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# COMPETITION ADMINISTRATION & COMPETITION CONDITIONS – Golf Australia Recommendations (Version – 17 October 2014)

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Committees are at all times required to operate within the confines set by this document.

Where the context so permits, any specific procedure that is either recommended or stipulated within this document will serve as a default condition for club committees in the event they do not already have a respective Condition.

NOTE: Many aspects of this document have been re-produced from The R&A's "*Guidance on Running a Competition.*"

## **PART I – Rules Governing Play**

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1. All rounds (ie Medal, Stableford and Par – Singles and Four-ball Competitions, plus Match Play competitions) shall be conducted in strict uniformity with the Rules of Golf, and the Club's Local Rules and By-Laws. (NB designated novelty events are not required to comply.) Local Rules and By-Laws must not contravene any Rule of Golf.
2. Local Rules may be made only by the Committee in charge of the competition. All Local Rules must comply with Appendix I, Rules of Golf.

## **PART II – Competition Administration**

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### **a) Registration/Starting**

Committees are advised, in their own interests, to appoint one of their members or an official to be available at the course while competitors are starting, and to empower this person to settle any problems which may arise regarding starting times, provision of markers, handicaps, etc (the official may be the Club Professional).

The main responsibilities of the starter are to ensure the players start at the time established by the Committee, and, in major stroke play competitions, to issue each competitor with a score card containing the date and the competitor's name.

### **b) Issuing Score Cards and Recording Scores**

#### *Responsibilities of the Committee:*

- In individual competitions, Committees should issue to each competitor a score card containing the date and the competitor's name, however the Note to Rule 33-5 does permit a Committee to request each competitor to record the date and their name on the score card. A competitor cannot be disqualified for not recording their name or the date.
- On return of the card by the competitor, check the addition of the scores for each hole and confirm the application of the handicap recorded (Rule 33-5). In par competitions, confirm which holes have been halved, won or lost and, in Stableford competitions, confirm the application of the points recorded (Rule 32-1).
- In four-ball stroke play, confirm the application of the handicaps recorded on the card, the better-ball scores for each hole and the addition of the scores (Rule 31-4 and 33-5).
- A competitor cannot be penalised if the card returned has been incorrectly totalled or has had the entitled handicap wrongly applied.
- The Committee should designate a "scoring area" where competitors are to return their score cards (eg. in a tent, a trailer, the golf shop, by the scoreboard, etc), see Decision 6-6c/1.

#### *Responsibilities of the Marker:*

- To check the score with the competitor for each hole, including any penalty strokes.
- To record the gross score taken by the competitor for each hole, and to assist the Committee, apply the appropriate Stableford points, or holes won, lost or halved in Par competitions.
- To sign the card and hand it to the competitor on completion of the round.

*Responsibilities of the Competitor:*

- To check the score for each hole, settle any doubtful points with the Committee, countersign the card, and return the card to the Committee as soon as possible (Rule 6-6b).
- In a handicap stroke play competition, ensure the handicap is recorded on the score card before it is returned (Rule 6-2b – NB this need not be in the specific box provided) and to assist the Committee, check the application of the handicap. In four-ball stroke play, ensure the gross scores to count are individually identifiable on the score card (Rule 31-4).

**c) Referees, Observers, Committee Members and Committee Decisions on Rules**

It is appreciated clubs cannot always provide referees for matches, or in stroke play, arrange for Committee members to be on the course to give decisions. Nevertheless, some means must be provided where disputes and doubts can be referred to the Committee, or its authorised representative, during or as soon as possible after the round and a decision given within reasonable time.

Committees should bear in mind the following points:

1. No Committee member or official should give a decision on a Rules matter unless they have been authorised by the Committee to give decisions in the Committee's name.
2. In a competition consisting of more than one round, a player is entitled to have any dispute or doubt arising in one round settled by the Committee before they start the next round; this applies even if two rounds are being played on the same day.

**d) Pace of Play**

In the interest of all, players have an obligation to play at a reasonable pace.

Rule 6-7 governs in the event of slow play and the Committee may establish pace of play guidelines to help prevent slow play, in accordance with Note 2 to Rule 6-7 which advises: *“For the purpose of preventing slow play, the Committee may, in the conditions of a competition (Rule 33-1), establish pace of play guidelines including maximum periods of time allowed to complete a stipulated round, hole or strokes. In stroke play competitions, the Committee may, in such a condition, modify the penalty for breach of this Rule as follows:*

*First Offence – One stroke;  
Second offence – Two strokes.  
For subsequent offence – Disqualification”*

It is a matter for the Committee to formulate its own pace of play guidelines. In most cases, Club Committees are limited in the number of officials to implement pace of play guidelines, and accordingly, it may be necessary to formulate a simple condition whereby a time limit is provided for completion of the round and/or a certain number of holes.

As an example of this form of condition, a Committee may decide that a group of three should not take more than 1 hour 45 minutes to complete nine holes and stipulate that if they exceed this limit, and are out of position, all three players are subject to a one-stroke penalty. In addition, the condition may state that if they fail to complete the second nine holes in the prescribed time and are still out of position all three players are subject to a further penalty.

The problem with adopting a policy where each player in the group is penalised is that it does not consider individual responsibility for the delay and a player who is blameless may be penalised. However, this type of policy may assist in terms of a group's self-regulation with slower players being encouraged to improve their pace of play.

When establishing these time limits, Committees must take into account the form of play (eg a foursomes event should be quicker than a singles event), the age of the players, the climate and course itself.

In major competitions, the Committee may wish to establish a hole by hole pace of play guideline. If Committees have decided on standard times for par 3s, par 4s and par 5s (eg 11, 13 and 15 minutes respectively), adjustments should be made to take into account the severity/simplicity of a particular hole and walking distances between holes.

Committees should ensure they do not bring about slow play by letting too many players on the course too quickly, or by setting up the course too severely.

**NOTE to Part II (e), (f), and (g):** The guidance relating to when to suspend play when operating in accordance with the procedures set out in Part II (e) and (f), and also the guidance relating to the management of Call-Up, is advisory and general in nature and should not be relied upon to meet individual or specific requirements. It is guidance for voluntary application by Clubs. It is not binding on any person or organisation and has no legal force. This guidance will not cover each and every circumstance nor can it, when adhered to, entirely eliminate the risk or possibility of loss or injury. Consequently it should be used as a guide only. Whenever using the information contained in these clauses Clubs should carefully evaluate the risks associated with their Club. These clauses are made available on the express condition that Golf Australia, the authors, consultants and advisors who have assisted in compiling and drafting the guidance are not rendering professional advice to any person or organisation and make no warranties with respect thereto and to the maximum extent permitted by law disclaim all liability and responsibility for any direct or indirect loss,

damage or liability which may be suffered or incurred by any person as a consequence of reliance upon anything contained in or omitted from this publication.

**e) Inclement Weather and Suspensions of Play (see above Note to Part II (e), (f), and (g))**

A Committee must be prepared for inclement weather and to ensure players and those involved in conducting the competition are able to recognise a suspension of play signal.

A competition need not be suspended simply on account of rain, unless rain is so heavy that it would be unfair to require players to continue. Generally, play should not be suspended unless the course has become unplayable, for example, balls are moving frequently on putting greens due to wind, or holes are surrounded by casual water.

Although a Committee should not suspend play unless absolutely necessary, it is the responsibility of the Committee to do everything possible to protect players from lightning. Although Rule 6-8b governs when play is suspended by the Committee, there is a Note to this Rule that states:

*“The Committee may provide in the conditions of a competition (Rule 33-1) that, in potentially dangerous situations, play must be discontinued immediately following suspension of play by the Committee. If a player fails to discontinue play immediately, he is disqualified unless circumstances warrant waiving the penalty as provided in Rule 33-7.”*

If the Committee introduces the condition for potentially dangerous situations, it overrides the provisions of Rule 6-8b in terms of discontinuance of play.

If the Committee has been advised that lightning is approaching, it should take into account the time it would take to give players a chance to seek shelter and/or return to the clubhouse when considering if/when to suspend play. The following signals are generally used and it is recommended that all Committees do similarly:

- **Discontinue Play for Dangerous Situation (ie immediate suspension):** One prolonged note of siren
- **Discontinue Play for Non-Dangerous Situation:** Three consecutive notes of siren, repeated
- **Resume Play:** Two short notes of siren, repeated

It is important to note that, while the Committee has the right to cancel a round in a stroke play competition, it may not do so in match play. If the players in a match have completed for example, six holes, they must resume play at the 7<sup>th</sup> tee.

In stroke play, the Committee has the option of suspending play and resuming from where play was discontinued or cancelling the round and replaying it entirely. There is no hard-and-fast rule as to when a Committee should suspend play and when it should cancel the round in stroke play. Generally, a round should be cancelled only in a case where it would be grossly unfair not to cancel it (Decision 33-2d/1).

**f) Fog and Darkness (see above Note to Part II (e), (f), and (g))**

Committees should use sensible and reasonable judgment when fog and darkness are a concern as either condition may render a course unplayable if the proper playing of the game becomes compromised. This may occur as a result of landing areas becoming beyond the field of vision, or simply by general viewing becoming overly challenged. Duty of care is a critical consideration, and in all instances the safety of players is paramount.

**g) Call-Up (see above Note to Part II (e), (f), and (g))**

Where call-up is in effect, the process needs to be properly managed. It is recommended that a group call the following group up only once all players are on the putting surface – the group calling-up (and any caddies, etc) should move beyond the back of the green until all of the following players have played their approach shots. A Committee should take into account all local factors when deciding whether or not to use call-up on a hole.

### **PART III – Conditions of the Competition**

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It is the duty of the Committee to publish at the time of entry the full details of conditions for competitions (Rule 33-1). It is the responsibility of the Committee to interpret the conditions they establish, and therefore the conditions should be clear and carry precise guidance as to what action should be taken when certain circumstances arise. Conditions which Committees should cover are:

**a) Competition Committee:** A Committee must be appointed that will be in charge of all aspects of the running of the competition. The Committee Members should be identified - *“The Committee will comprise .....*”. Other conditions which are recommended are:

- In the absence of the full Committee, such members as may be present at the time may give a decision and any decision so given will be deemed to be a decision of the full Committee.
- The Committee will have the sole management and control of the Competition with full power at any time to alter or vary any of the conditions.
- The Committee’s decision on matters affecting the Competition will be final.

**b) Format:** The Committee must determine the form of play it wishes to adopt.

**In match play competitions,** Committees must establish how the draw is to be compiled - it may be that it is restricted to a certain number of places, or stroke play qualifying preceding the match play stage. It is common to

look for 16, 32, or 64 qualifiers, and Committees must determine how they will settle a tie for the last qualifying place eg hole-by-hole play-off, count-back, etc. Once this number has been determined, the “General Numerical Draw” is the recommended method.

### **GENERAL NUMERICAL DRAW**

For purposes of determining places in the draw, it is recommended that ties in qualifying rounds other than those for the last qualifying place are decided by the order in which scores are returned, with the first score to be returned receiving the lowest available number, etc. If it is impossible to determine the order in which scores are returned, it is recommended ties are determined by a blind draw.

UPPER HALF	LOWER HALF	UPPER HALF	LOWER HALF
<b>64 QUALIFIERS</b>		<b>32 QUALIFIERS</b>	
1 v 64	2 v 63	1 v 32	2 v 31
32 v 33	31 v 34	16 v 17	15 v 18
16 v 49	15 v 50	8 v 25	7 v 26
17 v 48	18 v 47	9 v 24	10 v 23
8 v 57	7 v 58	4 v 29	3 v 30
25 v 40	26 v 39	13 v 20	14 v 19
9 v 56	10 v 55	5 v 28	6 v 27
24 v 41	23 v 42	12 v 21	11 v 22
4 v 61	3 v 62	<b>16 QUALIFIERS</b>	
29 v 36	30 v 35	1 v 16	2 v 15
13 v 52	14 v 51	8 v 9	7 v 10
20 v 45	19 v 46	4 v 13	3 v 14
5 v 60	6 v 59	5 v 12	6 v 11
28 v 37	27 v 38	<b>8 QUALIFIERS</b>	
12 v 53	11 v 54	1 v 8	2 v 7
21 v 44	22 v 43	4 v 5	3 v 6

**In stroke play competitions**, the Committee must decide how many rounds are to be played, whether or not the field is to be reduced at any stage, and whether it is to be a scratch or handicap event. If the competition is handicap based, the Committee may seek to establish different handicap divisions – these may be determined in advance or await entry and then divide the field evenly into their respective handicap divisions.

There is no hard-and-fast rule in the event that a competition is either delayed or declared null and void. The proper action of the Committee depends on the circumstances in each case and must be left to the judgement of the Committee. Committees are referred to Decisions 33-2d/1 and 33-1/2 for guidance.

- c) **Eligibility:** If a competition has a restricted field, there must be a procedure if more entries are received than can be accepted. It is permissible to use a “first-come first-served” policy. Although not recommended, it would also be permissible for a Committee to require that a player return a certain number of scores before they may enter for any Club competition.

#### Age:

If entry is restricted by age it is recommended that a player must be of the relevant age of the event on the first day of the competition.

#### Gender-based or Mixed Competitions:

A Committee is permitted to have a gender-based condition restricting entry to any event it controls.

#### Professional Golfers:

A Committee is permitted to have a condition which allows only professional golfers (or only amateur golfers) to compete. Furthermore, there is no Rule of Golf, or Golf Australia regulation, preventing professional golfers from competing in club competitions. It is at the discretion of the Committee to determine the conditions of play for each event and who is eligible.

It is usual that professional golfers are permitted to play in normal club competitions, but are excluded from major club events, honour board events, monthly medals, etc. It may be that professionals are also ineligible to win scratch prizes.

Note: Under the GA Handicap System, it is permissible for professional golfers to hold an Australian Handicap. Professionals must be recorded in GOLF Link by their club handicap administrator as having the status of “Professional”. Professionals should compete in handicap events using their Australian Handicap (as opposed to playing off a handicap calculated under any alternate system, or playing off an automatic handicap of Scratch).

#### Different Tees (in accordance with standard international procedures):

It is permissible for players in the same competition to compete from different tees or for men and women to compete from the same tees. The different courses will generally have different Course Ratings, and the recommended equalising procedure is to have the player playing from the set of tees with the higher Course Rating receive additional strokes(s) equal to the difference between each Course Rating. For example, if men playing from the middle tees,

from which the Rating is 70.3, compete against men playing from the back tees, from which the rating is 72.6, the men from the back tees will add two strokes ( $72.6-70.3 - 2.3$  rounded to 2) to their handicap.

- d) **Handicaps:** The Rules of Golf do not legislate for the allocation and adjustment of handicaps. Committees must clearly stipulate any handicap regulations.
- i) If the Committee stipulates a handicap limit, it must decide whether it will use exact handicaps (to one decimal place) or playing handicaps (whole numbers) to determine the lowest handicaps (should a ballot be required). The Committee must also decide whether to use the handicap at the time the entry is received, or the handicap at the time entries close. The former is recommended.
  - ii) A Committee may stipulate a competition playing handicap limit and a player with an Australian Handicap outside of those limits may compete on a reduced handicap for the competition only. If the competition handicap limit of one gender is reduced, the competition handicap of the other gender must be reduced by the equivalent percentage (eg maximum women's competition handicap is 34 (*which is  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the maximum handicap*), the maximum men's competition handicap must be 27).
  - iii) Where a competition committee needs to provide a player with a temporary handicap for a pro-am style event or an open day, Golf Australia recommends a figure of no more than 18 for men and no more than 30 for women. However, for a player clearly able to play to a handicap of less than 18 for men or less than 30 for women, a lesser handicap would be reasonable.
  - iv) In stroke play competitions which extend over a period of time (eg six weeks), Committees should determine whether the handicap current at the beginning of the competition or at the beginning of each round shall apply. The latter is more usual. In a play-off, the handicap applicable to the last round (rather than the handicap at the time of the play-off) should apply and the conditions should state this. In 36-hole and 72-hole stroke play competitions, it is recommended that handicaps are not altered during the event. In match play competitions which extend over a period of time, Committees must also decide whether the handicap current at the beginning of the competition or at the beginning of each match will apply – again, the latter is more usual.
  - v) In 27-hole stroke play competitions, for handicapping purposes, it is recommended that these be treated as a normal 18-hole round, PLUS a normal 9-hole round. Hence, the 18-hole round must be processed for handicapping purposes (as a normal 18-hole round), and the committee must then determine whether or not to use the 9-hole round as an additional round for handicapping purposes.
  - vi) Golf Australia does not make any specific recommendations re competition grades. We feel it is best left to each club to determine how it wishes to handle this issue after taking account of each of its own local characteristics. Factors taken into consideration should include the following:
    - Typical number of competition entrants (for example some clubs will regularly have only five or so competition entrants making it unnecessary to have any more than two grades, if that).
    - The distribution of handicaps within the club (for example if the vast majority of players have handicaps over 30, it may mean A and B grade should have a higher ceiling than if there is a reasonable proportion of players with handicaps between 20-30, and a reasonable number of players with handicaps of less than 20).
    - The manner by which grades have traditionally been set within the club (some clubs may feel quite comfortable in amending the grade settings relatively regularly whereas others will prefer to keep grades set at traditional values).
    - The nature of a specific competition (for example a club championship may attract a reasonable number of players which may result in three grades being warranted as well as a desire for tradition to be retained, whereas a mid-week Par event may attract very few players and have no traditional considerations).
  - vii) **CALLAWAY HANDICAP SYSTEM:** Competition organisers will on occasions find themselves faced with the situation where players do not have an official handicap. One option available to them is the Callaway Handicap System.

Under the Callaway System, a player's handicap is determined after each round by deducting from their gross score for the 18 holes the scores of the worst individual holes during the first 16 holes of the round.

The table below shows the number of 'worst holes' the player may deduct and the adjustment to be made, based on their gross score. For instance, if their gross score for 18 holes is 91, they may deduct the total of their two worst holes scores and half of the third worst (rounded up) on holes one through sixteen inclusive. Thus, if they have one 9, one 8 and a 7, their handicap totals 21. From this total, a further plus or minus adjustment is then made according to the adjustments indicated at the bottom of each column. For a gross score of 91, the adjustment requires a deduction of 2 strokes, resulting in a final handicap of 19. Thus, 91-19 handicap equals a net score of 72 for this player.

SCORE					DEDUCT
68	69	70	71	72	Scratch - no adjustment
73	74	75			½ worst hole and adjustment
76	77	78	79	80	1 worst hole and adjustment
81	82	83	84	85	1½ worst holes and adjustment
86	87	88	89	90	2 worst holes and adjustment
91	92	93	94	95	2½ worst holes and adjustment
96	97	98	99	100	3 worst holes and adjustment
101	102	103	104	105	3½ worst holes and adjustment
106	107	108	109	110	4 worst holes and adjustment
111	112	113	114	115	4½ worst holes and adjustment
116	117	118	119	120	5 worst holes and adjustment
121	122	123	124	125	5½ worst holes and adjustment
126	127	128	129	130	6 worst holes and adjustment
ADJUSTMENT					
-2	-1	0	+1	+2	Add to or Deduct from Handicap

**Note:**

1. No hole may be scored at more than twice its par.
2. Half strokes count as a whole.
3. The 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> holes are never deducted.
4. In case of ties, lowest handicap takes preference.

**HANDICAPS IN USE FOR VARIOUS EVENTS**

The below guidelines are the strong recommendations of Golf Australia. They are in effect throughout Australia, except where a Committee decides to proceed otherwise.

**EXPLANATORY NOTE** – Whilst committees are permitted to use a fraction of full handicaps for the purpose of determining competition prize winners and results, or for match play events, this flexibility should only be utilised in occasional or novelty events. Furthermore, full handicaps (and not fractions of handicaps) **MUST** be used in all circumstances when calculating the net scores that are to be used at the point when scores are processed for handicapping purposes.

*Example: A committee uses ¾ handicaps for a novelty Stableford event. A competitor's Australian Handicap is 20. Their score off their 20 handicap is 36 and that is what their exact handicap is adjusted against. However their handicap for the competition is 15 (ie ¾ of 20) which gives them a Stableford score for the competition of 31. When determining the player's position in the field, it is the score of 31 that is used.*

**MATCH PLAY**

**Singles:** The number of strokes given is the full handicap difference. Where the full handicap difference exceeds 18, players will receive 2 or 3 strokes per hole where applicable. When additional holes are required to determine the winner, strokes are awarded on the same holes as in the original round.

**Four-Ball:** The number of strokes given is the full handicap difference. The lowest marker concedes strokes to the others including their partner.

*Example:* Player A on a handicap of 10 receives nil, their partner (B) on a handicap of 24 receives 14 strokes, C on a handicap of 35 receives 25 strokes and D on a handicap of 40 receives 30 strokes. (Players will receive 2 or 3 strokes per hole where applicable.)

**Foursomes:** The number of strokes given is the full handicap difference between half the aggregate handicaps of each pair. Fractions of a ½ round up to the next highest number.

*Example i:* A's handicap is 20 and B's handicap is 15; total playing handicap is 17½. Their opponents C & D's handicaps are 20 & 18 respectively; total playing handicap is 19. The difference is 1½, so C & D receive 2 strokes.

*Note – It is essential to always follow the order of calculation steps as employed in this example.*

*Example ii:* A's handicap is 15 and B's handicap is 5; total playing handicap is 10. Their opponents C & D's handicaps 30 & 14 respectively; total playing handicap is 22. The difference is 12 which is the allowance C & D receive.

## **STROKE PLAY**

**Stroke (Medal):** Full handicap.

**Par and Stableford:** Full handicap.

**Foursomes:**  $\frac{1}{2}$  combined handicap (in the final application the fraction should be used, eg 18 $\frac{1}{2}$  not 19).

**Four-Ball Par & Stableford:** As above for par & Stableford. Note – In Foursomes, Canadian Foursomes, Four-Ball Par & Stableford, each individual's handicap MUST appear on each returned score card.

**Canadian Foursomes or American Foursomes (American Foursomes are also known as Chapman or Pinehurst Foursomes):** Combined handicap  $\frac{3}{8}$  fraction used.

**Eclectic Competitions:** A fraction, eg  $\frac{3}{8}$  or  $\frac{1}{2}$ , of the player's handicap at the beginning of the last round of the competition.

**Nine-Hole Events:** With nine-hole medal play events, the 18-hole stroke index is used to determine how many handicap strokes each player receives for the 9 holes being played. For example, if stroke index holes 1 and 3 are on the front nine and the 9-hole competition is being played over the front 9 then a player on a 3 handicap would be allowed 2 strokes for that 9. (The same three handicapper would be allowed 1 stroke if the competition was being played on the back nine.) For par & Stableford events, the stroke index is applied as per in an 18-hole event.

- e) **Entry:** The Committee must establish how players are to enter. In major competitions, it is normal for players to be required to complete an entry form, or enter on-line via an on-line entry system. In club competitions, a player should register their intention to compete which may be by way of paying an entry fee if required and/or entering or having their name entered in a book, or on a sheet or list kept for the purpose, or GolfLink terminal.
- f) **Time of Starting and Groups:** Under Rule 33-3, it is the responsibility of the Committee to establish the times of starting and, in stroke play, to arrange the groups in which competitors must play. It is quite permissible for Committees to permit competitors to start their round at some hole other than the 1<sup>st</sup> (eg the 10<sup>th</sup>), however this must be stated. The tees to be used must also be clearly indicated if there is any possibility of confusion.
- g) **Ties:** The manner in which halved matches or ties are to be decided must be announced before the competition begins. *The following guidelines include extracts from Appendix 1 in the Rules of Golf booklet.*

### **i) MATCH PLAY**

A match which ends all square should be played off hole-by-hole until one side wins a hole. The play-off should start on the hole where the match began. In a handicap match, handicap strokes should be allowed as in the prescribed round. The conditions should include the following statement: "In the event of a halved match in any round, the last stipulated round is deemed to extend to as many holes as are required for a match to be won."

### **ii) STROKE PLAY**

- (a) In the event of a tie in a scratch stroke play competition, a play-off is recommended. Such a play-off may be over 18 holes or a smaller number of holes as specified by the Committee. If that is not feasible or there is still a tie, a hole-by-hole play-off is recommended.
- (b) In the event of a tie in a handicap stroke play competition, a play-off with handicaps is recommended. Such a play-off may be over 18 holes or a smaller number of holes as specified by the Committee. If the play-off is less than 18 holes the percentage of 18 holes to be played should be applied to the players' handicaps to determine their play-off handicaps. Handicap stroke fractions of one-half stroke or more should count as a full stroke and any lesser fraction should be disregarded.

### **(c) COUNT-BACK**

- 1) In either a scratch or handicap stroke play competition, if a play-off of any type is not feasible, matching score cards is recommended (this is the default count-back method in Australia if a Committee's conditions of competition don't specify otherwise). The method of matching cards should be announced in advance. An acceptable method of matching cards for an 18-hole competition is to determine the winner on the basis of the best score for the last nine holes. If the tying players have the same score for the last nine, determine the winner on the basis of the last six holes, last three holes, and finally hole-by-hole from the 18th hole. If this method is used in a handicap stroke play competition, one-half, one-third, one-sixth, etc of the handicaps should be deducted. Fractions should not be disregarded.

If this method is used in a competition with a multiple-tee start, it is recommended that the "last nine holes, last six holes, etc" is considered to be holes 10-18, 13-18, etc. If this method is used when the ENTIRE field commences its round from the same tee, the count-back holes are adjusted accordingly (e.g. if the entire field commences its round from the 10<sup>th</sup> tee, as holes 1-9 are the "back nine" in this instance, it is recommended that the "last nine holes, last six holes, etc" is considered to be holes 1-9, 3-9, etc).

If the conditions of the competition provide that ties are to be decided over the last nine, last six, last three, and last hole, they should also provide what will happen if this procedure does not produce a winner.

In 36, 54, and 72-hole events, the last 18 holes shall be used and if still tied count-back as per an 18-hole round. In 27-hole events, the 18-hole card shall be used in the first instance.

In 9-hole events, the best score for the last 6 holes shall be used; if there is still a tie the last 3 holes, if a tie still persists then hole-by-hole from the 9<sup>th</sup>.

For competitions of 10-17 holes, the best score for the last 9 holes shall be used; if there is still a tie the last 6 holes, and then the last 3 holes. If a tie still persists then hole-by-hole from the last hole. For example, if a 12-hole competition is played over holes 1-12 the count-back is based on holes 4-12, if still a tie, holes 7-12, if still a tie holes 9-12, and then hole by hole from the 12<sup>th</sup> hole.

In handicap competitions over 9-17 holes, each player's competition handicap allowance is determined by the 18-hole stroke index. With nine-hole medal play events for example, if stroke index holes 1 and 3 are on the front nine and the 9-hole competition is being played over the front 9 then a player on a 3 handicap would be allowed 2 strokes for that 9. With this example, if in working through the count-back process and looking at the player's net score for the last 6 holes, it is calculated as follows: *Score = Total gross score for 6 holes minus (2 (ie the player's handicap for the competition) x 6/9).*

(Note: If an event is conducted over two or more courses, any difference in ACR between the courses must also be used to modify players' scores (this also applies to competitions conducted at the same course over more than one day. Eg Player at Course A with ACR of 73 returns a net 72, whilst Player at Course B with ACR of 76 has a net 74. The player at Course B has their score reduced by 3 (ie the difference between the ACRs of the two courses), and consequently beats the player at Course A by one shot.)

- II) An alternative count-back method is to use exact handicaps. If the conditions of the competition provide that ties are to be decided in this way, they should also provide what will happen if this procedure does not produce a winner.

- h) **Practice:** Committees must define clearly what areas are available for practice if such areas are not out of bounds (may include; practice putting/chipping green, practice fairway, etc). Committees have the power to waive or modify the provisions of Rule 7-1 under the Note to that Rule. If this is done, it must be made clear what the effect of the waiver or modification is: eg.

- Whether a competitor may play a full round before their competition round; or
- Whether a competitor may only practice at certain holes; and
- if so, whether a competitor may play practice shots on, or on to, greens or out of hazards.

The Committee may also:

- Allow practice on the competition course (or parts of it) during suspension of play (see Exception C to Rule 7-2); and
- Prohibit practice on or near the putting green of the last hole played (see Note 2 to Rule 7)

- i) **Prizes:** The Committee should announce in advance the prizes that are to be awarded in the competition. Committees are reminded about the Rules of Amateur Status when awarding prizes. Should the Committee wish to limit the number of prizes taken by a competitor, it is recommended that, where the conditions of a competition do not permit a player to take both a scratch and a handicap prize, first prizes take precedence over second prizes, and scratch prizes over handicap prizes, unless the handicap event is the event of the day.

- j) **Specification of the Ball:** The following conditions are only recommended for competitions involving expert players:
- *List of Conforming Golf Balls:* If the Committee wishes to require players to play a brand of golf ball on the R&A List of Conforming of Balls, the Golf Australia webpage reference for this list should be advertised and it is recommended the condition in Appendix I, Part C-1b be adopted.
  - *One Ball Condition:* If the Committee wishes to prohibit players from changing brands and types of golf balls during a stipulated round, it is recommended the condition in Appendix I, Part C-1c be adopted.

- k) **Caddie:** Rule 6-4 permits a player to use a caddie provided a player has only one caddie at any time. Professional golfers are permitted to caddie. However, a Committee is permitted to ban caddies or restrict a player in their choice of caddie. In such cases, it is recommended the condition in Appendix I, Part C-2 be adopted. If the condition banning the use of transportation is in operation, and yet the Committee wishes to allow the caddie to use motorised transport, this must be specifically stipulated in the conditions.

**l) Transportation (Golf Carts):** It is not a breach of a Rule of Golf to use motorised transport, and the Committee must establish a prohibiting condition if they wish players to walk during a stipulated round. If it is desired for players to walk in a competition, it is recommended that the condition in Appendix I, Part C-8 is adopted.

Note that Golf Australia would always encourage golfers with physical difficulties to play the game if at all possible. However, it is important that Clubs and Committees consider the issues surrounding the use of golf carts and any relevant legislation, as well as any health and safety issues, weather and ground conditions, and whether the layout of the course dictates that the use of carts is impracticable. If a Club or Committee does decide to permit the use of golf



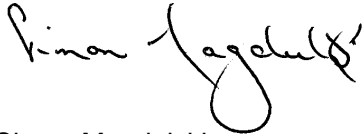
carts in competition, they may wish to consider putting restrictions on their use, for example, that golf carts would only be permitted for competitors with medical certificates or for competitors over a certain age who would otherwise be unable to participate due to physical limitations as a result of their age. If a Club permits the use of golf carts, it would be sensible to ensure that appropriate insurance cover is in operation in the event of any accidents or personal injury occurring as a result of their use. Players and Committees should be mindful of the definition of *Equipment* in the Rules of Golf in regards to shared golf carts.

Where the transportation condition in Appendix 1-8 of the Rules of Golf is in effect, a player granted an exemption from the restrictions imposed by this condition is being granted an exemption for the motorised transportation to carry the clubs only of that player as well as the player themselves. That is, the player is not permitted to transport the clubs of any other player (unless the Committee specifically authorises otherwise).

- m) **Advice in Team Competitions (Note to Rule 8):** If the Committee wishes to act in accordance with the Note under Rule 8, it is recommended the condition in Appendix I, Part C-6 is adopted.
- n) **New Holes:** If a single round competition is being played on more than one day, the Committee may provide that the holes and teeing grounds may be differently situated on each day. See Note to Rule 33-2b and Appendix I, Part C-7.
- o) **Suspension of Play Due to Dangerous Situation:** Attention is drawn to Rules 6-8 and 33-2d. If the Committee desires to adopt the condition in the Note under Rule 6-8b, it is recommended the condition in Appendix I, Part C-4 be adopted.
- p) **Mobile Phones:** The Committee must establish whether the use of mobile or portable phones is permissible. Committees may consider the use of mobile phones a distraction to other players and request that mobile phones be turned off during play. If the phone rings and this is deemed to be in use, the Committee would be justified in taking action against the offending player in accordance with Section 1, Etiquette on the Rules of Golf. Committees should also refer to Decision 14-3/16.

We hope that this document assists in the management of play at your club. Please feel free to contact your state association if you have any queries or if you would like any further information.

Kind regards,



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