicap* or a junior in senior event. Provided the requirements of section 3.8 (EDS) are met, the status of the score is equivalent to an EDS.

4.4 COMPUTED BUFFER ADJUSTMENT

4.4.1 *Does the score of a participant with an inactive handicap in a qualifying competition count in the calculation of the CBA?*

As the player's handicap is *inactive* and may be inaccurate, the score must not be considered when calculating the CBA, unless the *national association* has exercised the discretion as permitted in clause 3.7.2.

4.5 EGA EXACT HANDICAP AND EGA PLAYING HANDICAP

4.5.1 *How should the playing handicap of players from outside the jurisdiction of the EGA Handicap System be applied when they participate in a competition played according to the EGA HCP System?*

CONGU:

The *playing handicap* of a golfer holding a CONGU ® Exact Handicap has to be calculated as follows:

$$\text{PLAYING HCP} = \text{CONGU } \textcircled{\text{R}} \text{ EXACT HCP} + (\text{CR-PAR})$$

Example:

CONGU ® EXACT HCP = 19.5; CR = 70.2; SR = 125, Par = 72

→ $19.5 + (70.2 - 72) = 19.5 + (-1.8) = 19.5 - 1.8 = 17.7 \rightarrow 18$

USGA:

The *playing handicap* of a golfer holding a USGA Index has to be calculated as follows:

$$\text{PLAYING HCP} = \text{USGA INDEX} \times (\text{SR}/113) + (\text{CR-PAR})$$

Example:

USGA INDEX = 19.5; CR = 70.2; SR = 125, Par = 72

→ $(19.5 \times 125/113) + (70.2 - 72) = 21.6 + (-1.8) = 21.6 - 1.8 = 19.8 \rightarrow 20$

Note: A CONGU ® Exact Handicap is not based on Slope, thus, a Slope adjustment is not required to calculate the *EGA Playing Handicap*. A USGA Index is, however, based on Slope, as is an *EGA Exact Handicap*, thus it is necessary to account for the Slope factor of the course played when calculating the playing handicap. CONGU ® Exact Handicaps therefore have a different definition as compared to the USGA Index and the *EGA Exact Handicap*. USGA Index and *EGA Exact Handicap* are more or less comparable.

4.5.2 *How may handicaps determined by handicapping systems other than the EGA Handicap System be converted into EGA Exact Handicaps?*

Generally a handicap other than an *EGA Exact Handicap* will only be converted into an *EGA Exact Handicap* if the player moves to a country where the *EGA Handicap System* has been adopted and he becomes a member of an affiliated club which he nominates as his *home club*. A copy of the handicap record should be obtained and retained by his new *home club*. The following calculation does not apply for players from outside the EGA jurisdiction for single competitions. See decision 4.5.1

Conversion of CONGU® EXACT HCP into EGA EXACT HCP

Any conversion of handicaps from CONGU to EGA can only be approximate.

As *Slope Rating* is not part of the CONGU® Handicapping System, the CONGU handicaps are not directly comparable with *EGA Exact Handicaps*. Therefore they have to be Slope-adjusted as follows:

$$\text{EGA EXACT HCP} = \text{CONGU}^{\text{®}} \text{ EXACT HCP} \times 113 / 124$$

(the approximate average of course slopes in CONGU)

Conversion of USGA Index into EGA EXACT HCP

As USGA Indexes are based on Slope, no additional conversion has to be done. Therefore the USGA Index will become the *EGA Exact Handicap*.

$$\text{EGA EXACT HCP} = \text{USGA INDEX}$$

In all other cases, the player must return three scores as soon as possible played under *handicap conditions*, to allocate him a new *EGA Exact Handicap* under the requirements of clause 3.11.3.

4.5.3 *How should the player ensure that his playing handicap on the score card is correct? May the Committee waive the penalty of DQ?*

To satisfy Rule 6-2 and Rules of Golf Decision 6-2/1 the player is recommend to act as follows, specifically when playing away:

1. Write the *exact handicap* on the card if it does not appear in the printed section. Check the *playing handicap* with the *playing handicap table*, enter or adjust if required.
2. If the *exact handicap* is printed on the card, check the value and correct if required. Check the *playing handicap* with the *playing handicap table*, enter or adjust if required.
3. If no *playing handicap table* is readily available* check with the Committee when the exact handicap is missing or incorrectly recorded. Otherwise assume the computation is correct.

* "Readily available" means displayed in the area where score cards are issued close to the starting tee or in the recording area.

The above routine does not absolve the player from his responsibility under Rule 6-2, but will normally take care of wrong *playing handicap* information for an individual player due to recent alterations to his *exact handicap* or other administrative errors.

When, however, a systematic error has been made in computing the *playing handicap(s)* and no means of verification are available to the player(s), this is a Committee error that should warrant waiving the penalty of disqualification under Rule 33-7.

4.6 ALTERATION OF HANDICAPS section 3.12

4.7 ACTIVE HANDICAP, INACTIVE HANDICAP; ANNUAL HANDICAP REVIEW section 3.15

4.7.1 *May a player with an inactive handicap be allowed to play in a competition for which an EGA exact handicap is required?*

Clause 3.15.5 stipulates that an *active exact handicap* normally is a prerequisite for entry into any competition for which an *EGA exact handicap* is required at the discretion of the *national association* or *handicap authority*. If the *national association* does not exercise that option or restricts it to national competitions, the *handicap authority* can direct the same requirement for club competitions. The *handicap authority* may grant exceptions for players to participate with *inactive* handicaps in competitions in order to return a *qualifying* score provided they are not eligible to win a (net) prize, or be included in the *CBA*-calculation.

4.7.2 *Does a score used to reactivate an EGA Exact Handicap count in the AHR?*

Yes, provided all the other requirements of the *AHR*-process have been met.

These decisions are only current at the time of publication. The HCRC may publish, on the official website, decisions that arise from time to time subsequent to publication. www.ega-golf.ch

Should the national association have any queries not covered by the above, it is recommended that the national association consults the website before raising the matter with the HCRC.

At any time, the HCRC of the EGA may make additional interpretations of the EGA Handicap System.

Appendices

- A. Handicap Record Sheet
- B. Computed Buffer Adjustment (CBA) Procedure
- C. Annual Handicap Review (AHR) Procedure
- D. Handicap Allowance in Competitions
- E. Stroke Index Recommendation
- F. Playing Handicap Table
- G. Club Handicap
- H. System Options for National Associations
- I. Short Guide to the EGA Handicap System
- J. List of Explanatory Notes and Guidance Notes
- K. License Agreement Letter

Appendix A HANDICAP RECORD SHEET

Player: Mrs. P.A.R. Greenside					Code: NA code			D.O.B: 18.01.72		
Home Club: Up Hill Golf & Country Club					Other Clubs:					
Red Tees: CR = 71.2 ; SR = 128 ; PAR = 72					M / F					
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Date of event	Date of score entry	Round	Venue	Event	Score	Qualifying Stableford Score	CBA	(Shifted) Buffer Zone	Revised Exact HCP	HCP Status
	01.01.12			AHR					16.1	Inactive
15.08.11	15.08.11	1	H.G. & C.C.	STP-18	92	33	+1	(34 - 37)	16.1	Active
14.08.11	14.08.11	1	H.G. & C.C.	STP-18	90	36	-1	(32 - 35)	16.0	Active
13.08.11	13.08.11	1	H.G. & C.C.	STP-18	89	37	0	33 - 36	16.3	Active
	01.01.11			AHR					16.6	Active
01.08.10	02.08.10	1	Home Club	PAR-18	+1	37	0	33 - 36	16.6	Active
08.07.10	08.07.10	1	H.G. & C.C.	SFD-09	17	35	--	35 - 36	16.9	Active
03.07.10	04.07.10	1	Home Club	SFD-18	31	31	0	33 - 36	16.9	Active
03.06.10	03.06.10	1	H.G. & C.C.	SFD-18	29	29	-4 RO	(29 - 32)	16.8	Active
10.04.10	10.04.11	2	Home Club	STP-18	92	35	-2	(31 - 34)	16.8	Active
10.04.10	10.04.10	1	Home Club	STP-18	NR/DQ	33	+1	(34 - 37)	17.1	Active
03.04.10	04.04.10	1	Home Club	EDS-18	30	30	--	33 - 36	17.0	Active
24.03.10	24.03.10	1	Home Club	EDS-09	23	41	--	35 - 36	18.4	Inactive
23.03.10	24.03.10	1	Home Club	EDS-18	31	31	--	33 - 36	18.4	Inactive
	01.01.10			AHR					18.4	Inactive
27.08.09	27.08.09	1	Home Club	STP-18	98	31	-1	(32 - 35)	18.4	Active
15.05.09	18.05.09	1	H.G. & C.C.	SFD-09	15	33	--	35 - 36	18.3	Active
21.03.09	21.03.09	1	Home Club	SFD-18	34	34	0	33 - 36	18.2	Active
	01.01.09			AHR					18.2	Active

Legend:

STP = Stroke Play competition

-09 = played over 9 holes

NR = No Return

SFD = Stableford competition

-18 = played over 18 holes

DQ = Disqualification

PAR = PAR competition

EDS = Extra Day Score

Notes:

Round 2 is second round tournament on the same day

Re-activation 04-04-10: $18.4 = 0.1 - 1.6 + 0.1 = 17.0$

Recommendation:

Where practicable, it is recommended that individual players can access their own handicap record sheet.

APPENDIX B COMPUTED BUFFER ADJUSTMENT (CBA) PROCEDURE

For general (introductory) information on CBA, refer to the EN on CBA in section 3.7.

The Competition Stableford Adjustment (CSA) was developed from the CONGU Competition Scratch Score (CSS) system that provided a calculated adjustment when conditions were not normal. However, research by the EGA Handicap Research Group (HRG) has shown that scoring patterns in EGA and CONGU differed, particularly in the higher *handicap categories*, which resulted in a distortion of the expected distribution of CSA-adjustments. As a consequence, the HRG looked at revising the procedure so that it was based on the scoring patterns produced by the EGA system and simultaneously improved on other areas that the HRG considered capable of improvement. This has resulted in the introduction of the *Computed Buffer Adjustment (CBA)*.

The CBA-procedure has an algorithm based on assessing players' performance based on the probability P that players should return scores in *buffer zone* or better (BZ+) from EGA data. This probability does vary slightly from *handicap category* to *handicap category* so the number of players in each *handicap category* is used to determine the category-weighted P value for the competition (the Ideal Competition Probability P_C). The algorithm then determines the maximum and minimum values that would be consistent with normal variation (which is field-size dependent). The actual performance of the players is calculated from the BZ+ scores returned in the competition (N_{BZ}). This value is then compared with the ideal figure and the range corresponding to normal variation. If the value is within the expected range, the CBA is zero (*buffer zones remain unchanged*), and if outside the range, an adjustment (shift) in the *buffer zones* is computed. The greater the Competition P is outside the range corresponding to normal variation, the greater the value of the adjustment required. The algorithm takes into account field size when determining the range for normal variation.

The CBA-calculation will be applied at the end of the competition according to the following procedure:

1 Competition-Specific Values

- 1.1 Determine the number of players N_i in individual *handicap categories* 1 to 4, N_1 to N_4 , and the total number of players in the competition N_C , including NRs:

Category	Number of players
1	N_1
2	N_2
3	N_3
4	N_4
Total	$N_C = N_1 + N_2 + N_3 + N_4$

- 1.2 Determine the actual number of players N_{BZC} in the competition who return scores of BZ+ i.e. in the buffer zone or better:

Category	Buffer zone +	Number of players
1	35+ points	N_{BZ1}
2	34+ points	N_{BZ2}
3	33+ points	N_{BZ3}
4	32+ points	N_{BZ4}
Total		$N_{BZC} = N_{BZ1} + N_{BZ2} + N_{BZ3} + N_{BZ4}$

These data are then used by the algorithm to compute the value of the CBA resulting from the scores returned.

2 Pre-determined values

The following pre-determined values are used in the algorithm:

- 2.1 The “Standard” Probabilities P_i for BZ+ for *handicap categories* 1 to 4, P_1 to P_4 :

Category	1	2	3	4
Symbol	P_1	P_2	P_3	P_4
Value	43%	35%	35%	41%

Note: These “standard” probabilities were determined by using data from several *national associations* and must be applied unless a *national association* has data, based on considerable evidence, to suggest that significantly different values should be applied where the *national association* has jurisdiction. However, any exemption must be granted by the EGA Handicapping and Course Rating Committee.

- 2.2 The Confidence limit factor $f_{(k)}$ for the adjustment ranges, $f_{(-4)}$ to $f_{(+1)}$:

Adjustment	-4/RO	-3	-2	-1	+1
Symbol	$f_{(-4)}$	$f_{(-3)}$	$f_{(-2)}$	$f_{(-1)}$	$f_{(+1)}$
Value	-4.36	-3.56	-2.76	-1.96	3.5

- 2.3 The Confidence limit adjustments $a_{(k)}$ for the adjustment ranges, $a_{(-4)}$ to $a_{(+1)}$:

Adjustment	-4/RO	-3	-2	-1	+1
Symbol	$a_{(-4)}$	$a_{(-3)}$	$a_{(-2)}$	$a_{(-1)}$	$a_{(+1)}$
Value	1	1	1	1	0

3 The competition-specific values and the pre-determined values are then used to compute the CBA according to the following procedure:

- 3.1 Calculate the Ideal Competition Probability P_C as a weighted average of the BZ+ probabilities using the individual probabilities P_i (2.1) and the total number of players in the competition N_C and in each *handicap category* N_i (1.1):

Category	Standard Probability	Number of Players	Weighted Probability
1	P_1	N_1	$P_{W1} = P_1 * (N_1 / N_C)$
2	P_2	N_2	$P_{W2} = P_2 * (N_2 / N_C)$
3	P_3	N_3	$P_{W3} = P_3 * (N_3 / N_C)$
4	P_4	N_4	$P_{W4} = P_4 * (N_4 / N_C)$
Total		N_C	$P_C = P_{W1} + P_{W2} + P_{W3} + P_{W4}$

- 3.2 Calculate the first moment E of the binomial distribution using the total number of players in the competition N_C (1.1) and the ideal competition probability P_C (3.1):

$$E = P_C * N_C$$

- 3.3 Calculate the second moment V of the binomial distribution using the same values:

$$V = \sqrt{N_C * P_C * (1 - P_C)}$$

- 3.4 Calculate the unadjusted Confidence limits $C_{(k)}$ using the values of E (3.2), V (3.3) and the appropriate Confidence limit factors $f_{(k)}$ (2.2) and the Confidence limit adjustments $a_{(k)}$ (2.3):

$$C_{(k;unadjusted)} = E + f_{(k)} * V + a_{(k)}$$

for all $k = -4, -3, -2, -1, +1$, rounded to the nearest integer value.

- 3.5 Manage small field sizes where required :

$$C_{(-4)} = \text{Maximum} (C_{(-4;unadjusted)}, 0)$$

$$C_{(-3)} = \text{Maximum} (C_{(-3;unadjusted)}, C_{(-4)} + 1)$$

$$C_{(-2)} = \text{Maximum} (C_{(-2;unadjusted)}, C_{(-3)} + 1)$$

$$C_{(-1)} = \text{Maximum} (C_{(-1;unadjusted)}, C_{(-2)} + 1)$$

$$C_{(+1)} = C_{(+1;unadjusted)}$$

- 3.6 The CBA is then determined by comparing the value of N_{BZC} from 1.2 with the calculated values $C_{(k)}$ for individual adjustment ranges from 3.5:

CBA		-4/ RO	-3	-2	-1	0	+1
NBZC	from	0	$C_{(-4)} + 1$	$C_{(-3)} + 1$	$C_{(-2)} + 1$	$C_{(-1)} + 1$	$C_{(+1)}$
	to	$C_{(-4)}$	$C_{(-3)}$	$C_{(-2)}$	$C_{(-1)}$	$C_{(+1)} - 1$	N_C

- 4 The effect of the CBA-calculation will be to shift the *buffer zones* of each *handicap category* by the value -4 to +1, according to the calculated CBA, for all *handicap categories*.
- 5 Where the abbreviation RO appears in conjunction with the CBA (-4) the competition is designated "Reduction Only" and *exact handicaps* can only be reduced and not increased in such a competition.
- 6 Where a *qualifying competition* has been cancelled for any reason, even if the result is allowed to stand for handicapping purposes, a CBA must not be calculated. In this situation, *exact handicaps* will be adjusted using $CBA = 0$ and the competition will be designated "Reduction Only" i.e. no *exact handicaps* will be increased as a result of a competition being cancelled.
- 7 Where a *qualifying competition* field comprises only players in *handicap category 5* or less than 10 players from *handicap categories 1 to 4* no CBA will be calculated and all *exact handicaps* will be adjusted against Stableford points scored with the *handicap categories buffer zones* unadjusted.
- 8 Committees in charge of competitions are reminded that, provided a competition meets the CBA-criteria, they do not have the discretion to determine whether a *qualifying competition* is designated "Reduction Only" or not.
- 9 The CBA-procedure may not be applied to EDS or 9-hole scores.

APPENDIX C ANNUAL HANDICAP REVIEW (AHR) PROCEDURE

For general (introductory) information on *AHR*, refer to the EN on *AHR* in section 3.15.

Clause 3.4.8 requires *handicap committees* and *national associations* to carry out the *AHR* at the end of each playing season. The procedure has now been modified so that any adjustment resulting from the process is automatically applied to the player's handicap.

The *AHR* is an important adjunct to the handicapping process and is mandatory for all players. The procedure introduced four years ago used the Average of the Better Half of Stableford Scores (ABHSS) and compared this with the Expected Mean Stableford Score (EMSS). The latter was designed around the "Perfectly Handicapped Player" based on the CONGU / EGA method of adjusting handicaps. Research has shown that whilst the EMSS was satisfactory for the lower handicaps, as handicaps increased, the actual mean score showed a progressively positive variation from the EMSS. The ABHSS / EMSS system has therefore been replaced by an algorithm that compares the player's actual Median Stableford Score (MSS) with the European Averaged Stableford Score (EASS) for the player's *handicap category*. The EGA Handicap Research Group (HRG) derived the EASS from the same datasets used to formulate the CBA-algorithm.

<i>Exact Handicap</i>	<4.5	4.5 to 8.0	8.1 to 11.4	11.5 to 15.0	15.1 to 18.4	18.5 to 26.4	26.5 to 36.0
EASS points	33	32.5	32	31.5	31	30.5	30

Note: These EASS points were determined by using data from several *national associations* and must be applied unless a *national association* has data, based on considerable evidence, to suggest that scoring patterns deviate significantly from the EASS (1.0 points or more). In such a case, the *national association* may use country-specific values where appropriate. However, any exemption must be granted by the *EGA Handicapping and Course Rating Committee*.

The algorithm then subtracts the EASS corresponding to the player's handicap from his MSS to calculate the Player Deviation (PD). A +/- tolerance value of 2.9 is then applied and where the difference is +/- 3.0 or greater an adjustment of 1.0 is applied to the player's exact handicap; where +/- 5.0 or more, an adjustment of 2.0 is applied. Whilst the performance tolerance value is the same for both increasing and decreasing exact *handicaps*, it is accepted that the procedure for applying increases should take account of other criteria. Thus the procedure does not apply an increase to players who had a lower handicap at the end of the review period than they had at the start or who have identifiably had an upwards *general play* adjustment in the period between two reviews.

The accuracy of all systems that use average scores to assess performance is heavily dependent on the number of scores available and a minimum of eight scores have been identified as a minimum requirement. It is accepted that some players will not return eight scores in the review period and where this is the case, four scores from the previous *AHR* will be used to supplement the scores in the current *AHR*. It is understood that this could distort the process in some cases but it is considered there

is a greater potential for distortion if fewer than eight scores are used. All aspects of the *AHR* are the subject of on-going research by the HRG and it is expected that further improvements can be made in future releases.

The procedure will produce an *AHR*-report and it is strongly recommended that *national associations* include a translation of the suggested preface to the report published on the *EGA* website to assist *handicap committees* to carry out the *AHR*.

Procedure

Please note that throughout, the term *AHR qualifying scores* includes *Extra Day Scores*.

Any *AHR qualifying score* must take into account the associated *CBA*-value, if applicable, as follows: *AHR qualifying score* is (*qualifying score* – *CBA*)

Example, see App. A: event 10-4-2010: *AHR qualifying score* is $35 - (-2) = 37$

In the case of a *NR*, only *NR* scores that have been adjusted to Stableford scores may count for the minimum of four (4) scores required for the *AHR*. See clause 3.15.2

All players' records for the review period are subject to the *AHR*-procedure.

1. Identifying active handicap / inactive handicap

All handicaps of players who have returned three or fewer *AHR qualifying scores* are identified as *inactive* and excluded from further analysis. All players, including any *handicap category 1* players, are included in the *inactive handicap* report.

2. Identifying players with 8 or more AHR qualifying scores for inclusion in the automatic review

- 2.1 All players, including those in *handicap category 1*, who have 8 or more *AHR qualifying scores* in the current review period. All such players to be included in the automatic review i.e. if a player has returned 20 scores in the period, all twenty are analyzed and not just the last eight.
- 2.2 Players with less than 8 scores in the review period. Interrogate the previous year's *AHR qualifying scores* and select sufficient (in chronological order and with latest first) number to bring the total in the current analysis to 8. All players with 8 *AHR qualifying scores* after this process must be included in the automatic review.
- 2.3 Players with more than three *AHR qualifying scores* in the period of review but with less than 8 after the procedure in 2.2 has been applied are excluded from further analysis and must be listed as having *active handicaps* but too few scores to analyze. New handicaps are also in this group.

3. The Automatic Review Procedure

- 3.1 Calculate the *MSS* for each player. The median being the middle value of a series of numbers ordered in increasing value, e.g. the median of 25, 27, 31, 31, 32, 33, 34, 38 is 31.5.

- 3.2 Determine the $EASS_H$, the EASS that corresponds to the player's *exact handicap* at the end of the review period from the table:

Handicap	< 4.5	4.5 to 8.0	8.1 to 11.4	11.5 to 15.0	15.1 to 18.4	18.5 to 26.4	26.5 to 36.0
EASS	33	32.5	32	31.5	31	30.5	30

- 3.3 Determine the PD

$$PD = MSS - EASS_H$$

- 3.4 Use the value of PD determined to evaluate the performance of the player according to the table:

Value of PD	Player's current <i>exact handicap</i>	Adjustment applied
Between -2.9 and +2.9	Satisfactory	0
Player's MSS is 3 or more greater than EASS – player scored better than expectation		
+3.0 to +4.9	Too high	Reduced by 1.0
>+4.9	Significantly too high	Reduced by 2.0
Player's MSS is 3 or more less than EASS – player scored worse than expectation		
-3.0 to -4.9	Too low	Increased by 1.0
>-4.9	Significantly too low	Increased by 2.0

- 3.5 Additional determinations applied to players indicated as having too low handicap that would attract an increase

- 3.5.1 Exclude any player indicated for increase if their *exact handicap* at the end of the review period is lower than the start *exact handicap*.

$$\text{exact handicap at start of period} = EH_S$$

$$\text{exact handicap at end of period} = EH_F$$

Players must be excluded from the automatic increase procedure if $EH_F < EH_S$

- 3.5.2 Assess if the player has had an excessive handicap increase or an upward *general play* adjustment in the review period

Such players will be included in the automatic increase procedure and should be listed in the report as "Players who have had an above average increase during the review period, $(EH_F - EH_S) > 1.9$ "

3.6 Annual Review Report.

The procedure should produce an *AHR*-report of the general format detailed below.

Annual Handicap Review Report					
Club / Authority				Total players covered by report	
Period of Report	[from]	[To]	[number of players reviewed]		
The following players returned 3 scores or fewer and handicaps are designated inactive					
Player[list]	handicap category	gender			
The following players did not return 8 <i>qualifying scores</i> aggregated over 2 years and handicaps are designated active but not assessed					
Player[list]	handicap category	gender	EH		
The following players have returned 8 or more <i>qualifying scores</i> and had a positive PD of +3.0 to +4.9 and have had a 1.0 decrease in <i>exact handicap</i> (EH) applied					
Player	Old EH	New EH	Player	Old EH	New EH
[list]			[list]		
The following players have returned 8 or more <i>qualifying scores</i> and had a positive PD of greater than +5.0 and have had a 2.0 decrease in <i>exact handicap</i> (EH) applied					
Player	Old EH	New EH	Player	Old EH	New EH
[list]			[list]		
The following players have returned 8 or more <i>qualifying scores</i> and had a negative PD of -3.0 to -4.9 and have had a 1.0 increase in <i>exact handicap</i> (EH) applied*					
Player	Old EH	New EH	Player	Old EH	New EH
[list]			[list]		
The following players have returned 8 or more <i>qualifying scores</i> and had a negative PD of exceeding -4.9 and have had a 2.0 increase in <i>exact handicap</i> (EH) applied*					
Player	Old EH	New EH	Player	Old EH	New EH
[list]			[list]		

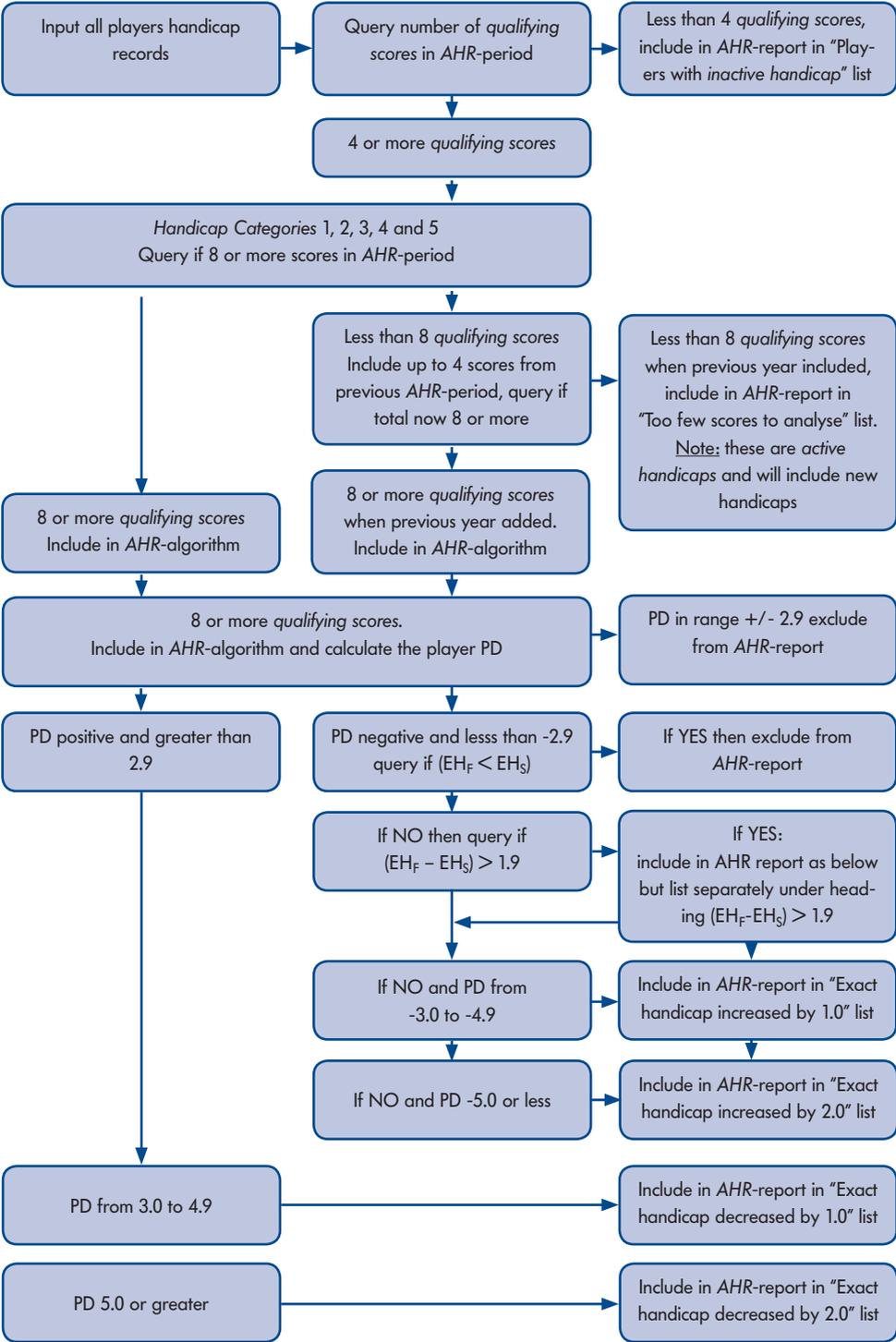
* Players who have had an above average increase during the review period to be listed separately under the heading $EH_F - EH_S > 1.9$, see 3.5.2.

The content above is the minimum required for the *AHR* report. The *national association* may wish to add more items and analytical tools. Also recommended for listing:

- Players with three or more NR's, listed as "Players with a high number of NR's"-
- Players with new handicaps (juniors)

3.7 A player may apply to the *handicap committee* to override the adjustments of the *AHR* on an individual basis. The *handicap committee* must establish whether there are exceptional circumstances and if an override of the *AHR*-adjustment is warranted. Such override must be justified in accordance with the provisions of section 3.16 (General Play)

3.8 The *handicap committee* must submit any adjustments made by the *AHR* to *handicap category 1* players or to *handicap category 2* players who have been taken into *handicap category 1*, to the *national association* for ratification. The automatic adjustment applies until the decision of the *national association* is received by the *handicap committee*.



APPENDIX D HANICAP ALLOWANCE IN COMPETITIONS

1. Players Competing From Different Tees;
or Men and Women Competing From Same Tees

The *Course Rating* reflects the playing difficulty of the golf course for a *scratch golfer*. The *Course Rating* and the *Slope Rating*, together one of the foundations of the *EGA Handicap System*, reflect the playing difficulty of the golf course for players with a handicap other than scratch. The course with the higher *Course Rating* is more difficult. When players compete in the same competition but play from different tees (men vs. women, but also men vs. men or women vs. women) or when men and women play from the same tees, the player playing from the set of tees with the higher *Course Rating* should receive additional *handicap strokes* equal to the difference between the *Course Ratings*. However, the formula of the *EGA playing handicap* (see clause 3.9.3) compensates for that difference and automatically adjusts the *playing handicaps* accordingly. Different tees may also have a different Par, but Par is not a standard of the difficulty of a golf course. Par is only included in the formula of the *playing handicap* because the *EGA Handicap System* is also based on Stableford scores for reasons of stroke control (see EN: The relevance of Par). This means that in stroke play and match play handicap competitions, when players compete in the same competition but play from tees with a different Par, the players playing from the set of tees with the higher Par receive additional strokes equal to the difference between the Par of the sets of tees. First, the *playing handicap* should be determined and then the additional strokes are added to the *playing handicap* of the player(s) playing from the tees with a higher Par.

Example 1:

If, in a stroke play or match play competition, men playing from the men's tees where the Par is 71 compete against women playing from the women's tees where the Par is 72, the women must add one stroke to their *playing handicap*.

Note: For handicapping calculations the additional stroke(s) must be disregarded.

Example 2:

Mrs. A and Mr. B are partners in a mixed foursome competition (stroke play or match play only). The men play from the men's tees where the Par is 71 and the women play from the women's tees where the Par is 72. Mrs. A has a *playing handicap* of 21 and Mr. B of 7. Mrs. A must add one stroke to her *playing handicap*, so she will play off 22. The *playing handicap* of the team is $50\% \times (22 + 7) = 29 / 2 = 14.5 \rightarrow$ rounded to 15

If less than full *playing handicaps* are recommended in such competitions (e.g. Four-ball stroke play), the percentage reduction in *playing handicaps* must also affect the adjustment for the difference between the Pars. In that case the following procedure is recommended:

1. Determine the *playing handicaps*.
2. Apply the adjustment for the difference in Pars.
3. Apply the *handicap allowance* for the appropriate form of play (e.g. 90 %).

Example 3:

In a Four-ball stroke play competition the men play from the men's tees where the Par is 71 and the women play from the women's tees where the Par is 72.

Mrs. A has a *playing handicap* of 16. The *handicap allowance* for this competition is 90 % of her adjusted *playing handicap*: $90\% \times \{16 + (72 - 71)\} = 90\% \times 17 = 15.3 \rightarrow$ rounded to 15.

Example 4:

Mrs. A and Mr. B are partners in a mixed greensomes competition (stroke play or match play). The men play from the men's tees where the Par is 71 and the women play from the women's tees where the Par is 72. Mr. B has a *playing handicap* of 8 and Mrs. A of 21.

The recommended *handicap allowance* is 60 % of the lower handicap + 40 % of the higher handicap:

Mr. B receives 60 % of 8 = 4.8 strokes.

Mrs. A receives 40 % of her adjusted *playing handicap*: $40\% \times (21 + 1) = 8.8$ strokes.

The team receives $4.8 + 8.8 = 13.6 \rightarrow$ rounded to 14.

2. Handicap Allowances

The EGA recommends that the following *handicap allowances* apply in the following forms of play. A *national association* may at its discretion make the recommendations mandatory. The reference to handicaps in all cases refers to *playing handicaps*.

2.1 Match Play

Handicap strokes to be taken according to the *handicap stroke index*, see clause 3.9.7.

Singles:

The player with the higher handicap receives the full difference between the *playing handicaps* of the two players.

Foursomes:

The side with the higher sum of the *playing handicaps* of the partners receives 50 % of the full difference between the aggregate handicap of each side (0.5 is rounded upwards).

Example:

Players A (*playing handicap* 11) and B (*playing handicap* 18) play a foursomes match against Players C (*playing handicap* 6) and D (*playing handicap* 12)

A and B receive: $50\% \times [(11 + 18) - (6 + 12)] = 50\% \times (29 - 18) =$
 $50\% \times 11 = 5.5 \rightarrow$ rounded upwards 6 strokes

Note: In mixed foursomes match play, *handicap strokes* are taken as assigned on the *handicap stroke index* for men.

Four-ball (Better-ball):

The player with the lowest *playing handicap*, who must play off scratch, must concede *handicap strokes* to the three other players based on 90 % of the difference between the *playing handicaps*.

Note: In mixed four-ball match play, *handicap strokes* are taken as assigned on the player's respective *handicap stroke indices*.

Greensomes:

The partner with the lower *playing handicap* receives 60 % of his *playing handicap* and the partner with the higher *playing handicap* receives 40% of his *playing handicap*. Both figures are added before rounding. The final figure (= the *playing handicap* of the side) is rounded (0.5 upwards). The side with the higher *playing handicap* receives the full difference between the handicaps of the two sides. If, in the above formats, players play from different tees with a different Par, see section 1 in this Appendix.

2.2 Bogey, Par and Stableford Competitions

Handicap strokes to be taken according to the *handicap stroke index*, see clause 3.9.7.

Singles:

The player receives 100 % of his *playing handicap*.

Foursomes:

The side receives 50 % of the sum of the *playing handicaps* of the partners. (0.5 rounded upwards).

Four-ball (Better-ball):

Each partner receives 90 % of his *playing handicap*.

Greensomes:

The partner with the lower *playing handicap* receives 60 % of his *playing handicap* and the partner with the higher *playing handicap* receives 40 % of his *playing handicap*. Both figures are added before rounding. This final figure (= the *playing handicap* of the side) is rounded (0.5 upwards). *Handicap strokes* to be taken according to the *handicap stroke index*.

Players with a "plus" handicap give one or more strokes to the course, commencing at stroke index 18.

In a mixed foursome or greensome *handicap strokes* are taken as assigned on the *handicap stroke index* for men.

In a mixed four-ball *handicap strokes* are taken as assigned on the player's respective *handicap stroke indices*.

In the above formats, when players compete in the same competition but play from different tees with a different Par, no extra adjustment for the difference in Pars will be applied to their *playing handicaps* since the formula of the *playing handicap* (see clause 3.9.3) compensates for that difference.

2.3 Stroke Play

Singles:

The player receives 100 % of his *playing handicap*.

Foursomes:

The side receives 50 % of the sum of the *playing handicaps* of the partners (0.5 rounded upwards).

Four-ball (Better ball):

Each partner receives 90 % of his *playing handicap*.

Handicap strokes to be taken according to the *handicap stroke index*.

In mixed four-ball stroke play *handicap strokes* are taken as assigned on the player's respective *handicap stroke indices*.

Greensomes:

The partner with the lower *playing handicap* receives 60 % of his *playing handicap* and the partner with the higher *playing handicap* receives 40 % of his *playing handicap*. Both figures are added before rounding. The final figure (= the *playing handicap* of the side) is rounded (0.5 upwards). In the above formats, when players compete in the same competition but play from different tees with a different Par, see section 1 of this Appendix.

Notes:

Note 1: *Handicap allowances* in a handicap competition must be laid down by the Committee in the conditions under which the competition is to be played (Rules of Golf, Rule 33-1).

Note 2: The committee in charge of a competition to be played over an extended period may provide in the conditions of the tournament, that a player's *exact handicap* may be changed during a competition.

Note 3: In handicap competitions over 36 holes, *handicap strokes* should be given or taken on a basis of two 18 holes rounds.

Note 4: Hole-by-hole play-off. When extra holes are played in handicap competitions, *handicap strokes* should be taken in accordance with the *handicap stroke index*.

Note 5: Players with a "plus" handicap give one or more strokes to the course, commencing at stroke index 18.

APPENDIX E HANICAP STROKE INDEX ALLOCATION

Rule of Golf 33-4 requires Committees to “Publish a table indicating the order of holes at which *handicap strokes* are to be given or received”.

To provide consistency at *affiliated clubs* it is recommended that the allocation is made with the following considerations:

- It is an established fact that the stroke index allocation has virtually no influence on the Stableford result and therefore on handicap adjustments.
- It is of paramount importance for match play that the strokes to be received at all handicap differences are evenly spread over the 18 holes.
- This is best achieved by allocating the odd numbered strokes to the more difficult of the two nine holes, usually the longest nine, and the even numbers to the other nine.
- The degree of difficulty of a hole related to Par is a factor for the sequence of allocation.
- The degree of difficulty can be derived from the bogey rating or by comparing the average score of a group of club members to Par.
- Try to achieve one stroke index table for all tees, men and women.
- The player who is to receive strokes will generally need his equalizer starting on the most difficult Par 5 and subsequently on the most difficult Par 4 followed by the other Par 5s. Next in order are the Par 4's and finally the Par 3's.

A very difficult Par 3 may take priority over a Par 4. Difficult holes are generally a Par 5 not reachable in 3 or a Par 4 not reachable in 2 for the average player

Allocating the stroke index numbers to the holes could be done in the following way:

- Split the 18 holes in 6 groups of 3; 1,2,3 then 4,5,6 etc
- Stroke index 1 to 4 not on holes 1,2,3 or 16,17,18
- The aggregate of the 6 groups of holes should be between 27 and 30
- If index 1 is allocated to the first of the two nine holes, index 2 should be placed in the second.
- All odd indices on the first and all even on the second, or the other way round, is to be preferred, also in view of nine-hole rounds.
- Avoid index 1 to 6 on adjacent holes.

Example:

Assign index 1 to the most difficult of 7,8,9. For 9 holes 4,5,6.

Assign index 2 to the most difficult of 13,14,15.

Assign index 3 to the most difficult of 4,5,6. For 9 holes 7,8,9.

Assign index 4 to the most difficult of 10,11,12.

Assign index 5 to the most difficult of 1,2,3.

Assign index 6 to the most difficult of 16,17,18.

Allocate indices 7 to 12 to the six groups evenly, 7 does not have to fit in group 7,8,9

Allocate indices 13 to 18 in the same way.

Result:

Holes 1,2,3	Index 5,7,15	Sum 27
Holes 4,5,6	Index 3,11,13	Sum 27
Holes 7,8,9	Index 1,9,17	Sum 27
Holes 10,11,12	Index 4,12,14	Sum 30
Holes 13,14,15	Index 2,10,18	Sum 30
Holes 16,17,18	Index 6,8,16	Sum 30

APPENDIX F PLAYING HANDICAP TABLE

<h2 style="text-align: center;">EGA Playing Handicap Table</h2> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Uphill Golf & Country Club</i></p>											
YELLOW TEES MEN			BLUE TEES MEN			BLUE TEES LADIES			RED TEES LADIES		
5559 Meters			5032 Meters			5032 Meters			4687 Meters		
PAR 72 CR 71.6 SLOPE 134			PAR 71 CR 68.5 SLOPE 129			PAR 72 CR 74.0 SLOPE 133			PAR 72 CR 71.8 SLOPE 128		
EGA Exact Handicap		EGA Playing Handicap	EGA Exact Handicap		EGA Playing Handicap	EGA Exact Handicap		EGA Playing Handicap	EGA Exact Handicap		EGA Playing Handicap
From	To		From	To		From	To		From	To	
+4,0	+3,5	+5	+4,0	+3,6	+7	+4,0	+3,9	+3	+4,0	+3,8	+5
+3,4	+2,7	+4	+3,5	+2,7	+6	+3,8	+3,0	+2	+3,7	+3,0	+4
+2,6	+1,8	+3	+2,6	+1,8	+5	+2,9	+2,2	+1	+2,9	+2,1	+3
+1,7	+1,0	+2	+1,7	+0,9	+4	+2,1	+1,3	0	+2,0	+1,2	+2
+0,9	+0,1	+1	+0,8	0,0	+3	+1,2	+0,5	1	+1,1	+0,3	+1
0,0	0,7	0	0,1	0,8	+2	+0,4	0,4	2	+0,2	0,6	0
0,8	1,6	1	0,9	1,7	+1	0,5	1,2	3	0,7	1,5	1
1,7	2,4	2	1,8	2,6	0	1,3	2,1	4	1,6	2,3	2
2,5	3,2	3	2,7	3,5	1	2,2	2,9	5	2,4	3,2	3
3,3	4,1	4	3,6	4,3	2	3,0	3,8	6	3,3	4,1	4
4,2	4,9	5	4,4	5,2	3	3,9	4,6	7	4,2	5,0	5
5,0	5,8	6	5,3	6,1	4	4,7	5,5	8	5,1	5,9	6
5,9	6,6	7	6,2	7,0	5	5,6	6,3	9	6,0	6,7	7
6,7	7,5	8	7,1	7,8	6	6,4	7,2	10	6,8	7,6	8
7,6	8,3	9	7,9	8,7	7	7,3	8,0	11	7,7	8,5	9
8,4	9,1	10	8,8	9,6	8	8,1	8,9	12	8,6	9,4	10
9,2	10,0	11	9,7	10,5	9	9,0	9,7	13	9,5	10,3	11
10,1	10,8	12	10,6	11,3	10	9,8	10,6	14	10,4	11,2	12
10,9	11,7	13	11,4	12,2	11	10,7	11,4	15	11,3	12,0	13
11,8	12,5	14	12,3	13,1	12	11,5	12,3	16	12,1	12,9	14
12,6	13,4	15	13,2	14,0	13	12,4	13,1	17	13,0	13,8	15
13,5	14,2	16	14,1	14,8	14	13,2	14,0	18	13,9	14,7	16
14,3	15,0	17	14,9	15,7	15	14,1	14,8	19	14,8	15,6	17
15,1	15,9	18	15,8	16,6	16	14,9	15,7	20	15,7	16,5	18
16,0	16,7	19	16,7	17,5	17	15,8	16,5	21	16,6	17,3	19
16,8	17,6	20	17,6	18,3	18	16,6	17,4	22	17,4	18,2	20
17,7	18,4	21	18,4	19,2	19	17,5	18,2	23	18,3	19,1	21
18,5	19,3	22	19,3	20,1	20	18,3	19,1	24	19,2	20,0	22
19,4	20,1	23	20,2	21,0	21	19,2	19,9	25	20,1	20,9	23
20,2	20,9	24	21,1	21,8	22	20,0	20,8	26	21,0	21,8	24
21,0	21,8	25	21,9	22,7	23	20,9	21,6	27	21,9	22,6	25
21,9	22,6	26	22,8	23,6	24	21,7	22,5	28	22,7	23,5	26
22,7	23,5	27	23,7	24,5	25	22,6	23,3	29	23,6	24,4	27
23,6	24,3	28	24,6	25,4	26	23,4	24,2	30	24,5	25,3	28
24,4	25,2	29	25,5	26,2	27	24,3	25,0	31	25,4	26,2	29
25,3	26,0	30	26,3	27,1	28	25,1	25,9	32	26,3	27,1	30
26,1	26,9	31	27,2	28,0	29	26,0	26,7	33	27,2	27,9	31
27,0	27,7	32	28,1	28,9	30	26,8	27,6	34	28,0	28,8	32
27,8	28,5	33	29,0	29,7	31	27,7	28,4	35	28,9	29,7	33
28,6	29,4	34	29,8	30,6	32	28,5	29,3	36	29,8	30,6	34
29,5	30,2	35	30,7	31,5	33	29,4	30,1	37	30,7	31,5	35
30,3	31,1	36	31,6	32,4	34	30,2	31,0	38	31,6	32,3	36
31,2	31,9	37	32,5	33,2	35	31,1	31,8	39	32,4	33,2	37
32,0	32,8	38	33,3	34,1	36	31,9	32,7	40	33,3	34,1	38
32,9	33,6	39	34,2	35,0	37	32,8	33,5	41	34,2	35,0	39
33,7	34,4	40	35,1	35,9	38	33,6	34,4	42	35,1	35,9	40
34,5	35,3	41	36,0	36,0	39	34,5	35,2	43	36,0	36,0	41
35,4	36,0	42				35,3	36,0	44			
club handicap differential		+6	club handicap differential		+3	club handicap differential		+8	club handicap differential		+5

APPENDIX G CLUB HANDICAP

In order to increase the playing experience of inexperienced golfers, in particular beginners, many golf clubs issue handicaps exceeding the official limits for *exact handicaps*. Such handicaps are referred to as *club handicaps* and may be allocated up to 54. They are maintained in a much simplified way. The general purpose of *club handicaps* is that they allow members of an *affiliated club* to monitor their progress in mastering the game of golf and to compete, with limitations as directed by the *handicapping authority*.

1. Definitions

- 1.1 All definitions listed in Part 1, as well as the specifications included below, apply.
- 1.2 A *club handicap* is a handicap exceeding the limit for an *EGA Exact Handicap* of 36. A *club handicap* is expressed as a whole number to a maximum of 54. The *EGA Club Handicap* is used for conversion to a *club playing handicap*.
- 1.3 The “club handicap differential” is the difference between an *exact handicap* of 36.0 and the corresponding *playing handicap* at the course being played.

Example:

According to the *EGA Playing Handicap Table* a player with an *exact handicap* of 36.0, playing from the a set of tees at his *home club* has a *playing handicap* of 39. The *club handicap differential* when playing from the a set of tees is: $39 - 36.0 = 3$

For a 9-hole round, the *club handicap differential* is determined by taking two times the *club handicap differential* of the 9-holes to be played

- 1.4 A *club playing handicap* is the number of *handicap strokes* a player with a *club handicap* receives from a specific set of tees at the course being played. For reasons of simplicity, a player's *club playing handicap* is determined by adding the *club handicap differential* of the course being played to his *club handicap*.

Example:

The maximum *club handicap* at a player's *home club* is 54.

The *club handicap differential* from the men's tees is 3.

A men's *club handicap* of 38 converts to a *club playing handicap* of 41 ($= 38 + 3$), a *club handicap* of 53 to a *club playing handicap* of 56 ($= 53 + 3$), etc...

The *club handicap differential* from the women's tees is 5.

A women's *club handicap* of 41 converts to a *club playing handicap* of 46 ($= 41 + 5$).

For a 9-hole round the number of *handicap strokes* a player receives is:

CLUB HCP + (2X 9-HOLE CLUB HCP DIFFERENTIAL)

2

The *club handicap* is a whole number, 0.5 is rounded upwards.

2. Attaining a Club Handicap

2.1 The maximum *club handicap* is 54.

Note: The *national association* may limit the *club handicap* to 45.

2.2 To attain a *club handicap* a player must submit one *qualifying score* of 36 Stableford points or more over either 18 or 9 holes. The number of *handicap strokes* the player receives for 18 holes is:

$54 \text{ (or } 45) + \text{club handicap differential}$

For 9 holes the *handicap allowance* is half of the *handicap allowance* for 18 holes, 0.5 rounded upward

2.3 The initial *club handicap* must be calculated on the basis of the Stableford score returned:

$54 \text{ (or } 45) - (\text{Stableford points} - 36)$

Example:

The player returns a score of 39 points. His *club handicap* is $54 - (39 - 36) = 51$.

3. Alteration of Club Handicaps

3.1 The number of *handicap strokes* the player receives for 18 holes is:

$\text{club handicap} + \text{club handicap differential}$

For 9 holes the *handicap allowance* is half of the *handicap allowance* for 18 holes, 0.5 rounded upwards.

3.2 *Club handicaps* may not be increased except in accordance with section 3.16 of the *EGA Handicap System*.

3.3 *Club handicaps* are reduced by whole numbers based on *qualifying scores* only. If a player returns a score of 37 Stableford points or more, his *club handicap* is reduced by 1 stroke per Stableford point in excess of 36. If applicable, any CBA-adjustment should be taken into account.

Example:

A lady with a *club handicap* of 49 returns a score of 39 Stableford points. Her *club handicap* is consequently reduced to 46 ($= 49 - 3$).

3.4 Reductions of a player's *club handicap* must be made and registered by the *handicapping authority* on the day the *qualifying score* becomes known to the *handicapping authority*.

3.5 When assigning an initial *EGA Exact Handicap* as a result of a *qualifying score* to a player already holding a *club handicap* the *handicapping authority* may, at its discretion and in accordance with clause 3.11.5, proceed as follows:

- Reduce the player's handicap to 36.0 in accordance with clause 3.3 (Appendix G).
- For the balance of the score, follow the procedure for alteration of *EGA Handicaps* (see clauses 3.12.10 and 3.12.11).

4. Suspension Loss, Restoration, Review and General Play

4.1 The *handicap committee* of the player's *handicapping authority* may apply regulations similar to sections 3.13, 3.14, 3.15 and 3.16 as they deem appropriate.

APPENDIX H SYSTEM OPTIONS FOR NATIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

(This appendix does not need to be translated by the *national associations*)

There are a number of clauses in the *EGA Handicap System* providing options for which each *national association* has to define directives to the *handicapping authorities*. The options are described in the relevant clause, or in a note to the clause. Rather than the note, the *national association* can insert the national policy under the same clause in its own translation or publication of the *EGA Handicap System*.

Part 1 Definitions

- *Period for preferred* lies to be determined by the *national association*. See also 2.6.1; 3.1.13

Part 3 Handicapping

- Clause 3.1.4 Delegate authority to *area authority*
- Clause 3.1.8 Assume responsibility of *handicapping authority*, and define for what group of players
- Clause 3.1.11 Determine limitations to application of 9-hole scores and *EDS*, see 3.6.1c and 3.8.1-4
- Clause 3.1.14 Require successful examination Rules of Golf before allotment of handicap
- Clause 3.1.17 Direct that an *active handicap* is a prerequisite for entry into a competition that requires an *exact handicap*. See section 3.15
- Clause 3.3.3 Direct that an *active handicap* are a prerequisite for entry into a competition that requires an *exact handicap* at club level. See section 3.15
- Clause 3.6.1 c Restrict application of 9-hole *qualifying scores* to specific *handicap categories* and to a maximum number per year
- Section 3.7 (EN) Possible exemption from *CBA* for emerging golf nations
- Clause 3.7.2 Extension of *CBA*-calculation to include *inactive handicaps*
- Clause 3.8.2 Limit number of *EDSs* per year
- Clause 3.8.3 Designate course(s) for *EDSs*
- Clause 3.8.4 Exclude *handicap categories 2 or 2 and 3* from *EDS*
- Clause 3.11.2 *Club Handicaps* see Appendix G
- Clause 3.12.3 Discretion to add requirements to the player's handicap record
- Clause 3.15.2 Discretion to determine way of marking *active*. Note to give examples
- Clause 3.15.5 Discretion of *national association* or *handicap authority* to direct an *active handicap* is a prerequisite for entry into a competition that requires an *exact handicap*
- Appendix G 2.1 Limit *Club Handicaps* to 45
- Appendix G 4.1 *Handicap authority* may define procedures for suspension and loss, restoration, *annual handicap review* and *general play* similar to sections 3.13-16

APPENDIX I A SHORT GUIDE TO THE EGA HANDICAP SYSTEM

This “Short Guide to the *EGA Handicap System 2012-2015*” provides introductory and fundamental information about certain key aspects of the *EGA Handicap System 2012-2015*. The information is abbreviated and should not be seen as a substitute for the regulations for handicapping contained in the publication, “*EGA Handicap System 2012-2015*”. For more information about any aspect of the *EGA Handicap System*, please refer to the relevant section. Terms in italics are terms which have been defined within the *EGA Handicap System 2012-2015*. Please be aware that certain aspects of the *EGA Handicap System* are effective at the discretion of the *national associations*.

The EGA recommends that *national associations* translate and distribute the “Short Guide” to golfers who hold or are trying to attain an *EGA handicap*.

GENERAL

The main purpose of the *EGA Handicap System* is to achieve uniform and fair handicapping in Europe, and to enable players with varying degrees of golf skill to play and compete on a basis as fair and equitable as possible.

To attain an official *EGA handicap*, contact an *affiliated club* or the *national association*. Play at least three rounds under *handicap conditions* (see below and Part I, Definitions) and return score cards signed by yourself and a marker for all three rounds. You will be assigned a handicap on the basis of the best score returned.

Play your best in every single round and record as many *qualifying scores* as possible during the season – this is a fundamental principle of any handicap system. Make sure that the handicap which is recorded is correct – it should reflect your current playing ability. If your handicap is too high/low –contact the local *handicap committee*. *Exact handicaps* are divided into five different *handicap categories*. See standard table below.

Always check which *playing handicap* you are entitled to on the course being played based on your recorded *exact handicap* and the posted *playing handicap-table*.

You may usually choose which set of tees you want to play from (in competitions, special conditions apply).

Make sure that your *playing handicap* is recorded on the score card before you return the card upon completion of the round.

HANDICAP ALLOWANCES

Your *handicap allowance* is the number of strokes you receive in a handicap competition. Allowances may vary for different forms of competition and are designed to produce as equitable competition

conditions as possible. The EGA recommended *handicap allowances* (singles, four-ball and foursome) for stroke play and match play are as follows:

- | | |
|-------------------------|--|
| Stroke play (singles) | – The player receives 100% of his <i>playing handicap</i> . |
| Stroke play (four-ball) | – Each partner receives 90% of his <i>playing handicap</i> . |
| Stroke play (foursome) | – The side receives 50% of the sum of the <i>playing handicap</i> of the partners (0.5 rounded upwards). |
| Match play (singles) | – The player with the higher handicap receives the full difference between the <i>playing handicaps</i> of the two players. |
| Match play (four-ball) | – The player with the lowest <i>playing handicap</i> , who must play from scratch, concedes <i>handicap strokes</i> to the other three players based on 90% of the difference between the <i>playing handicaps</i> . |
| Match play (foursome) | – The side with the higher sum of the <i>playing handicaps</i> of the partners receives 50% of the full difference between the aggregate handicap of each side (0.5 rounded upwards). |

QUALIFYING HANDICAP ROUND

In order for a round to count for handicapping purposes it is a requirement that *handicap conditions* are met. You can play a round and enter the score for handicapping either in connection with a *qualifying competition* or as an *EDS*, see below.

- The round must be played on a course rated according to the *USGA Course Rating System* and the *Course Rating* must be valid.
- The round must be played according to the Rules of Golf and approved Local Rules.
- The round must be played according to the rules of stroke play (scores to be counted in Stableford points) and with a full *playing handicap* (special conditions apply for 9-hole rounds).
- The score must be marked by an approved marker.

Additional information with respect to qualifying rounds:

Rounds played with preferred lies may also count for handicapping purposes.

Rounds played in four-ball tournaments or other tournaments where a player plays with one or more partners may not count for handicapping purposes.

If you fail to return a score in connection with a *qualifying round*, a *No Return (NR)* is recorded for that round, and this may result in an adjustment or non-adjustment of your handicap depending on the reason for the *NR*. Your *handicap committee* considers the reasons on a case by case basis and makes a determination with respect to adjustments.

EXTRA DAY SCORES AND 9-HOLE SCORES

Players in *handicap category* [specified by the national association] may return an *extra day score*, i.e. a score returned outside a *qualifying competition*, subject to the following conditions:

Extra day scores

- You must register your name on the *extra day score-list* (often an electronic “list” in a computer system) before starting the round and the entry should include information facilitating the administration of the score when returned (including information on whether the round consists of 9 or 18 holes).
- You must return a score card signed by you and your marker. Your *playing handicap* must be recorded on the score card before it is returned.
- *Handicap conditions* apply
- For players in *handicap category 1*, only rounds played in a competition count for handicapping purposes, i.e. *extra day scores* are not allowed.

9-hole scores

If you belong to *handicap category* [specified by the national association] you are also entitled to return scores from rounds played over 9 holes for handicapping purposes. However, remember that:

- You must announce your intention to play a *qualifying round* over 9 holes before you start the round.
- You may announce and record only one (1) *qualifying round* over 9 holes/day.

ALTERATIONS OF HANDICAPS

The system will adjust your *exact handicap* depending on the score you return. The adjustment becomes effective immediately after the round irrespective of whether the score has been entered into the computer (e.g. away scores). You are obliged to know your *exact handicap* at all times (see also “Shared responsibilities” below).

If you are required neither to increase nor to lower your handicap you are said to have returned a score “inside the *buffer zone*” in which case no alterations are made to your handicap. The buffer is a tolerance zone just below handicap in which no handicap adjustment is made.

Always record a score from a *qualifying round*, regardless of whether you have lowered your handicap, increased your handicap or played inside the *buffer zone*. You should record your *qualifying rounds* immediately after the round by returning your score card to the local *handicap committee* or else as instructed by the golf club. In the table below one can read off the different limits for Stableford points for the *buffer zone* applicable to each *handicap category*. If you return a score which is lower than the *buffer zone* you must increase your *exact handicap* and if you return a score above the buffer, generally of 37 Stableford points or better, you must lower your *exact handicap*.

Handicap Category	EGA Exact Handicap	Buffer Zone		Stableford-points below the buffer zone: add only	Subtract for each Stableford-point above the buffer zone:
		18-hole scores	9-hole scores		
1	plus – 4.4	35 – 36	–	0.1	0.1
2	4.5 – 11.4	34 – 36	–	0.1	0.2
3	11.5 – 18.4	33 – 36	35 – 36	0.1	0.3
4	18.5 – 26.4	32 – 36	34 – 36	0.1	0.4
5	26.5 – 36.0	31 – 36	33 – 36	0.2	0.5

CBA – COMPUTED BUFFER ADJUSTMENT

Sometimes a round of golf is played under conditions which are not “normal” relative to the rating of the course, e.g. extreme weather or very difficult course set-up, but within the *EGA Handicap System*, such a round can still be used for handicapping purposes, provided all other *handicap conditions* for a *qualifying round* are met. However, when conditions are “abnormal” to the extent that it would be unfair to let the result affect a player’s handicap, an allowance should be made to compensate. Within the *EGA Handicap System* this allowance is referred to as *Computed Buffer Adjustment (CBA)*.

In the *CBA* calculation, the performance of the field of players relative to the *buffer zone* is compared with the calculated expected performance of these players under “normal” conditions, and if the performance is outside certain set limits, an adjustment to the *buffer zone* of an individual player is made. The adjustment can result in (i) a shift upwards (if the field’s performance is much better than expected) or (ii) a shift downwards (if the field’s performance is much worse than expected) of the window allowed for playing within the *buffer zone*. Alternatively it may happen that the conditions are so extreme that the result will count for reduction of handicaps only. *CBA* must be applied before the handicap adjustments are calculated.

CBA applies in 18-hole *qualifying competitions* only, i.e. not for 9-hole scores or for EDS. The purpose of *CBA* is to introduce yet another element of fairness to the *EGA Handicap System*. Individual players need not to be concerned with the *CBA* calculation which should be carried out automatically the system used to administer handicaps.

SHARED RESPONSIBILITIES – THE PLAYER AND THE HANDICAP COMMITTEE AT THE GOLF CLUB

In order to guarantee a correct and effective application of the *EGA Handicap System* it is essential that everyone involved assumes responsibility for fair handicapping. Each player is ultimately responsible for his handicap and for any alterations needed with respect to that handicap in connection with *qualifying rounds*. In addition, remember the following:

- You must return at least four (4) scores from *qualifying rounds* every year to maintain an active EGA handicap. However, the more the better – make it a habit to always return a *qualifying score*.
- It is a good idea to report exceptionally good scores from rounds which do not count for handicapping purposes. Notify the *handicap committee* at the golf club.
- The *handicap committee* at the golf club is responsible for the correct application of the handicap system at the golf club. Turn to the *handicap committee* at the golf club if you think you have a wrong handicap (i.e. a handicap which is too high or too low) The *handicap committee* has the authority to adjust the *exact handicap* of any player particularly in connection with the *annual handicap review* process and it should exercise this authority in exceptional cases also between *annual handicap reviews* if a need arises.

ANNUAL HANDICAP REVIEW – ACTIVE AND INACTIVE HANDICAPS

Every year at the end of the season, the *handicap committee* must review the *exact handicap* of all players. For your handicap to be reviewed you must have returned at least four (4) scores from *qualifying rounds*. You are said to have an *active* handicap and are eligible for entry into a competition for which an EGA handicap is an entry requirement. Using at least eight (8) *qualifying scores* (if needed also from the previous year) as a basis for analysing your playing performance, your handicap may be adjusted upwards or downwards or left unchanged as a result of the review.

If you return three (3) or fewer scores from *qualifying rounds* you are said to have an *inactive* handicap since that handicap is based on insufficient data for a handicap review to be performed; in that case you are not eligible for entry into a competition for which an EGA *Exact Handicap* is required, but you can still play social golf.

As a final note, remember (i) that golf is more enjoyable if everyone assumes their part of the responsibility and takes good care of their handicaps, and (ii) that a handicap reflects your playing ability – it is not a status symbol.

More background and answers to questions relating to the application of the EGA Handicap System can be found on www.ega-golf.ch

APPENDIX J LIST OF EXPLANATORY NOTES AND GUIDANCE NOTES

In order to provide enhanced explanation and understanding and to facilitate a correct application of the *EGA Handicap System*, certain parts of the code in the manual have been supplemented with explanatory text (Explanatory Notes) and advisory text (Guidance Notes)

The EGA Handicap System 2012-2015 contains the following Explanatory Notes and Guidance Notes.

Explanatory Note	Manual reference
Principles of Course- and Slope Rating	2.1
Relevance of Par	2.5
Computed Buffer Adjustment (CBA)	3.7
Extra Day Scores (EDS)	3.8
Plus handicaps	3.9
9-hole scores	3.9
Stableford	3.10
Annual Handicap Review (AHR)	3.15
Guidance Note	Manual reference
Junior golf	2.4
Preferred lies	2.6
Course set-up and maintenance	2.7
Purpose of audit of low handicap players	3.1
The purpose and composition of the handicap committee	3.4
Scores acceptable for handicapping purposes in case of disqualification	3.6
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APPENDIX K EGA HANDICAP SYSTEM LICENSE FORM

Licence Agreement Letter

EGA Handicap and Course Rating Committee

National Association [address details]

Dear Mr/Mrs [official of the National Association]

By the present letter, the European Golf Association (henceforth referred to as "EGA") grants the [National Association name] (henceforth referred to as the "National Association") the exclusive, non-transferable license to use the EGA Handicap System (henceforth referred to as "the System" and all related software/ equivalent as a means to determine and administer handicaps for golf players within their jurisdiction, subject to the Licensee's performance of all the provisions contained in the following paragraphs.

For mutual consideration received, which is hereby acknowledged, the parties agree to the following:

1. This agreement shall commence as of [date 1-1-2012 or later] and shall be effective through December 31, 2015. Thereafter, this agreement may be renewed only upon written agreement of the parties hereto.
2. The National Association has the jurisdiction for the administration of the System within its own country, subject to the overall jurisdiction of the EGA and shall ensure the integrity of the System. The EGA grants the National Association the non-exclusive and non-transferable right to use the trademark "EGA Handicap System", and the associated terms "EGA Handicap", "EGA Exact Handicap", "EGA Playing Handicap" for the specific application of the System, only in the performance of this agreement and for no other purpose. This trademark is and will remain the sole property of the EGA.

For correct implementation of the System, the National Association shall comply with the following conditions and obey the following rules:

1. Policies and regulations of the National Association and affiliated clubs and member organisations issuing EGA Handicaps must be consistent with the fundamental principles and regulations of the System as outlined in the current System (effective 2012-2015) and any amendments thereto as well as with the Rules of Golf as approved by R&A Rules Limited.
2. In order to achieve uniformity in the application of the System, a National Association does not have the right to amend the regulations of the system in any way.

3. EGA Exact Handicaps issued by a National Association or an affiliated club and member organisations not in full accordance with the System, may not be called “EGA Handicaps” and may not be identified as such on handicap certificates.
4. The National Association shall appoint a sub-committee, the National Handicap Committee, to administer the System within its own country and may delegate any part of its jurisdiction to an area authority under its control and governance.
Note: The National Handicap Committee should consist of at least three qualified members.
5. The National Association shall ensure that area authorities, affiliated clubs and member organisations are suitably trained and instructed to administer the System.
6. The National Association is responsible for ensuring that area authorities and all affiliated clubs and member organisations comply with the obligations and regulations of the System and the terms of this Licence Agreement including such functions as may be performed or result from software based application programmes.
7. The National Association shall establish obligatory procedures with respect to the options provided by the System.
8. The Handicapping & Course Rating Committee of the EGA has the right to obtain any information related to handicapping from a National Association at any time during the term of the agreement subject to statutory limitations (privacy).
9. Appeals regarding the application of the System in a country shall be made to the Handicapping & Course Rating Committee of the EGA, which may, at its discretion, carry out such investigation as it considers appropriate. Any decision of the EGA Handicapping & Course Rating Committee is final, with reservation of the constitutional possibility to submit the case to the arbitration of the Court of Arbitration of Sports (CAS) in Lausanne, Switzerland.
10. Only National Associations are permitted to translate the manual entitled “EGA Handicap System 2012-2015” from English into their own language. The translation must, in all respects, communicate and acknowledge the underlying principles and purposes of the System. The system in its translated form must be called “EGA Handicap System” and the handicaps must be called “EGA Handicaps”. In other respects, the translation does not need to be literal and the National Association may use the terminology that is commonly used in its own country. The translated manual should have a heading stating that the National Association has adopted the System and shall be called “EGA Handicap System”, and that handicaps shall be called “EGA handicaps”. The National Association must send a copy of its translation to the EGA.

APPENDICES

11. If the EGA determines that a National Association is in breach of any of the obligations and regulations of the System or the terms of this Licence Agreement, the EGA will send written notice to the National Association specifying the breach. The National Association shall have thirty (30) days to respond outlining the cure for the breach to the satisfaction of the EGA. If the answer is not satisfactory, the Handicapping & Course Rating Committee of the EGA is entitled to order measures to restore a situation in accordance with the regulations. These measures can be accompanied by an official warning. If the National Association persists in the breach, the EGA may withdraw the licence to use the System. The National Association can appeal this decision to the Court of Arbitration of Sports (CAS) in Lausanne, Switzerland.
12. National Associations must also obtain written authorization from the United States Golf Association in order to use the USGA Course Rating System.
13. This agreement is governed by the law of Luxembourg.

To confirm the acceptance of the Licence and the above conditions, would the appropriate representative of the National Association please sign the enclosed copy of this License Agreement and return it to the office of the EGA Handicapping Committee.

European Golf Association

EGA Handicap and Course Rating
Committee

NN

Jan Kees van Soest

General Secretary

Chairman

Acknowledged and agreed to

Date:

By:

Name:

Title:

[National Association]

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