



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: Richard Heath

January (2013) news update – EGA Handicapping and Course Rating Committee

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). The news updates are sent to all national associations and we recommend that the national associations distribute them at their discretion.



Annual Handicap Review

January is the time of the year when the Annual Handicap Review (AHR) is usually carried out. The EGA Handicap System, clause 3.4.8, dictates that the Handicap Committee of every club assumes responsibility for this review. The AHR is a crucial adjunct to the day-to-day handicapping process and is mandatory to all players. The main objectives of the AHR are to (i) identify those players who have returned enough scores to be assessed effectively, and (ii) to assess whether the scoring performance of all such players in handicap categories 1-5 is representative of the players' ability as indicated by their EGA Exact Handicap, and then either leave the handicaps unchanged (because they appear to be accurate) or change them upwards or downwards by 1 or 2 strokes). On a slightly personal note, I like to think of the AHR as the MOT for my car – it is an annual check-up carried out in my own interest as well as in the interest of those (driving) around me, to make sure that the car (my handicap) is running smoothly and without causing harm to anyone.

The EGA has determined that it is necessary for a player to return **four or more scores** in the period between AHRs for an effective assessment to be made of the player's performance against handicap. Such players have **active handicaps** and are included in the AHR assessment. Players who have returned fewer than four scores are excluded from the performance assessment process within the AHR and are regarded as having **inactive handicaps** (please note that national associations have the option of using whatever term they think is appropriate to designate an active/inactive handicap on the player's handicap record). It is vital that all handicapping authorities communicate to their members that the designation is in reference to a player's *handicap, not in reference to the player him-/herself*. Players whose handicap has been designated inactive retain their EGA Exact Handicap but the handicap cannot be definitely verified as the Handicap Committee has been presented with too little information to make that judgment. However, an inactive handicap can still 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; please also note the discretion given to national associations to allow players with an inactive handicap to play in a qualifying competition without being eligible to win a (net) prize (3.15.5).

Good communication between the Handicap Committee and the members is essential to avoid unfortunate misunderstanding about the intents and purposes of the AHR, and to avoid any kind of stigmatization of golfers who return few scores, for whatever reason. In cases where the AHR results in a change of a player's handicap upwards or

downwards, it is the responsibility of the club's Handicap Committee to constructively explain to the player why the action is taken. If players understand the reason behind an action, they are a lot more likely to accept the decision positively.

We would recommend all golf clubs to provide the members with information about the AHR, for example through the club's website or magazine. Any national association that feels the EGA can assist them with advice about how to manage the AHR or the communication concerning the AHR should contact the EGA HCRC Secretary, Mr. Malcolm Gourd (ega-hcp@dgv.golf.de).



Handicapping and Course Rating training/educational materials

Encouraged by requests from the Central Zone, the HCRC intends to develop simple educational materials to be used in training of national as well as regional and club Handicap Committees. Material of a similar nature to be used in connection with Course Rating training will also be produced jointly with the USGA (the governing body for the USGA Course Rating System). The time frame for producing these materials is uncertain, but we are hopeful to have something ready by autumn 2013. Once produced, the materials will be made available in electronic form through the EGA website.

I would also like to take this opportunity to encourage any national associations that feel the EGA might be of assistance in providing handicapping and course rating training on a national or regional basis to approach the EGA – we would be happy to facilitate such training, either via our own staff or committee members or by providing contacts with other national associations with recognized and well-established training schemes.

If you have any further questions, please contact the HCRC Secretary, Mr. Malcolm Gourd (ega-hcp@dgv.golf.de).



Changes to the CBA-algorithm released

During the first week in December (slightly delayed by additional validation) the EGA Handicap Research Group (a sub-committee to the HCRC) released the details for the changes to the CBA-algorithm. In a letter addressed to the Handicap Committees of all EGA national associations, the HRG Chairman, Mr. Peter Austerberry, explained the steps taken by the EGA to address concerns that the CBA-algorithm was over-dependent on field size for large fields. Because of the lateness of the release, the changes are introduced during 2013 on a recommendation basis only; however, the HCRC hopes that as many national associations as possible are able to introduce the changes sometime during this year. If, for any reason, your national association was not in receipt of this information, please contact the EGA office in Epalinges (info@ega-golf.ch) to receive your copy of the letter.

With very best wishes for 2013,

Hans Malmström
Chairman, EGA Handicapping and Course Rating Committee