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INCREASE OF MAXIMUM AUSTRALIAN MEN'S HANDICAP TO 36 – Golf Australia Q&A for Committees

What is the change to the maximum Australian Men's Handicap?

On 1 September 2008, the maximum Australian Men's Handicap will increase from 27.4 to 36.4.

Are clubs permitted to increase Australian Men's Handicaps beyond 27.4 before 1 September 2008?

No.

I am the handicapper at a club that is on Golf Link. Do I need to do anything at all?

No. Golf Link will make all of the changes for you.

I am the handicapper at a club that is NOT on Golf Link. Do I need to do anything?

On the display item designated by your club to display members' handicaps, update any player's handicap whose Australian Handicap will change as a result of the increase to 36.4.

Will this put Australia in a different position to the rest of the world?

No. Most of the rest of the world already has a maximum men's handicap of 36 – including the USA and Europe.

What will be the positive outcomes of the change?

- ◆ Players whose golf diminishes over time due to age will be better encouraged to remain actively engaged in competitions and club life.
- ◆ Beginners will be better encouraged to become actively engaged in golf and club life.
- ◆ Australia will move to being more in-line with global trends.

My Club has capped its members' exact handicaps at 27.4. Will Golf Link reprocess all old competitions on 1 September 2008 to automatically increase the handicaps of affected players?

No. If on 1 September 2008 a club feels that a member should have a handicap greater than 27.4, they should use the process outlined in Section 9 of the Australian Men's Handicapping System to increase that member's Australian Handicap to the appropriate figure. Any questions regarding this process should be directed to your State Association.

Given this decision, will there be any other resultant changes to the Australian Men's Handicapping System I should be aware of?

Yes. There is also a change to Section 2 of the System (which deals with the allotment of the initial handicap). From 1 September 2008, when assessing a player's initial five cards, the handicapper must adjust any score of more than 3 over par at a hole to 3 over par. (Note – Prior to 1 September 2008, the respective figures were set at 2 over par.)

What was the process Golf Australia followed in reaching this decision?

The maximum men's handicap was discussed at the 2007 National Handicapping & Course Rating Forum (attended by representatives of each of the Member States, as well as representatives from Golf Australia, Golf Management Australia, and Golf Link) and there was strong consensus amongst the delegates for an increase to 36.4. The Golf Australia Handicapping & Course Rating Committee accepted this recommendation and agreed to make the change. This decision was then ratified by the Golf Australia Board.

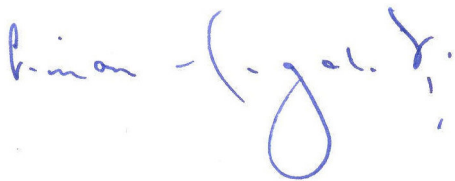
My club is concerned this change may increase slow play in our competitions. Is there anything we can do to address these concerns?

In assessing how to best manage this issue at your club, the following points should be noted:

- ◆ Medal play competitions take longer to play than Stableford or Par competitions, and the change will have no effect on the time it takes to complete a medal play round. This is because every player has to hole-out on every hole and, as result, a player's handicap is irrelevant.
- ◆ For Stableford and Par competitions, there is the potential for a slight change to the pace of play, but this should be minimal. Only 12% of players will see their Australian Men's Handicaps increase as a result of this decision and many of these already have Club Handicaps beyond 27 anyway (meaning the real impact in terms of pace of play may only relate to about 6% of players).
- ◆ There is a solution which will enable a club to completely avoid any change to pace of play. This solution is to cap the maximum handicap a player may use in a competition. If a cap of 24 (for example) is introduced for a competition and a player with a handicap of 35 wishes to play, they are still eligible to compete. They would play off 24 in the competition but would still be handicapped on what their score would have been had they played off 35. Golf Link will automatically make this calculation. This is a competition option which has been in place for many years.

Golf Australia hopes this document will assist in the management of handicapping at your golf club. Please feel free to contact either myself or your state association if you have any queries or if you would like any further information.

Kind regards,



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