

LTMGC 2022 Policy Updates

This last winter, we discussed potential changes to our policies and systems for handicaps, maximum hole scores, tee boxes and partner handicap spreads in team events. The details of those decisions and the rationale for making them are below.

Tournament Handicaps

We had some feedback last year from a variety of people in two specific areas:

1. We had many situations where a player's tournament handicap was significantly lower (> 3 strokes) than their WHS/ghin handicap. Many members expressed discomfort with that. This sentiment was echoed in our year-end survey where over 50% of members expressed a desire to see us adjust our system to ensure tournament handicaps did not drift to far above WHS/ghin.
2. We also received other feedback during the year to the effect that it seemed like a lot of flight winners had tournament handicaps that were lower than their WHS/ghin handicap. This was true but nothing nefarious in my opinion. Our current system uses best **4 out of 8 (best 50%) tournament scores** to calculate tournament index whereas WHS/ghin uses 8 out of 20 scores (best 40%). This math means that it was not unusual for over 60% of our members to have a ghin handicap that was lower than their tournament handicap at any point in time.

Taking all of this into account, The Board has voted to adjust our tournament handicap system so that going forward it will be based on the best 4 out of 10 tournament scores over approximately the last 12 months with a cap on the **tournament index** so that it may not be more than **2.0 strokes** higher than the players **WHS/ghin index**. Players with fewer than 5 tournament scores in that 12-month timeframe will play to a strict lower of tournament/ghin (previously this was 8 scores).

We believe that all things considered, this will be a positive change and be a more equitable system. **On average**, tournament indexes will be about one stroke lower under this system compared to the old system and within about ½ stroke of ghin index. Under the current system, average tournament index was around 1 ½ strokes higher than ghin.

Similarly, under the current system we had around 35 players whose **course handicap** was more than 3 strokes higher than ghin **course handicap**. That won't happen under the new system. Likewise, instances of tournament **course handicap** being exactly 3 strokes higher than ghin **course handicap** will be significantly reduced.

Maximum holes scores

Another policy that has been somewhat controversial ever since we introduced it two years ago was our maximum hole score policy. That policy provided that, in most tournaments, the maximum hole score that a player was required to take was:

- a. No maximum for flights 1 & 2
- b. Max net double bogey for flights 3 thru 7
- c. Max gross quad bogey in flight 8 (where they compete for both gross and net prizes)

After some lively discussion the board voted to rescind this policy. For 2022, there will be no maximum hole scores unless specifically approved under special circumstances. This does not affect best-ball and

other team events where you will not count your score in the competition. In those cases, you will continue to pick up if you are out of the hole and record the score you most likely would have made.

The rationale for the decision was two-fold:

1. Most board members did not believe that maximum hole scores improved pace of play.
2. Most board member felt that it created inequities when the maximum hole score changed the outcome of a tournament which it most certainly does on occasion.

Mixed Tees

This is another area where many members have strong feelings. Many members, though still a minority, believe that playing from a forward tee gives a player an advantage in a mixed tee competition. We have looked at a lot of data in this regard, including scoring data for over 3,600 tournament rounds, payouts by flight by tee box, match play results when competing from different tee boxes, and winnings in our skins games by tee box. None of this data suggests that there is a measurable advantage for players who play from a forward tee in a mixed tee competition assuming they have sufficient scores from that forward tee and their handicap reflects playing from that tee. The data we used to form these conclusions is available upon request. ***Accordingly, we will not be changing our tee box policy for this year. Players will declare a tournament tee and play from that tee box for the season.*** In the past, we have generally allowed one and only one permanent change during the season. However, we do not allow players to exercise this option just prior to the Club Championship.

A Blue tee player may request to compete for the low gross club championship from the gold tees in flight 1. Depending on the player's handicap, we may or may not allow them to compete for net prizes in that flight.

Handicap spreads in team events

In the last couple of years, we have not imposed a limit on the handicap spreads between partners in team events. We discussed this and the consensus of the board is that there should be some type of limitation. The details of what that limitation will be provided prior to the signup for any team event, including 2-man best ball, Member-Guest, Member-Member, and team match play.