



# EUROPEAN GOLF ASSOCIATION ASSOCIATION EUROPEENNE DE GOLF

Registered offices : Luxembourg, Höhenhof, Senningerberg

Place de la Croix-Blanche 19  
P.O. Box  
CH – 1066 Epalinges  
Switzerland  
© (41 21) 785 70 60 Fax 785 70 69  
E-mail: info@ega-golf.ch  
Gen. Secretary: John C. Storjohann

## 2008 News Letter EGA Handicap System

December 2008

Dear member Federations

This is the second HCRC News Letter to keep you informed about different aspects of the EGA Handicap System. After the introduction in 2007 for many players and clubs the year 2008 provided more opportunities to gain experience that will hopefully add to the depth of the evaluation of the system later in 2009. During the year many questions have been brought to the Ctee. the answers to which we are passing on in this News Letter if we feel they are of general interest.



### Implementation

We have made quite some progress towards the goal of uniform implementation. Of 21 Federations holding a license for the EGA system the implementation status is as follows:

	2007	2008
• Fully implemented	8	12
• Partially implemented i.e. without active / inactive indicator	7	9
• Plan to implement in 2008 or undecided	4	-
• No response	2	-
• CSA	15 of 21	
• EDS	19 of 21	
• 9-Holes	18 of 21	

We have been working closely with some National Federations to improve the score significantly. The Ctee. maintains uniformity as one of its prime focal points. It is hoped that, by working closely with the National Federations a unified approach will emerge.



## **Operative period of 2007 version extended to 2011**

The Ctee. has decided to extend the operative period of the system from the end of 2010 to the end of 2011. This restores synchronisation with important sister organisations, R&A Rules, CONGU and USGA Course and Slope Rating and provides more time to make this version work and to prepare and introduce improvements in 2012.



## **New license procedure**

It is planned to improve the current licence agreement to a renewable one that clearly states the rights and obligations of the federations and the EGA HCRC. This agreement follows the format of the USGA Course and Slope Rating Licence and will be introduced per 1<sup>st</sup> January 2009.



## **Competition Stableford Adjustment (CSA)**

The quick fix to the CSA computation appears to have the desired effect. Preliminary results in Germany point at a reduction of CSA -1 from 32 to 20 %. We will therefore keep the amended Appendix D. in place as it is on a temporary basis.

We are fully aware that quite a few clubs and players criticise CSA on different grounds. Some of this criticism is based on false arguments, status related or otherwise. But some are to the point and will be addressed.

It is very unfortunate that CSA started off on the wrong foot but we remain of the opinion that the CSA principle does provide a valuable tool to correct for undue influences on proper handicapping. We must give the application more time to enable data gathering and definition of improvements. It is very likely that the debate on CSA will keep going on for a while that is the reason we repeat our views here below.

CSA is not:

- "Stealing" from or adding to player's scores
- Time consuming mathematical magic

CSA is meant to be:

- Correction for inadequate circumstances (weather, course)
- Improved, more equitable adjustment of handicaps (formerly the 10% rule)
- Should become an "automatic filter" in the computer software managing handicap records.



## **Regional seminars and evaluation inquiry**

In the first half of 2009 all licensees will be requested to complete an inquiry on the current system. It is hoped that the federations have enough data to evaluate the current procedures and to list experiences and comments from the clubs. This information plus proposals from the HCRC will be input to a series of seminars to discuss points for improvement or simplification and new features of the system to be introduced in 2012.

*Please be aware that it is in your own interest to fill in this inquiry as completely and accurately as possible as this is your chance to bring your thoughts and ideas into the discussion. If you are critical about certain aspects, now is this the time to stand up and tell us about it, not later. Not responding is the worst option.*

The seminars will be organised on a regional basis in the second half of 2009 for the Northern, Central and Southern zone thus keeping the group small and providing ample opportunity for two way communication and exchange of views.

It is foreseen to introduce the new 2012 version with a meeting for all federations very early in 2011 at the latest.



## **Handicap Research Group**

The Executive Committee have authorised the formation of a small Handicap Research Group (HRG) consisting of two members of the HCRC and three experts in statistics and mathematical modelling. The programme 2009-2011 of the HRG comprises the following items:

- Build up a database with European handicapping data
- Analyse the data and set up scoring models and simulation tools
- Study and make recommendations for (alternative) solutions such as for CSA, using 4-ball scores, Annual Review algorithms etc.
- Exchange and communicate about data and studies with sister organisations as CONGU and USGA.

It is expected that this supporting activity will greatly add to the quality and understanding of existing and future features of the EGA Handicap System. Whenever appropriate cooperation will be sought with federations who have data and experience in a particular subject.



## **Tees for young players**

Most Courses have rated the forward and standard tees for men and women. Therefore the Committee recommend that boys irrespective of age play men's ratings (any tee) and girls to play women's ratings. If this causes problems between different age groups, the suggestion would be to separate both boys and girls into two different price winning categories.



## **Re-activating a handicap**

When re-activating a handicap as described in paragraph 22.7 maintenance of the handicap is resumed as required for active handicaps by entering the three scores in the correct order. See Appendix B for reference. Note 1 is meant to alert the Ctee. to circumstances when it may be expected that the re-activated handicap could differ considerably from the inactive one, e.g. considerable time has passed since the handicap became inactive.



## **EGU to introduce concept of active and inactive handicaps**

On November 25<sup>th</sup> 2008 a statement was released announcing:

“The English Golf Union (EGU) in conjunction with the English Women’s Golf Association (EWGA) are to launch a system of handicapping that will identify the competitive nature of all those players with a CONGU handicap.

The system, which has the full support of CONGU will come into effect on the 1<sup>st</sup> January 2010 and will require all members with CONGU handicaps to return at least three (3) qualifying scores (including Supplementary Scores and 9 Hole Qualifying Competitions) per year in order to retain an Active handicap. Those failing to return the stipulated number of scores will have Inactive handicaps that may prevent them competing in club competitions.”

The statement further describes the way to re-activate handicaps and the applicability of inactive handicaps for social golf etc. as in the EGA Handicap System.

The HCRC is very pleased to note that after the 9-holes scores and EDS the EGU and the EWGA have decided to introduce this feature of the EGA Handicap System as well.



## **International competition scores and handicap adjustment**

Quite often its very cumbersome to gather the data required to compute the Stableford points resulting from gross scores of international strokeplay events. The Championship Committee (CC) and the HCRC have arranged for the following information to be provided by the CC for all federations and clubs to facilitate handicap adjustment of players participating in those competitions.

After the tournament the EGA website will display the complete list of players with starting handicap and adjusted handicap(s) after the round (s). In addition all score cards per player will available , the data of the course(s) i.e. Course Rating or SSS, Slope Rating if available, Par and stroke-index and CSA or CSS if applicable in case corrections have to be made.

If the scores are made in a country that has not adopted Course and or Slope Rating the EGA Playing Handicap should be computed as follows. Playing Hcp is [Exact Hcp + (SSS or CR-Par)] rounded.

In case a competition is played from a specific combination of tees for which no rating was done, one should take the rating of the colour of which the majority of tees were played from and adjust these Rating and Slope values for the total yardage difference according to the USGA table

“Ratings Adjustments from unrated tees” (USGA Handicap System edition 2008-2011; pages 34, 35). The Playing Handicaps have to be calculated according to the adjusted rating values. CSA, of course, is also calculated based on Stableford points resulting from these adjusted Playing Handicaps.

Example (Women)

**Played: 11 blue tees, 3 yellow tees, 2 white tees, 2 red tees = Total length 5690 yards**

Majority of tees played = blue

Length from blue tees = 5524 yards

rated to CR: 72.9 Slope 137

5690 (played course) – 5524 (blue course) = 166 → Difference in yardage is 166 yards.

According to the table, the Blue rating values would have to be adjusted by: CR + 0.9 and Slope +2 and therefore lead to adjusted rating values of: CR 73.8 Slope 139

The table may not be used for tee marker placement (teeing ground) variation within the same colour tee. If blue would have been picked 18 times, but the tee marker placements would lead to + 80 yards from the permanent marker’s distance, the table shall not be used.

In the one colour scenario the table will only come into account, if the +/- 100 Meters allowance from the EGA-Handicap System is exceeded.

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It is hoped that you have found this Newsletter No 2 interesting and informative and we welcome member federations to communicate any problems they are experiencing implementing the system and any suggestions they may have for its improvement. In this way the Committee hope that the 2012 edition will further enhance the relevance and reputation of the EGA Handicapping System.

To contact us please write or e-mail to:

Malcolm Gourd  
Secretary HCRC

**German Office:**

Viktoriastr. 16,

D-65189 Wiesbaden

phone: +49 (611) 1679981

mobile: +49 (170) 6758604

Email: [EGA-HCP@dgv.golf.de](mailto:EGA-HCP@dgv.golf.de)

On behalf of the H&CRC

***Jan Kees van Soest***

- Chairman EGA-HCRC -