Appendix L. Procedure and computer software requirements for Annual Handicap Review

Amendments valid per 1-1-2008. Concurrent modifications required in chapters 22, 26 and Appendix G.5

Introduction

According to clause 26.1 the *Handicap Committee* of a *Handicapping Authority* shall undertake an Annual Handicap Review (AHR) as soon as possible after the end of the year (season). The AHR is <u>mandatory</u> for all players.

At the AHR the *Handicap Committee* shall confirm or adjust the *Exact Handicap* (upwards or downwards) of all players who have returned four (4) or more *Qualifying Scores* in the past calendar year in accordance with the requirements of clause 25. However, till today many *Handicap Committees* have never performed an AHR because the *EGA* had not yet published any guidelines and a review of all the members of a club without help of a computer was too labour-intensive and time consuming.

At the request of some *National Associations* the following guidelines have been developed to assist the *Handicap Committee* in conducting an AHR based on computer analysis as mentioned in clause 26.5.

The purpose of a computer analysis is to readily identify all handicaps meriting consideration for handicap adjustment at the AHR and to give an indication of the number of strokes for <u>increase or decrease</u>. However, <u>all proposals by the computer shall still be evaluated before confirmation by the *Handicap Committee*</u>.

Handicap Committees must be aware that a good AHR will include all aspects of players' results for the previous year. The number of scores returned in relation to the number of rounds played, performances in Four-ball, Team and Matchplay competitions should be taken into consideration. This may be particularly important for players who return few (four or five) *Qualifying Scores* but who do regularly compete in other events.

The *EGA Handicap System* is based on the assumption that every player will try to make the best score he can at each hole in every round he plays and that he will return as many *Qualifying Scores* per calendar year as possible but no less than four (4). All *Exact Handicaps* maintained on the basis of four or more scores shall be clearly marked with an asterisk [*], or the number of scores entered in the past season in parentheses (number) on the Handicap Records and Handicap Certificates to indicate that the *Exact Handicaps* have been correctly reviewed on the basis of sufficient statistical data and are acceptable for entry into any *Qualifying Competition* which requires an *EGA Handicap* (clause 22.5).

All *Exact Handicaps* based on only three (3) or less *Qualifying Scores* in a calendar year are statistically extremely unreliable and, in the absence of adequate and necessary information for adjustment and revision, do not reflect the scoring potential of the players with sufficient accuracy. It is not possible to conduct a meaningful AHR based purely on such limited information. For that reason such "inactive" handicaps shall first be listed at the AHR because they will remain unchanged and, in the following year, shall NOT be maintained anymore in accordance with the provisions of clause 22 (see clause 22.4 – 22.7).

Exact Handicaps attained in the previous year are listed (Re Procedure point 2) and shall not be declared inactive in the following calendar year irrespective of the number of scores entered in the first season.

If the National Association chooses to indicate active and inactive by the number of scores entered in the past season in parentheses on handicap records and the like inactive handicaps are identified by (0,1, 2or 3)

Expected Mean Stableford Score (EMSS):
The "Expected Mean Stableford Score" is the Stableford Score, calculated from handicapping statistics and computer models, that a properly handicapped player most likely will make when playing an 18-holes round.
According to the statistical foundations of the *EGA Handicap System* a player is not expected to make a Stableford score in his relevant *Buffer Zone* or better each time he plays a *Qualifying Round*, so one can easily understand that his EMSS will be lower than the lowest score of his *Buffer Zone.*
The EMMS can be calculated for every *Exact Handicap*, but for reasons of simplicity the EMMS has only been computed for seven ranges of *Exact Handicaps*, which do not necessarily coincide with the five *Handicap Categories*:

Handicap	- – 2.4	2.5 – 5.4	5.5 – 9.4	9.5 – 13.4	13.5 – 18.4	18.5 – 26.4	26.5 – 36
EMSS	34	33	32	31	30	29	28

Procedure
The procedure below performed by a computer will identify different categories of players. It is expected that by separating the *Exact Handicaps* that should be considered for adjustment from the large numbers that need not be examined, the work involved at the AHR will be greatly reduced and raised to a higher level of accuracy.

1. *Exact Handicaps* of players with less than four (4) scores returned are listed and shall remain unchanged (see clause 22.6 and 22.7).

    Note: *Handicap Committees* must be aware that these handicaps are not declared lost or lapsed but should only be used for social golf or other events as

the players' *Home Clubs* may direct.

2. All newly awarded *Exact Handicaps* (i.e. those attained in the previous year) are listed and shall not be increased but may be considered for reduction. These handicaps can also be subjected to the analysis described in point 4.

3. The performance of each player who has returned four (4) or more scores will be evaluated by first computing the <u>Average of the Better Half of his Stableford Scores</u> (ABHSS). The ABHSS shall not be rounded but is expressed as a number taken to one decimal place.

   Example 1:
   In a calendar year a player returns 6 Stableford scores: 24, **35**, **32**, 28, **30** and 25
   His ABHSS is: (30 + 32 + 35) / 3 = 32.3

   Example 2:
   In a calendar year a player returns 5 Stableford scores: 24, **28**, 25, **29** and **32**
   His ABHSS is: (28 + 29 + 32) / 3 = 29.6

   In case of an odd number of scores, the middle score will count for the better half of the scores.

   Example 3:
   In a calendar year a player returns 4 Stableford scores: 24, **31,** No Return and **36.**
   His ABHSS is: (31 + 36) / 2 = 33.5

   Note: A No Return is normally very unusual in Stableford competitions. *Handicap Committees* should be aware that a player who regularly reports a No Return could be manipulating his handicap.

4. The value of the player's ABHSS will then be compared with his EMSS.
   A computer can easily identify the following groups of players:

   a. **The player's ABHSS is equal to or higher than the sum of the Lower Limit of his *Buffer Zone* + 5:**
   <u>Subject to the provisions of clause 25.1 and 25.3</u>, the player's *Exact Handicap* should be considered for reduction. It is recommended to decrease his *Exact Handicap* by the difference between ABHSS and the Lower Limit of the *Buffer Zone* + 5 but with a maximum being determined by his *Handicap Category* and a minimum of 0.5 (see table below):

Handicap Category	I	II	III	IV	V
Buffer Zone	<u>35</u> – 36	<u>34</u> – 36	<u>33</u> – 36	<u>32</u> – 36	<u>31</u> – 36
	40	39	38	37	36

Lower Limit Buffer Zone + 5					
Maximum reduction	1.0	1.5	2.0	2.5	3.0

In exceptional cases maxima may be exceeded if performance factors in other forms of golf (matchplay, four-ball etc) indicate it.

b. **The player's ABHSS is equal to, or higher than his EMSS but below the sum of the lower limit of his *Buffer Zone* + 5:**
The player's *Exact Handicap* will normally remain unchanged and will be confirmed.

Example:
A player's *Exact Handicap* is 4.2 → EMSS = 33
The sum of the lower limit of his *Buffer Zone* + 5 = 35 + 5 = 40
The player's *Exact Handicap* remains unchanged when:
$$33 \leq \text{ABHSS} < 40$$

Note: there may be players in this range who have performed well in other forms of golf and these performances may suggest a reduction in handicap. Only in very exceptional circumstances should such performances be used to justify an increase in handicap.

c. **The player's ABHSS is lower than his EMSS:**
It is recommended to increase his *Exact Handicap* by the difference between ABHSS and EMSS but with a maximum being determined by his *Handicap Category* and a minimum of 0.5 (see table below):

Handicap Category	I	II	III	IV	V
Maximum increase	1.0	1.5	2.0	2.5	3.0

The system is advisory in the sense that the computer selects *Exact Handicaps* of players meriting consideration for adjustment and suggests a number of strokes. The *Handicap Committee* is then obliged to evaluate the proposal and all other pertinent data and, after approval, make the final adjustment.

In evaluating the proposals the *Handicap Committee* may take the following points in consideration:

After the Annual Handicap Review all handicaps are listed and should be made available for peer review and consultation by all other players and organising committees.

Note 1:
The second revised edition of the *EGA Handicap System* will become effective on the 1st of January 2007. However, the *EGA* strongly recommends to use the above guidelines not until the **1st of January 2008** as the *National Associations* and *Affiliated Clubs* should first advise all players at the beginning of the year 2007 about the consequences and that their handicaps will not be maintained anymore in accordance with the provisions of clause 22.8 – 22.15 if they fail to return at least four (4) *Qualifying Scores* before the end of the year.

Note 2:
The *EGA* reserves the right to amend the above guidelines after careful examination and evaluation of the results of AHR each year.
To assist in such examinations *National Associations* are invited to send the results of AHR in their own country to the *Handicapping Course Rating Committee* of the *EGA.*

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