

HANDICAP NEWS - APRIL 2013

Dear Golfer,

This month we unveil the new SAGA Handicap card, remind you about the recent changes made to the SAGA Handicap system and give you the results of the golfer survey which we ran at the beginning of this year. We also highlight the reasons for the need to adjust handicaps when using different tees and introduce you to a new partner focused on providing all card holders with great deals on golf equipment and accessories.

New SAGA Handicap Card

We are pleased to announce the launch of the new SAGA Handicap Card. Over the course of the next few weeks the new cards will be delivered to the home clubs of all golfers as a direct replacement of the existing green handicap card. Please ensure that you collect your card as soon as your club lets you know that it is available.

Please note that all golfers will still be able to manually login and enter scores on the handicap terminals and the www.handicaps.co.za website using the same Username and PIN/Password that they were using previously. For first time users the SA Player ID and PIN, as printed on the front of both the new and old card, can be used to login and you can then change your Player ID and PIN to one you prefer.

Handicap Changes Effective 1 April 2013

For those of you that may have missed the communications we sent out, the SAGA introduced a few changes to the handicap system with effect from the 1st of April.

1. Maximum Score on Any Hole - The maximum score on a hole for handicap purposes was revised to a maximum of 2 over par except where a player has two handicap strokes on a hole, in which case the maximum score allowed is 3 over par for that hole. (See point 5.3 in the handicap manual)

2. Most Likely Score Rule – Players are obliged, where possible, to complete every hole. Should a player not complete a hole then in terms of the revised rule, they must record the most likely score they would have achieved. This was introduced because some players were taking given putts from the edge of the green, as a one putt, and others were picking up when their partner had made a good score, and then entering the maximum allowed as their score for the hole. This most likely score rule is also in force in the USA, New Zealand and Australia. (See points 3.14 and 5.4 in the handicap manual)

3. Removal of the dynamic Calculated Rating Calculation – The CR calculation was suspended from the system 14 months ago and the decision has now been taken by the SAGA to permanently remove it from the handicap system. The fact that the handicap is already based on a weighted average of the best 10 of the last 20 scores, means that a bad weather day is likely to have a minimal effect on the player's handicap.

To view the updated SAGA Handicap Manual [CLICK HERE.](#)

Golfer Survey Results

A big thank you to all who took the time to complete the online golfer survey which we ran over a period of 5 weeks during January and February. We had close on 10 000 completed submissions and were very pleased with the overwhelmingly positive feedback. To view the full results of the survey [CLICK HERE.](#)

Front Tees, Back Tees and Senior Tees

We have noted that many golfers misunderstand the way a handicap is calculated and how they need to adjust their handicaps when competing against golfers using different tees.

We all know that a shorter course is easier than a longer course and that is why scores for handicap purposes are not calculated using the Par of the course, but the stroke rating (SR) of the particular set of tees played.

The stroke rating takes into account the length and other difficulties of a golf course. So the principle is that no matter where a player is handicapped - a difficult course or an easy course - they should be able to compete with one another on equal terms (provided the stroke rating is correct). So it does not matter if a player always plays off the front tees,

middle tees, or back tees, because the stroke rating has adjusted their handicap scores to take into account the relative difficulty.

But when players enter a competition, their scores are calculated against Par and not the stroke rating. This means that if players are using the front tees when everyone else is using the middle or club tees, then they need to adjust their handicaps by the difference in the stroke rating of the two tees.

Senior Tee

The use of special senior tees (unique to South Africa) is discouraged by the SAGA. These tees should only be in use at clubs that do not have Union rated Forward Tees, and only on holes where the senior or shorter hitter cannot reach the fairway over a water hazard, canyon or other non-recoverable hazard (a bunker should not be used as a reason for a senior tee).

Players record their scores using the stroke rating of the tees from which they played on the other 17 or so holes. The Club would then need to approve which players may have this special compensation and whether or not they should have this advantage in club competitions.

The Golfer's Club Deal of the Week

We are pleased to advise that The Golfers Club, one of South Africa's biggest golf equipment retailers with 10 megastores country wide, has agreed to sponsor a 'Deal of the Week' available only to SAGA Handicap Card holders. All deals, as well as sneak previews of items available during sale periods, can be viewed on www.handicaps.co.za.

Quote

*You can make a lot of money in this game. Just ask my ex-wives. Both of them are so rich that neither of their husbands work. ~ **Lee Trevino***

Swing Easy!

Handicaps Network Africa