

The Golf Rules Review

An Intermittent Communique by the 2020 WWGA Golf Rules Maven

Issue XVII

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MATCH PLAY OVERVIEW

This year a Match Play Tournament on Stony Lick will be added to our WWGA slate of tournaments. The Golf Rules Maven saw some interest from newer players so this issue of The Golf Rules Review will be the start of a series on Match Play. This first issue is an overview and includes how to assign handicaps for a match and how to record your score. Future issues will review the difference between the rules for match play versus stroke play and the rules on conducting Match Play Tournaments.

What is Match Play?

Match Play is a popular golf game where instead of playing a round against everyone in the field as you do in stroke play, you are only playing against another person or a team. We play stroke play in our Tuesday games in which the total gross or net score determines the winner. In Match Play, your total gross or net score isn't used to determine the winner. Instead you are playing your opponent hole by hole. If you have the lowest score on the hole you win the hole. If you have a bad hole, you lose the hole, move onto the next hole and start again. At the end of the Match, whoever has won the most holes, wins. In fact you could win with a score of "1".

- A Match ends when a player has won more holes than are remaining. You may not need to play 18 holes to determine the winner. If you win the first 10 holes, the match is over.
- In a Tournament, if a match is tied at the end of 18 holes, play may continue until the tie is broken (sudden death) and there is a winner. In this case the golfer who won the hole in sudden death, has a score of "1" for the match.

Sounds simple, but there's a little more to it.

How are Handicap Strokes assigned for a Match?

At the start of a Match you and your opponent will declare your course handicaps as of the date of the match.

- If you give a handicap that is too high, and it affects the number of strokes you would get, then you are disqualified. This is true whether it is discovered during or after the match is finished.
- There is no penalty for declaring a lower handicap, but you must play using that handicap. After you tee off on the first hole, there are no corrections if you find out during or after the match that you were wrong.

In Match Play, whether it's Team or Individual, the best player (lowest handicap) gets "0" strokes and everyone else gets their net strokes. Net strokes are equal to their handicap strokes minus the best player's handicap strokes.

For example, if your Opponent has a 10 Handicap, and You have a 16 handicap, your Opponent get 0 strokes for the match and You gets 6. You get 1 stroke on each of the 6 hardest holes (shown in the Handicap line on a scorecard). This example is shown on the scorecard in the next section (How to Keep Track of Your Score During a Match)

Benefits of Match Play

Match play is popular because it lessens the advantage a good golfer has over an inexperienced golfer. The inexperienced golfer may lose a hole by a lot of strokes, but it only counts as "1" for the experienced golfer.

Match Play can be quicker than Stroke Play. For example, you do not have to hole everything out. The match could end before you get to the 18th hole.

Match Play Is a fun game you can play with your foursome. A popular game is COD (Carts, Other, Drivers) in which there are three 6 hole matches. The first 6 holes, the golfers in one cart play against the other cart, for the next 6 holes, the driver of one cart teams up with the passenger of the other cart, for the last 6 holes, the drivers play against the passengers. Usually at The Woods a \$1 is bet on each match so the most one player can lose is \$3.

Even if you lose, a close competitive match is a lot fun to play and talk about! Especially if you are tied on the 18th hole and go onto play additional holes for a sudden death playoff.

Match Play Overview

How to Keep Track of Your Score During a Match

Your scorecard will reflect both the gross scores on each hole for you and your opponent as well as the Match score as it stands as of each hole. In the example below, "You" gets 6 strokes and the "Opponent", who is the better player, gets "0" strokes. Leave an empty line between your scores and your opponents to record the score for the match. This empty line is used to track your status of the match as of each hole.

Here's how to record the scores:

- At the start of a match everything is "All Squared" (AS) which means tied, because no one has done anything.
- On the first hole your each get par. But You get a stroke so You win the first hole with a net 2. Record a "+1" for your score
- You lose the second hole, so the match is tied. Record "AS" for hole #2.
- You wins the next 2 holes, and record a "+1" for the 3rd hole, and a "+2" for the 4th hole.
- You lose the 5th hole, so the score is back down to "+1" for the holes You won.
- You also lose the 6th hole and the match is tied, show "AS" as your score.
- You lose the 7th hole, so You are down 1 and a "-1" is shown as your score.
- You tie the 8th hole so You are still down and "- 1" is shown as your score.

The Wrong Way to Assign Handicap Strokes

Players who are new to match play often want to have each player's full handicap strokes applied across all holes, the same way as stroke play. This is wrong. Doing it like stroke play gives an advantage to the stronger player.

Knocking the stronger player down to zero handicap strokes, as is done under the USGA Handicap rules, ensures the weaker player gets the strokes where they need them the most and makes the match more equitable.

In the Golf Maven's experience, even though each player's handicap gets reduced by the same number of strokes, psychologically, it seems harder to play with "0" strokes than when you get some strokes.

How to Score a Match in Match Play
"You" the Player, Gets 6 Handicap Strokes from the Opponent

Line Showing hole ranking for Handicaps.
1=Hardest Hole
18= Easiest Hole

The hardest hole

The easiest hole

HOLE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	OUT	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	IN	TOTAL	HCP NET
WHITE TEES	181	120	260	170	169	126	262	306	220	1834	261	131	258	326	298	154	113	169	149	1658	3092	
GREEN TEES	172	120	269	158	162	116	253	210	210	1756	244	117	249	312	279	154	99	153	137	1744	3500	
GOLD TEES	126	110	258	140	155	105	194	250	200	1541	207	102	240	241	234	135	84	130	125	1498	3039	
HANDICAP	5	17	13	7	3	15	9	1	11		6	16	18	2	10	4	18	8	12			
PAR	3	3	4	3	3	3	4	4	4	31	4	3	4	4	4	3	3	3	3	31	62	
You	3	4	4	3	6	5	7	6														
OR	+1	AS	+1	+2	+1	AS	-1	-1														
Opponent	3	3	5	5	3	4	4	5														

Match Score

RULES OF PLAY

- USGA Rules govern unless modified by local rules.
- Golfers are responsible for damage to adjoining properties.
- Golf carts use 90 degree rule unless posted otherwise.
- Out of bounds is defined by edge of pavement on roadways unless otherwise marked.
- Comfort Stations are located after holes 4, 5, 9 and 13.

- In the event of lightning, seek shelter. Return to the Clubhouse if possible.
- In case of emergency, call 911. To contact The Woods Pro Shop, dial 304-754-7222.
- No outside coolers. Alcohol beverages must be purchased from the beverage cart or the Clubhouse Grill.
- ALSO, SILVER PLAY: Be ready to hit at your turn. Keep up with the group in front of you. Exit greens quickly and record scores at next tee.

The Woods
Pro Shop: 304-754-7222
Clubhouse Grill: 304-754-3482

What Every Golfer Should Know - How to Determine Your Handicap Strokes for Each Hole for Stroke Play

*This information from the Tuesday Games golf rules, is shown here as a refresher.
You may already be familiar with how to do this.*

When playing stroke play, In order to assign handicap strokes correctly on your scorecard, you first need to determine your Course Handicap. This is not the same as your Handicap Index. The GHIN app offers an "easy to use" Course Handicap Calculator.

- All Scorecards have a line called "HANDICAP". This line ranks each hole by difficulty with 1 being the hardest hole and 18 is the easiest hole.
 - For Mt. View, it is important to use the handicap assigned to the ladies' tees as these are different than the hole handicaps assigned to the men's tees.
 - On Stony Lick the hole handicaps are the same for Men and Women.
- For a Net Stroke Play Tournament, allocate your Course Handicap strokes one-by-one from hardest-to-easiest hole until you have assigned all of your Course Handicap strokes. You do this by putting a small dot in the upper corner to indicate you the stroke (s) you get on the hole. If you have more than 18 strokes, then continue to assign dots for the hardest holes until you have used all your handicap strokes. For example, if you have a 24 handicap, on the 6 hardest holes you get 2 dots and the remaining easier 12 holes get 1 dot.
- For each hole, your Net score = Gross Score Less Handicap Stroke(s) on that hole.

Example of Player with a 24 Course Handicap

Allocating Dots to Representing Handicap Strokes for Each Hole

The Player gets 2 strokes on the 6 hardest holes (24-18=6) and 1 Stroke on the 12 easiest holes (18-6 = 12)

Line Showing hole ranking for Handicaps.
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18= Easiest Hole

The hardest hole

The easiest hole

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GOLD TEES	126	110	258	140	155	106	194	250	200	1541	207	102	240	241	234	135	84	130	125	1498	3039	
HANDICAP	6	17	13	7	3	15	9	1	11		6	16	14	2	10	4	18	8	12			
PAR	3	3	4	3	3	3	4	4	4	31	4	3	4	4	4	3	4	3	3	31	62	
Fiona Blue																						
• OR •																						

Course/Slope Ratings

White MEN 66.9/97 WOMEN 60.9/93 Green MEN 64.9/92 WOMEN 58.9/94 Gold MEN 64.9/97 WOMEN 58.9/99

Date: _____ Score: _____ Attest: _____

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