

INTERNATIONAL BLIND GOLF ASSOCIATION

HANDICAP SYSTEM

REVISED: DECEMBER 2019 (WITH EFFECT FROM 1 JANUARY 2020)

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The International Blind Golf Association (IBGA) has devised this System to ensure that for international handicap competitions the calculation of handicaps is made in the same way in each member country.
- 1.2 Until the introduction of this System there were many different methods of determining handicaps which led to inconsistency of approach and allegations of unfairness. By operating this System the IBGA believes that all competitors in IBGA sanctioned events will have a chance of winning.
- 1.3 A sanctioned event is an event played in accordance with the Rules of Golf (as modified for blind golfers) set out by the R&A/USGA which has been pre-approved by the IBGA Board or, for its members by a Member Association, including all IBGA sponsored events. Scores in sanctioned events are eligible to count as Qualifying Rounds (see 7.1 below).

2. COMMENCEMENT

- 2.1 The IBGA Handicap System came into operation on 1st January 2005. The data to be used will be the scores from the most recent Qualifying Rounds (see paragraph 7) completed by each Registered Player (see paragraph 8).

3. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE MEMBER ASSOCIATION

- 3.1 Each Member Association shall appoint a National Handicap Secretary.
- 3.2 On completion of a Qualifying Round, as defined in paragraph 7, the National Handicap Secretary shall obtain and check all of their players' scorecards.
- 3.3 The National Handicap Secretary shall provide the IBGA Handicap Secretary with updated information on players' adjusted scores (see 6.4 – 6.6 below) as soon as practicable after completion of Qualifying Rounds, unless these have been submitted by the host Association as in 3.4 below.
- 3.4 For IBGA sanctioned events, or for events in which player(s) from other Member Associations participate, it is the responsibility of the host Association's National Handicap Secretary to submit the competitors' adjusted scores to the IBGA Handicap Secretary and, where relevant, send the scorecards of players from other Member Associations to their respective National Handicap Secretaries for checking.

4. IBGA HANDICAP SECRETARY

- 4.1 The IBGA Handicap Secretary shall ensure that National Handicap Secretaries provide the relevant information at the appropriate time.

- 4.2 The IBGA Handicap Secretary shall publish a full list of the current handicaps of all players and keep the list up to date.
- 4.3 The IBGA Handicap Secretary shall report on the operation of the System to the IBGA Board of Directors.
- 4.4 The IBGA Handicap Secretary shall chair the IBGA Handicap Committee.

5. THE IBGA HANDICAP COMMITTEE

- 5.1 The IBGA Handicap Committee shall determine the outcome in any dispute regarding handicaps under this System.
- 5.2 The decision of the IBGA Handicap Committee shall be final.
- 5.3 The IBGA Handicap Committee shall consist of the IBGA Handicap Secretary and two Directors of the IBGA.

6. CALCULATION OF HANDICAP

- 6.1 The player’s handicap shall be determined by averaging the difference between the (adjusted/deemed) gross score (see 6.4 – 6.6 below) and course rating for the course for the latest Qualifying Rounds played as follows:

Number of Qualifying Rounds in player’s scoring record	Qualifying Rounds used in handicap calculation	Handicap Adjustment
3	Lowest 1	Reduce by 2.0
4	Lowest 1	Reduce by 1.0
5	Lowest 1	0
6	Average of lowest 2	Reduce by 1.0
7 or 8	Average of lowest 2	0
9 to 11	Average of lowest 3	0
12 to 14	Average of lowest 4	0
15 or 16	Average of lowest 5	0
17 or 18	Average of lowest 6	0
19	Average of lowest 7	0
20	Average of lowest 8	0

- 6.2 Where less than three Qualifying Rounds have been played the player will not be allocated a handicap under this System and will not be eligible to play in an IBGA sanctioned Nett event.
- 6.3 When the result of averaging is .4 or less the Playing Handicap should be the rounded down figure. If the result is .5 or more the rounded up figure should be the Playing Handicap. For example if the average is 17.5 the Playing Handicap will be 18.
- 6.4 The gross score for a Qualifying Round shall be adjusted where a player scores higher than a nett double bogey on a hole or holes in that round. For example if a player has a handicap of 36 that player receives two shots on each hole. If on a par 4 hole that

player scores 10 the gross score shall be deemed to be 8, i.e. a double bogey on a par 4 would be 6 plus the two shots received. The score of 10 should be adjusted downward to 8 in these circumstances.

- 6.5 In a competition using the Stableford scoring system each hole on which no points are scored should be deemed to have the score of a nett double bogey. A deemed gross score can thereby be established for the whole round.
- 6.6 When a card cannot be retrieved but the gross score, the course rating and the player's handicap are available an adjusted score shall be calculated by subtracting the player's handicap and course rating from the gross score. The balance should then be divided by 6 and the gross score reduced by that figure.
- For example if a player has a handicap of 24 the course rating is 72 and his gross score is 120, then the adjusted score would be 120 less one-sixth of (120 – 72 – 24), i.e. 120 less one-sixth of 24, which is 116.
- 6.7 For determining a starting handicap using three cards the same procedure as above should be used.

7. QUALIFYING ROUND

- 7.1 A Qualifying Round shall be any round of golf played in a blind golf tournament which is sanctioned by the IBGA or the player's Member Association where the player's card is marked by another competitor in the same competition or an appointed marker.
- 7.2 A Qualifying Round must be played on a golf course with a course rating of at least 66.
- 7.3 An incomplete round or a no return will not count as a Qualifying Round. An exception is a Stableford round for which provision is made in 6.5 above.
- 7.4 Where a player is disqualified the card may count as a Qualifying Round if there is an ascertainable gross score for the round.
- 7.5 For players identified in paragraphs 7.5.1, 7.5.2 and 7.5.3 below, and with permission from the IBGA Handicap Committee through a recommendation from the National Handicap Secretary, a limited number (as stipulated below) of the following rounds may be counted as Qualifying Rounds:
- (i) Rounds played in competition with sighted golfers.
 - (ii) Rounds played on a designated date.

The cards must be signed by a marker with an official local handicap accompanied by a letter verifying the playing of the round signed by an official of the host golf course.

- 7.5.1 An Associate Member may count a maximum of four (4) such Qualifying Rounds in their first year of membership and a maximum of two (2) in each subsequent year. Signed cards and letters should be submitted directly to the IBGA Handicap Secretary.
- 7.5.2 A golfer deemed by the National Handicap Secretary to be isolated by distance may include a maximum of two (2) such Qualifying Rounds in his/her scoring record. Signed cards and letters should be submitted to the National Handicap Secretary.

- 7.5.3 In very exceptional cases (e.g. where a return journey of more than 7,200 kilometres (4,500 miles) is needed to attend any sanctioned blind golf event) the National Handicap Secretary can accept a maximum of two (2) such Qualifying Rounds per year.
- 7.5.4 A golfer who already has 10 or more Qualifying Rounds in his/her scoring record may not count any further such Qualifying Rounds as described in 7.5.

8. REGISTERED PLAYER

- 8.1 A Registered Player is:
 - a. a player whose name has been included in the Member Association's register of players notified to the IBGA for inclusion on the Sight Database; or
 - b. an Associate Member included on the Sight Database.

9. HANDICAPS IN COMPETITIONS

- 9.1 The only handicap to be used in an IBGA sanctioned event is the handicap calculated in accordance with this System.
- 9.2 In order to achieve fairness when men and ladies play against each other in a competition the following should be adopted by the tournament committee:
 - 9.2.1 When men and ladies have been handicapped off different tees:
 - a. if course rating for the competition course is the same off the men's and ladies' tees there is no need for any adjustment of handicaps.
 - b. if course rating is different between the men's and ladies' tees the result can be measured by deducting the relevant course rating from the gross score: or
 - c. use one card (usually the men's) and add the difference in course rating to the ladies' handicaps.
 - d. if a lady is required to play off the same tees as men in the same competition she should be given an additional 4 strokes on her handicap plus the difference in course rating.
 - 9.2.2 Where men and ladies are handicapped off the same tees:
 - a. if they play off the same tees in the competition no adjustment is required.
 - b. if a lady handicapped in this way is required to play off the ladies' tees in the competition that lady's handicap should be adjusted by subtracting 4 shots plus the difference in course rating from her handicap.

10. HANDICAP LIMITS

- 10.1 The maximum handicaps for players shall be as follows:

	B1	B2	B3
Men:	54	45	36
Ladies:	63	54	45