

CONGU Rule Changes 2016

Members will be aware by now that a number of changes to CONGU (Council of National Golf Unions) has come into effect this year. The purpose of this bulletin is to provide members with an outline of the changes that affect both the administration of the Unified Handicapping System (UHS) and you as a player.

Adoption of the Calendar Year

In future the handicapping year will follow the calendar year from 1st January to 31st December each year. This will mean that all players will have the calendar year to submit 3 qualifying scores to retain your handicap. The annual Handicap Review will now take place before the end of the calendar year and from January 1st 2017 players with a current or 'c' competition handicap will change automatically if they have not submitted 3 cards before the end of the year.

Four Ball Better Ball Handicap Allowance

The handicap allowance for both four ball better ball stroke play and match play matches has been increased from 75% to 90% of the difference between full handicaps. This means the player with the lowest handicap will give shots to the other 3 players based on 90% of the difference between the full handicaps. PLEASE NOTE The current 2016 Summer Fourball will run on the old system as the event details were published before our handicap system was updated to the new calculations.

Competition Scratch Score (CSS) Calculation

From this season onwards the CSS calculation for all qualifying competitions will include scores from Handicap Categories 1,2,3 and 4 for both men and women.

Initial Handicap Allowance

A new algorithm has been introduced in line with the Annual Review algorithm. New handicaps will be allocated on the basis of all the information available, including any previous handicap held before the allocation of a CONGU handicap, and at the discretion of the Golf and Handicap Committee may be higher or lower to reflect the player's current playing ability.

In addition, a new 'club handicap' of up to a limit of 54 may allocated for both men and women but these handicaps will not have 'c' competition status. Handicaps of over 28 for men and 36 for women will only be valid for club run events at the player's home club and cannot be used for open competitions or at other clubs.

Re-activation of Handicap

If a player leaves or resigns from their club during the year, then the player's 'c' handicap status will remain valid for the rest of that year and the following calendar year should they join another affiliated club in that period.

Re-instatement of 'c' Competition Handicap Status

The re-instatement of a competition 'c' handicap requires players to submit three qualifying scores, which could be 18 hole competitions, 9 hole competitions or Supplementary Scores at any club at which you are a member. Supplementary scores require signing the book in the Pro Shop prior to playing a round. This is to register your intent to hand in a card.

Qualifying 9 hole scoring:

9 hole qualifying events will be recorded as 18 hole equivalent scores on the basis of the following arrangements:

- Player's returning a 9 hole qualifying score within the buffer zone or better will continue to have 18 points added to their actual score over 9 holes

- Players returning a qualifying score outside their buffer zone will have their actual points scored over 9 holes doubled

Supplementary Scores:

Where players are unable to play in qualifying competitions to enable them to retain their 'c' competition handicap there are now additional opportunities to return supplementary scores:

- It is now acceptable to return supplementary scores from any GB&I club at which you are a member
- In Scotland, Category 1 players with an exact handicap of 2.5 and above are now eligible to submit supplementary scores
- Players in Category 2 and above are now eligible to submit 9 hole supplementary scores
- Players who hold 'club handicap' status can submit an unlimited number of supplementary scores during the playing season

Continuous Handicap Review

The Unified Handicapping System (UHS) now includes a report that will flag when a player has seven consecutive 0.1 increases in qualifying competitions. This does not mean that their handicap will automatically be increased but allows the Golf and Handicap Committee to review the situation to determine if a handicap adjustment is required.