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News update (October, 2012) – EGA Handicapping and Course Rating Committee 2012

The EGA Handicapping and Course Rating Committee(HCRC) is committed to provide all members of the EGA with continuous news updates, in addition to the information contained in the minutes of the HCRC (available on the EGA website).



Contents of handicap certificates

The experiences from some national associations indicate that EGA players sometimes present handicap certificates of very differing quality with regard to the contents of the certificate, meaning that essential information is often missing, making true verification of a player's handicap difficult.

Although it is not laid down in the EGA Handicap System what information a handicap certificate must contain, the HCRC would nevertheless strongly recommend that all national associations include at least the following key elements of information on the certificate to facilitate verification of EGA Handicaps:

- Date of issue
- Period of validity
- Player's name in full
- EGA Exact Handicap
- Status of handicap ("Active"/"Inactive" or an equivalent transparent term)
- National association issuing the certificate (with contact details if the national association is the player's handicapping authority)
- Player's home club (with contact details if the club is the player's handicapping authority)

A club/committee has the discretion to accept or refuse a handicap certificate which lacks any of the above.



“Dual handicap” practice

It has been brought to the attention of the HCRC that clubs in some national associations do not accept EGA Handicaps from certain other EGA national associations because they believe that scores posted under the other association’s implementation of the EGA Handicap System are at odds with the philosophy governing play in their own country. This has led to a situation where EGA players sometimes have two “handicaps”, one which they use in the home country and one which they use when they play in another country. This practice is contrary to the EGA Handicap System.

According to clause 3.5.1, a player must have only one exact handicap, and that handicap applies everywhere where the EGA Handicap System applies. Please note that this applies also in the case where a player has two home clubs (allowed by decision 4.2.3). If an individual club or a committee has valid reasons to conclude that a player’s handicap does not reflect his current playing ability in that it is too high, they make take action under clause 3.16.7 and adjust the player’s handicap downwards. This is applicable ONLY in the competition in question and the player’s home club must be notified and provided with full details. Any practice involving the issuing of more than a single EGA Exact Handicap is a serious threat to handicap portability and must consequently cease immediately.



CBA-feedback and minor modifications for 2013

General observations about the implementation of the CBA-feature have been favourable. The algorithm appears to have worked reasonably satisfactorily, particularly at the CBA 0, -1 and +1 adjustment levels and has applied well to abnormal weather conditions experienced during club events. The move to buffer zone plus scores as opposed to 34+ points as the “standard score” has enabled players to more readily see the relevance of the handicapping process.

However, some problems have been found for large field sizes where a higher than anticipated number of CBA -3 and -4/Reduction Only results are being generated. This was considered a possibility by the Handicap Research Group already in 2011. The overall effect on handicaps of this over-compensation is considered to be relatively insignificant as preliminary analysis indicates it involves less than 3% of competitions. However, in the light of experience, an adjustment to the constants used in the algorithm will be recommended for 2013. Preliminary work by the Handicap Research Group indicates that the proposed adjustment would involve only minor and simple re-programming by the national associations. We would ask national associations to make allowances in their IT work plan for minor software updates regarding CBA later this autumn. We expect to provide full details of the proposed modifications by the end of October.

We hope that you have found this update 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.

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On behalf of the EGA Handicapping and Course Rating Committee,

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